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Irish American Nationalism 1914-1922

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Irish American Nationalism

1914-1922

by

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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This is to certify that the master’s thesis of

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has met the thesis requirements of Iowa State University

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INTRODUCTION

Irish Americans challenged American foreign policy during the early part of the twentieth century in an effort to aid Irish natives (those living abroad in Ireland) in their determination to gain independence for Ireland. The role Irish Americans played in the early twentieth century was summed up in a quote read by actor Aidan Quinn from the documentary film, The Irish in America, “The Irish did not simply blend into the landscape, into the melting pot, instead, they stirred American history.”¹ When the Irish arrived in America, they steadfastly fought for their Americanism. Yet, they did not assimilate entirely into American life. Irish Americans remained committed to the future of Ireland. Matthew Frye Jacobson, described the American Irish in a very important quote from his book, Whiteness of a Different Color:

“This language of racial unity was among the staples of Irish nationalist polemic, and nationalist leaders continually sounded the chords of racial obligation...in their efforts to keep the overseas Irish oriented toward the homeland and toward the promise of its eventual liberation.”²

The Irish entered America fleeing British rule. They fled starvation, political and economic oppression, and most of all to seek freedom and a place to call their own. As with many immigrants of the nineteenth century, the Irish met immediate disapproval and opposition. They faced religious as well as racial prejudice. Though they came to America under the rule of Great Britain, they were ethnically very different and generally disliked and mistrusted when they arrived. The media portrayed the Irish as brutish, rough, lazy, and

drunken. An article in the liberal magazine, *The Nation*, described the public's opinion of the initial Irish famine immigrants as, "Historically only semi-alien, their appearance aroused, none the less, both fear and active opposition." Irish Americans rose above this portrayal to eventually become a "potent force" in America. America gave the Irish self-confidence. No longer living in a colony dominated by Great Britain, the Irish enjoyed the ability to be recognized as both Irish and American. However, by the early 1900's, Irish Americans still faced many opponents, including Great Britain.³

Before the Irish became truly American, they had to assimilate into American life. During the 1840's, a wave of Irish settled within the U.S. Initially, they settled in cities such as New York or Boston. The potato famine caused such an influx of Irish to arrive in America that Irish immigrants never had to look too far for someone of their own heritage and culture. The Irish settled mainly in the East, though some traveled to the Midwest to work in mines and on the railroads, and some traveled to the West in search of gold or land. The Irish consisted of communal families centered within their parish. Many urban neighborhoods consisted mainly of Irish throughout the U.S., forming distinct Irish areas such as South Boston. Families remained closely united and supportive with one another. After all, Irish Americans were not often supported outside their own communities, perhaps this contributed to the close bond Irish Americans shared with each other. Within these communities, new immigrants formed nationalist organizations such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Molly Maguires, the Fenians, the Clan na Gael, and many more. Irish

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American nationalist organizations became the political voice that helped Irish Americans earn self-determination and eventually helped attain independence for Ireland.4

The early twentieth century marked powerful changes for second and third generation Irish Americans. The Irish, it seemed, had assimilated into American life. Irish Americans celebrated American holidays such as Columbus Day. They spoke out about current political issues such as worker conditions, American industries, and immigration facilities. Many Irish became Socialists, united in one cause with various other immigrant groups such as the German Americans. They joined unions, fought for safer conditions in the mines, and fought for pay increases. Many lost their lives because of the harsh working conditions in which the Irish industriously worked, while others achieved improvements and equality within labor jobs. Some Irish Americans even spoke out against the dangers of Socialism, a viewpoint that created controversy for the Irish by World War I. However, Irish Americans remained, for the most part, urban workers and many became members of unions. Irish Americans association with Socialism perhaps furthered and strengthened their alliance with German Americans. Also, Irish Americans argued their opinions on religion and education and the separation of the two. They feared their children would be taught Protestant values. Irish Americans, unable to send their children to Catholic schools, favored nondenominational school systems. All of this progress signified that Irish Americans truly embraced their American culture and wanted to attain equality within their newfound homeland.5

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5 The Pilot (Boston), 30 January 1892, 6. The Pilot, 19 March 1892, 7. The Pilot, 18 June 1892, 3. The Pilot, 22 October 1892, 5. The Pilot, 9 January 1892, 3. The Pilot originated in 1829 by a Jesuit priest. The Pilot exemplified one of the first Irish American newspapers that portrayed the onslaught of the famine Irish and their ascendance into American culture.
On the other hand, most Irish Americans held onto Irish native culture as well. Nationalist organizations had spread throughout the U.S from the beginning of Irish immigration to America. Yet, the early 1900’s saw a growth in cultural organizations that emphasized Irish cultural issues rather than political issues. The Gaelic League leaders aimed to preserve Irish history, culture, and language even within America. They urged Irish Americans to preserve their native language, to teach Irish history in American school systems, and to practice Irish dance and song. In fact, upon anticipation of an Irish Republic, the Gaelic League was reestablished in Ireland, in which Eamon de Valera, President of the Irish Republic, urged all Irish natives to speak and write in the Irish language. De Valera wrote all correspondents to England in Gaelic. Overall, Irish natives and Irish Americans joined together to preserve their culture throughout the U.S.

The Irish throughout America held steadfastly to their political ideas, as well as their cultural traditions. Butte, Montana represented a region in which Irish Americans settled and preserved their cultural and political values. Butte had originated as a predominately Irish town when Marcus Daly, an Irish American, discovered copper in Butte. Irish Americans in Butte aimed to preserve Irish music by organizing an Irish drum corps. Butte Irish Americans remained politically active as well. Many became involved in unions by the early 1900’s. Irish American involvement with Socialism escalated with the hanging of Frank Little, leader of the Butte IWW labor union.

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7 The Sinn Feiner, 12 November 1921, 8-9
Demonstrations to rid Socialists throughout America escalated during World War I. As discussed below, Irish and German immigrants fueled the fear of Socialism by joining in efforts to regulate labor guidelines.

Meanwhile, Irish Americans continued to support their heritage through various other ways outside of Butte. The New York Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick administered a glee club. The Gaelic Society organized native Irish lecturers to speak at meetings. The New York Irish Gaelic Society offered singing and language classes every Wednesday evening for free. The New York Philo-Celtic Society organized a night of entertainment and dance to raise proceeds for the purposes of saving and promoting the Irish language. The Irish Literary Society, formed in New York, established a center for literacy of the Irish arts, language, literature, and history. In an article written in *The Melrose Bell* entitled, “What the Irish Have Meant to America,” by P.H. Johnson, it was noted how the Irish have served America during several occasions. Johnson noted Irish American participation in such occasions as the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the American Revolution, and the Civil War. Johnson stated, “No other people coming to our shores have displayed toward their native land a love more wholesome than the Irish.” Irish Americans truly cared how the rest of America perceived them. Irish Americans were like so many immigrant groups who held onto their culture and customs, while assimilating into American life as well.

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By the early 1900’s, Irish Americans urged Irish natives to stay in Ireland to maintain the population of the country. Previously, the effects of British rule caused many Irish to flee to various countries such as Australia, Canada, and the U.S. Also, the 1840’s famine caused many Irish natives to emigrate or die in Ireland. Ireland had not recovered their pre-famine population; in fact, many decades passed before Ireland gained her pre-famine population back. In an effort to stop Irish immigration to America, Irish American organizations such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, and the United Irish League, cooperated with the Irish Anti-Emigration Society to prevent paid passages by American citizens for Irish immigrants.¹²

Also by the early twentieth century, the Irish seemed to have the will to earn their independence from Great Britain once and for all, though Ireland was turbulent and unsteady for centuries. Irish Americans had a new struggle ahead: attaining self-determination for Irish natives. The Pilot, a Boston Irish American newspaper, expressed concern over justice for Ireland. For example, two New Yorkers, in association with the Political Prisoners’ Amnesty Association of Ireland, asked the U.S. government to intercede and obtain the release of Irish American prisoners in Great Britain. The U.S. government did not intercede; the request signified continual Irish American reliance on the U.S. government to act as the mediator between Ireland and Great Britain. However, the Irish quickly found out that the U.S. government found it increasingly more difficult to intercede as their ties with Great Britain grew stronger.¹³

¹³The Pilot, 30 January 1892, 2. The Pilot, 14 May 1892, 8.
America provided the opportunity for Irish Americans to advocate a better, stable Ireland. Irish Americans made most of the efforts towards Irish independence, while the U.S. government did not. From 1914 to 1922, Irish Americans continuously urged the U.S. government to help cease Anglo-Irish tensions, and to aid the Irish in a new Republic. A few key events sparked Irish Americans influence in the Irish cause. The Home Rule Act, established in 1914, caused a division between Irish Americans. A few Irish Americans desired more than self-government for Ireland, while some sought complete independence. Secondly, Irish Americans allied with German Americans on various political issues such as Socialism and to prevent America's entrance into World War I. Thirdly, the 1916 rebellion in Dublin sparked greater interest abroad, in Ireland, for the Irish American cause. Many Irish Americans were directly involved with the insurrection. Finally, World War I, Wilson's plan for a League of Nations, and the Paris peace talks, encouraged leaders to attain U.S. governmental support in the Irish cause. Yet, between 1914 and 1922 most pleas to the government went unnoticed or unanswered. Irish Americans met with increasing frustrations while helping to establish a free Ireland. By 1922, America's voice in the matter was quieted until the 1960's and 1970's. Irish American involvement did not cease, however, but did remain rather dormant mainly due to the fact that Ireland became a Free State, which did not incorporate complete independence, but gave Ireland dominion status.

The Irish in America needed outlets to fulfill or at least aid Ireland's independence. For most Americans, the only view they had of Ireland was the Irish living in the U.S., and most Irish Americans were just beginning to be recognized as middle to upper class. From the moment Irish immigrants landed on American soil they faced discrimination and oppression. Irish Americans faced the actuality of their identity as a whole group amidst
Anglo-America. In other words, the Irish living in America were not only faced with discrimination because they were simply Irish, but they also had to prove their right to be Americans. At first, they fought against religious persecution. Then Irish Americans fought against stereotypes that displayed them as lazy, drunk, and untrustworthy. In the twentieth century Irish Americans faced political persecution. Discrimination only fueled the fire of Irish American nationalism.

For the most part, limited support of most Americans for the Irish cause would not begin until after Ireland became a Free State in 1922. American support in the early twentieth century was mainly a result of wanting something in return. Irish Americans represented a large immigrant group by the twentieth century. Some Irish Americans simply felt guilty that they lived a better life than Irish natives. Others felt the need to protect their Irish American identity. Irish Americans differed from native Irish because they could not physically know what it was like to wake up to see the civil war and destruction of Ireland. They could not physically know what it was like to live in the midst of the Anglo-Irish War. Irish Americans had overcome their “Irishness” and became Americans. One American visitor to Ireland in 1920 wrote of his experience in war-torn Ireland. He commented that most Americans knew little about the true conditions in Ireland. “There is a spirit in Ireland today that no power on earth, or in hell (heaven is with her) can conquer…”¹⁴ This quote symbolized the battle in which native Irish fought to attain self-determination. Yet, perhaps their independence may not have been attained or would have been delayed if Irish Americans did not aid them in the battle.

¹⁴The Sinn Feiner (New York), 10 July 1920, 10.
Irish Americans struggled to attain success in the early 1920's. Several Irish Americans saw their refuge within the situation in Ireland. The majority of Irish Americans voiced their political savvy in Ireland to enhance their political and social power in America. To explain, Irish Americans used politics to move up the social scale. Many Irish Americans chose to use the Irish question as a means to acquire a political voice and political power within America. In some respects using the Irish question as a political tool to climb the social ladder worked. By 1920, some Democratic Party leaders feared a loss because Irish Americans and German Americans threatened their odds of winning by voting for the Republicans (a party in which the Irish rarely voted for). All in all, Irish Americans became very vocal about the Irish question, which caused them to be noticed by the general American public and the U.S. government.

Why did a surge of Irish American nationalism occur in the early twentieth century? There was a significant rise in nationalism within many immigrant groups throughout America in the early twentieth century. In fact, World War I was sparked by nationalist tensions. The Irish were one of the largest immigrant groups, and because they reached second and third generations by the early twentieth century, they became more vocal about nationalist issues. How did the Irish in America gain support to help achieve Irish independence? How did the Irish in America fare in the event of a world war and a dominate bond between the U.S. and Great Britain? The Irish question dominated much of the media throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century. Yet, why did America seem to fade out of Irish affairs after 1922 when the focus shifted after Ireland became a Free State? The immigration laws of 1924 prevented many Irish to immigrate to America. An act to restrict all immigrants, for fear of the unknown or unwanted, gained momentum in the 1880's
with the influx of many Eastern European immigrants, and succeeded when the Immigration
Act of 1924 limited all immigration.\textsuperscript{15} Also, by the mid-1920's most Irish Americans
believed the Free State was the best Ireland would ever attain. They were not completely
independent from England, but it was better than Home Rule; in most American minds, it
was better than nothing. Also, perhaps Irish Americans disassociated themselves from the
Irish question in the 1920's because they faced increasing social problems and also
successes. For example, the Ku Klux Klan spoke out against Governor Alfred Smith of New
York, a successful politician and prominent Irish American, because he was Catholic. Also,
many Irish participated in and reaped the benefits of bootlegging during Prohibition. The
1920's also proved to be a time in which the Irish, along with the rest of America, enjoyed
life. Irish Americans held high political jobs such as Alfred Smith, Senator Thomas Walsh
of Montana, and even Joseph Tumulty, private secretary to President Wilson. Many became
famous writers or playwrights such as Eugene O'Neill. Others became famous actors,
business entrepreneurs, and athletes such as John Sullivan. Irish Americans became fully
involved in American life. As a result, the Irish cause remained dormant after 1922.

The following chapters describe Irish American involvement in Ireland's path
towards freedom. The 1916 Rebellion and World War I shaped America's involvement in
the Irish question. Not only did Irish Americans voice their opinions both for and against the
cause of Ireland, they also provided financial support, physical leadership, and a political
ideology in the Irish fight for self-determination. Irish Americans became the driving force
behind the Irish cause; while doing so, they became a distinct group in which their passion

\textsuperscript{15}Roger Daniels, \textit{Coming to America} (Princeton: Perennial, 2002), 265.
for America and Ireland alike were equally divided. Yet, before these events occurred, Irish throughout the world remained divided on the issue of Home Rule.
CHAPTER 1

HOME RULE

Charles Stewart Parnell led the Home Rule Party in Ireland, which rose to established power in the 1880’s. The Party fought for self-government for Ireland, though in a limited nature. In other words if Home Rule would be established, the Irish would sit in Parliament in London with few law-making powers, while Great Britain would still control Ireland economically. Though Parnell’s party successfully elected a few Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) members into Parliament, IRB members feared that the Home Rule Party would accept far less from Great Britain than they were willing to settle for.\(^\text{16}\)

The IRB, an organization developed in 1858, strove to end Britain’s rule of Ireland completely. The IRB maintained representatives in Ireland and America throughout the 1800’s. Irish nationalists revived their violent streak, while their power and political drive increased just as well. For the first time ever, Irish nationalists swayed opinions to bring about change. Just as Communist and Socialist movements spread throughout Western Europe in the mid 1800’s, Irish nationalism spread throughout Ireland and America after Irish Americans gained political strength. The IRB wanted a free Ireland, an Irish Republic, and began to persuade others of their ideas. Many IRB members joined the insurrection of 1916 and became powerful leaders in the fight for an Irish Republic.\(^\text{17}\) Though the IRB and the Home Rule Party culminated during the fight for Home Rule, as discussed below, the IRB played a significant role in the 1916 rebellion, and began the fight for Irish self-determination.


\(^{17}\)Feeney, \textit{Sinn Fein}, 23.
By the late nineteenth century, Irish Americans were divided on the issue of Home Rule. For instance, many reactions to Home Rule were similar to that of W.I. Branagan, publisher of a small town Irish newspaper and Home Rule supporter. Branagan reported, “Ireland has gained a great many substantial advantages from the British government during the past twenty years…”\textsuperscript{18} Also, the nationalist organization, The Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) accepted Home Rule even though the bill did not include everything the Irish sought to achieve. The AOH believed it would improve conditions in Ireland. James Regan, President of the AOH, pronounced, “A half loaf is better than no loaf, but the acquisition of the half loaf is no bar to our continuing our efforts for the whole loaf.”\textsuperscript{19} It seemed that even the Catholic Church in America supported the Home Rule Bill.

Yet, others felt Home Rule was not enough to settle Irish concerns. A letter to the editor of the \textit{Nation} pronounced, “Unrestricted Home Rule means giving Ireland over to a kind of Tammany, uninfluenced by the institutions of a free country, steeped in the bigotry and tyranny of the past.”\textsuperscript{20} Tammany Hall represented a political refuge for many Irish Americans; but had undertones of discontent through the districts Tammany controlled. Tammany originated as an anti-Catholic and anti-Irish organization until the Democratic Party leaders quickly realized the Irish made up a large majority of the vote. Though the Irish gained strength, status, and power through the auspices of Tammany Hall, the undertones of Tammany were often violent and deceitful. As a result, most of the general American public regarded the Irish involved with Tammany as violent, sneaky, and deceitful.

\textsuperscript{18}Emmetsburg Democrat (Emmetsburg, Iowa), 3 March 1916, 4.  
\textsuperscript{19}The New York Times, 24 July 1914, 5.  
\textsuperscript{20}Letter to the Editor, “Dangers of Irish Home Rule,” \textit{The Nation} 103, no. 2665 (1916) : 82.
as well. Meanwhile, until 1914, the issue of Home Rule set the tone of debate with Irish everywhere.21

On the other hand, the Home Rule Party became the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) and continued to dominate until the start of World War I in 1914. Controversy and propaganda arose as World War I threatened to disrupt the Home Rule Bill process. During the war, supporters organized campaigns to rally the American public to help aid Home Rule efforts. Irish Americans in favor of Home Rule supported John Redmond, the newly established leader of the IPP, with fervor. For example, the small Midwestern newspaper, *The Emmetsburg Democrat*, supported Redmond and Home Rule, “Mr. Redmond and his colleagues understand conditions in Ireland and in Great Britain, and they know what is best for their country’s interests.”22 Furthermore, a letter to the editor in the *New York Times* pronounced, “...Redmond has made Home Rule an accomplished fact.”23 The United Irish League of America, known for its support of Redmond and Home Rule, campaigned throughout the U.S. to promote Home Rule and its resolutions, especially during World War I when the Home Rule Bill threatened to never be instated.24 Father O’Loughran, an Irish writer and priest lecturing within America, cabled his support to John Redmond. Father O’Loughran pronounced, “Everywhere I have spoken in the States there is wonderful enthusiasm for immediate Home Rule for all Ireland. In an age of democracy this great

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24 *The New York Times*, 1 April 1917, 2.
democratic issue must be settled.\footnote{The New York Times, 3 May 1917, 6.} John Redmond died in March, 1918 and with him, it seemed, Home Rule died as well.\footnote{The Times Weekly, 15 March 1918, 222.}

Throughout the late 1800’s and early 1900’s there was an international cry for changes throughout the small, dominated countries such as Ireland. Though there was little competition for the IPP in the late 1800’s, nationalist ideas and movements sprung up around the whole of Europe. New conceptions were formed from many small nations that one culture, one language, and one identity mattered the most. As a result, nationalism, or having great pride for one’s country or place of origin, sparked revolutions within various small nations. It was one such nationalist movement that would spark World War I. Ireland was not an exception; it was deeply rooted in political, economic, and social oppression, and like a ticking time bomb, could only hold out for so long.

The exception for the late 1800’s and early 1900’s was that those who fought for Irish freedom and sparked a nationalist movement were not starving like those who fled from the potato famine; they were not poor, illiterate peasants. Most were educated and affluent such as Padriac Pearse, nationalist and first president of the Irish Republic, poet W.B. Yeats, and editor and Socialist James Connolly. The fight for Irish freedom in the twentieth century represented an organized, strategic fight to attain independence.

Also, cultural movements came to life in early twentieth century Ireland. Poets such as Yeats, John Millington Synge, and James Joyce enjoyed the success of such cultural movements, promoted nationalist sentiment through their work. Prior to the early twentieth century, Irish nationalist organizations and movements had few successes and many failures.
These organizations and movements did not share the same ideas or desires. There was little cohesion. However, an Irish nationalist named Arthur Griffith came on the scene just as Redmond’s party tried to enact Home Rule once and for all. Griffith would forever be known as the founder of Sinn Fein, the political movement of the Irish Republican Party. In 1905, Griffith wrote, *The Sinn Fein Policy*, in which he spoke of a separate, independent Ireland. Though the Irish had a Republican movement long before Griffith’s Sinn Fein policy, the early 1900’s were deeply rooted in nationalist movements throughout Europe and because of this, more Irish natives and Irish Americans acknowledged and considered the Sinn Fein policy.²⁷

Though Griffith envisioned a nonviolent separatist movement in which Irish natives and their culture and history would be truly shown, various nationalist organizations, most notably the IRB, merged with Sinn Fein while keeping violent ideas intact. The IRB simply aimed to use Sinn Fein to pave the road further towards an Irish Republic, and vice versa. The IRB’s strength grew as members of its American branch, the Clan-na-Gael, supported its cause financially. With the political party, Sinn Fein, and the nationalist organization, the IRB, Irish Americans joined the fight in a separatist movement that would result in a free Ireland.²⁸

Prior to World War I, Sinn Fein leaders tried to persuade the IPP to withdraw their members from Parliament and worked towards creating freedom within Ireland’s borders. By 1912, Redmond and his party held the power within Parliament and a Home Rule Bill passed. However, the Home Rule Act was set to be initiated in 1914. The start of World

²⁷The Literary Digest, 2 February 1918, 10-11. Feeney, Sinn Fein, 18.
War I halted the Home Rule process and the Bill was indeterminately shelved. Moreover, Great Britain's entrance into the war and America's neutrality in 1914 caused many Irish Americans and Irish natives to fight against Redmond and to ally with the Germans. Many Irish Americans and Irish natives began creating revolutionary ideas to bring about a free Ireland.

Meanwhile, Griffith's Sinn Fein movement fell within the shadows of the success of Home Rule. Sinn Fein did not have abundant supporters in the early 1900's. On the other hand, the Irish Volunteers formed in the South of Ireland. The Volunteers represented those that believed in Sinn Fein policy while maintaining their support for the IRB. The Volunteers wanted more than just Home Rule; they wanted complete independence from British rule. However, with the prospect and hope of Home Rule, most Irish natives and Irish Americans longed for at least partial success of attaining semi-freedom with the Home Rule Bill.

Those Irish natives who disagreed with Home Rule formed the Ulster Volunteers (in Northern Ireland) to try to force Britain to back down from Home Rule and to reinstate British rule. In fact, Parliament and the Ulster Volunteers talked about dividing at least four counties in Northern Ireland (Ulster) from the Home Rule Act; Northern Ireland would remain under British rule completely. Also, many Northern Irish natives were Protestant, and feared the predominately Catholic South; any threat against the North’s Protestant majority met with severe disdain. American support of the Ulster Volunteers included the

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29*The Literary Digest*, 2 February 1918, 10-11. This article suggested that though the war would soon end, Home Rule advocates remained quite vociferous, while Sinn Feiners would not give up on their hope for a United Ireland. Feeney, *Sinn Fein*, 55.

organization known as the Loyal Orange Institution. The Orangemen of America
campaigned against Home Rule and its sympathizers in America.\textsuperscript{31}

By 1914 Irish natives, along with the aid of Irish Americans, began setting a political
tone throughout Ireland. There was not one universal political party. Irish natives and Irish
Americans either believed in Sinn Fein, the Irish Parliamentary Party, or they believed that
Ireland should remain as a complete part of the British kingdom. Meanwhile, Sinn Fein
reemerged and transformed itself as a powerful force to be reckoned with by the end of the
war.

\textsuperscript{31}The New York Times, 2 May 1917, 3.
CHAPTER 2
THE GERMAN ALLIANCE AND THE THREAT OF WAR

Generally speaking, immigrant communities in America were fragmented by their countries of origin. Few immigrant groups in the early twentieth century had much in common with one another, except that most were from countries in Northwestern Europe or Southeastern Europe. Yet, Irish Americans and German Americans joined in a united cause. Like the Irish, thousands of Germans came to America and remained a coherent group. Though both remained perhaps the largest of the immigrant groups to come to America, both held onto their heritage and culture, and both carried bitter resentments towards the British. Irish and German Americans united in one cause for two separate interests, and formed a powerful alliance that helped aid Irish Americans in their fight for a free Ireland.

Between the beginnings of the potato famine in 1841 to the devastation that followed in 1855, approximately 1,600,000 Irish emigrated to the United States. In the nineteenth century and the years before World War I, 5,300,000 Germans immigrated to the United States. Most, however, came after the Irish wave had subsided in the early 1860’s. Germans came in search of economic opportunity and political stability. By 1870, 1,855,827 Irish lived in the United States, as opposed to 1,690,410 Germans. Though people of English descent made up the majority of the U.S. population in 1870, by then the Germans and the Irish held a very large majority of the immigrant population. While both immigrant groups differed in language, religion, and their place of origin; they were similar in that most
German or Irish Americans maintained a negative view towards Great Britain, and grew increasingly suspicious towards the bond between America and Great Britain.  

The Irish differed from the Germans in many ways, including how they earned a living. The Irish held a variety of jobs, but most of them remained in labor positions, while the Germans maintained jobs in both agriculture and labor. Irish and German immigrants worked in manufacturing fields such as breweries, cotton mills, and woolen mills. The mills came easily to both ethnic groups, as they had taken these trades with them from their homelands.

By the late 1800’s, the temperance movement threatened both Irish and German jobs within breweries. German Americans and Irish Americans opposed members of the temperance organizations because they feared their livelihoods and libations would be taken away. Temperance advocates blamed the Irish for too much drinking and for their associations in the liquor business. After all, many Irish immigrants were urban; they had a knack for running the bar business. Throughout the late 1800’s and into the 1900’s bars were places in which the Irish participated in political activity. All in all, the way in which the Irish and German Americans chose to earn a living, whether through the liquor business, mines, or on the railroads, resulted in where they made their homes.

In the mid-1850’s, Irish and German immigrants constituted those living in the poorest conditions, those paying the least amount of taxes, and those receiving the most

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charity. Most Irish Americans lived in the cities, in overcrowded and dangerous tenements. Tenements did not reflect the promises of a new start that many immigrants to America felt they could have. By 1855, the tenement population on the East Side of New York City rose to approximately 500,000. Five families, perhaps, lived in a 12 X 12 room, while livestock lived in the cellar. During this time, the Irish lived among the slums when the term “no Irish need apply” made finding a job very difficult. The Irish who lived in the tenements were called the “low Irish” because tenement life did not necessarily offer a way out except within the neighborhood. As a result, some the tenement Irish stooped as low as the tenements and filth they lived in and became crooks. The more fortunate Irish immigrants, however, lived in wealthy homes in which they were employed, or dwellings outside the mines and railroads for which they worked. By 1910, eighty-one percent of all Irish Americans lived in cities such as Boston, St. Louis, New York, and Chicago.

Many German Americans lived in areas where the Irish made their homes. In areas such as “Dutch Hill,” on the East side of New York City, impoverished German Americans worked as peddlers and lived amongst livestock. Even when Germans lived among the Irish or amid the many nationalities of the tenements, they remained independent. Many of the Germans left as soon as they had the money to do so and made lives for themselves that ensured more happiness than the tenement Irish.

The majority of German Americans lived in towns throughout the East and Midwest. Many arrived and settled in New York City or Buffalo. However, others joined German immigrants who came in the early 1800’s to settle in rural areas of Pennsylvania and Ohio.

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34 Riis, How the Other Half Lives, 6, 19, 20.
Germans also dominated in mining communities such as Dubuque, Iowa, and manufacturing communities such as Green Bay, Wisconsin and St. Louis, Missouri.\textsuperscript{37}

As the German population settled throughout the U.S. in the nineteenth century, they created their own societies. German societies aimed to promote the settlement of German towns throughout Arkansas, Texas, and Minnesota, which resulted in the small German town of New Ulm, Minnesota. The Germans thrived on the continuity of their ancestry and their communities through newspapers written in the German dialect. German immigrants started and published such newspapers as the Buffalo, New York \textit{Demokrat} and the Cincinnati \textit{Volksblatt}.\textsuperscript{38}

Irish Americans and German Americans differed greatly in the years leading up to World War I. Unlike the Irish Americans, German Americans had a long-standing, organized, and communal society which spanned almost a century throughout the United States before World War I. The Irish, though communal, focused on attaining social mobility within the U.S. to gain rights to their Americanism before World War I. The early twentieth century and World War I marked the time period when the Irish were able to combine their ethnicity backed by their Americanism to fight for one solid cause.

Meanwhile, German Americans fought for many of the same causes the Irish Americans did. German Americans were loyal Democrats, as were most Irish Americans. Both groups attained powerful political control over the Democratic ticket. German and Irish Americans had consistently fought side by side against such acts as prohibition and women's suffrage. The two ethnicities were even opposed to the 1917 suggestion that a literacy test

\textsuperscript{37} Wittke, \textit{We Who Built America}, 187.
\textsuperscript{38} Wittke, \textit{We Who Built America}, 187.
should be enacted to solve the problems of immigration and to keep the unwanted out. By 1914, Ireland was on the brink of self-government and many German Americans disagreed with U.S. diplomatic strategies that threatened U.S. neutrality. German Americans, like the Irish Americans, disagreed with World War I. German and Irish Americans joined causes to stress their criticism towards an Anglo-American alliance in World War I.  

Germany and Ireland had similar histories. Both countries were ruled by various other countries. Members of both ethnic groups feared entanglements with Great Britain. As a result, both German Americans and Irish Americans formed organizations in the later part of the nineteenth century to curb the influence of outside nations on America. Irish Americans formed the Irish National Alliance in 1895. The leaders of the Alliance focused on literacy and education for the Irish, emphasized Irish history and its battle with Great Britain, and promoted a free Ireland. In 1899, the leaders of the National-German American Alliance focused on the threat of foreign infringement on America.

Before world war ever threatened America, German and Irish leaders formed a pact in 1907 to discourage the U.S. government against “foreign entanglements.” Irish American organizations such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Clan-na-Gael, and the Friends of Peace joined with German organizations such as the German Alliance and the German Club, to speak out against unnecessary relationships with foreign countries. On October 10, 1914 a meeting, given by the Irish National Volunteer Committee at the Terrace Garden in New York City, illustrated German support for the Irish cause. The president of the German American Alliance Committee announced that Ireland would receive freedom if Germany

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39 Daniels, *Coming to America*, 278.
40 Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 197-201.
41 Wittke, *The Irish in America*, 276.
42 Wittke, *The Irish in America*, 276.
prevailed against the allies. Speakers at the meeting also condemned John Redmond, advocate of Home Rule, for supporting the war. German and Irish Americans announced that Home Rule was not enough for Ireland; they needed complete independence. The meeting at the Terrace Garden proved that the alliance aimed to sway sentiment within America.43

However, misconceptions immediately arose about the first meeting between the German and Irish Americans. The New York Times initially printed that the National Anthem was not played at the meeting, yet the crowd sang “Die Wacht am Rhein”. However, the crowd sang the National Anthem together with “Die Wacht am Rhein” and “God Save Ireland.” In an effort to clear up the mistakes printed by the New York Times, David Naughtin, chairman of the Irish Volunteers meeting, wrote to the editor. Naughtin stated that the purpose of the meeting was to show that Irishmen everywhere were committed to self-determination within Ireland. He also proposed that it was not only an Irishman’s cause, but the cause of all people of the United States who believed in a free government. Naughtin compared self-determination to the principles of the Declaration of Independence and ensured that like America’s fight for independence, Irish Americans only motive was that of self-determination for Ireland. The New York Times immediately corrected the misprints. However, the damage was done. The general American public and the Wilson administration greatly feared established German American support for the Triple Entente. The New York Times may have printed the information incorrectly to promote the hysteria

43 New York Times, 10 October 1914, 11.
directly linked to American fears of Socialism and German American and Irish American unification. 44

On December 17, 1914 the New York Irish Volunteers held a second meeting for German Americans and the Clan-na-Gael. The meeting aimed to sway the sentiment of the Wilson administration and the American public about a break from neutrality. The speakers at the meeting included James Larkin, a Dubliner and chairman of the Citizen Army (a Socialist organization aimed to curb Irish labor problems), and Dr. Kuno Meyer from the University of Berlin. James Larkin announced that he would rather break his own son’s necks before he would let them be ruled by the British. He shunned John Redmond as a supporter of the English and asked the German and Irish alliance to act together to make the U.S. and the media influence the Wilson administration. On the other hand, Dr. Meyer, who had been lecturing throughout the U.S., was scheduled to speak at Harvard on ancient Irish poetry. However, when the president of Harvard received a copy of Dr. Meyer’s lecture that was to be given, the occasion was quickly canceled. The president feared that by allowing the lecture to be given, it would violate the “spirit of neutrality” in which the U.S. had so far maintained. Dr. Meyer stated, “If I had said in my lecture as I intended to do...among many misfortunes of Ireland there is also that of having had her history written by her enemies...it served to represent the Irish as a barbarous and illiterate people it would no doubt have been considered a flagrant breach of neutrality.” 45

At the second meeting, German Americans and Irish Americans did not delineate from their own American identity. The two ethnicities sang the “Star Spangled Banner” and

45 New York Times, 18 December 1914, 1.
presented the American flag atop the Irish Republic tri-color flag.\footnote{New York Times, 19 December 1914, 12.} Henry Runkel, director of a German relief society in Chicago described the alliance as, "...the most significant event that has occurred in the history of the United States for many decades." Runkel explained that those of German and Irish descent could restore the U.S. to its dignity lost during the war.\footnote{New York Times, 8 December 1915, 2.} Americans in support of the war and Great Britain felt that the German-Irish alliance threatened the U.S.

The general public had mixed reactions about the events unfolding with the German-Irish alliance. Dr. John Doyle of the United Irish American League (an organization designed to promote Home Rule for Ireland) announced that the League repudiated the meeting at the Terrace Gardens on October 9th. Dr. Doyle stated, "I want to say on behalf of the patriotic Irish American societies that the purpose of that meeting does not represent Irish sentiment at all." Dr. Doyle's letter to the editor encouraged other Irishmen to speak out against a German affiliation. Also, several Irish Americans phoned the \textit{New York Times} to complain about the meeting.\footnote{New York Times, 10 October 1914, 11.} John Hayes, secretary of the United Irish League of America, stated that an affiliation or an alliance with the Germans proved to be a danger to good American citizenship and a devotion to the country and America's interest. Hayes continued by denouncing the Irish nationalist organization, the Clan-na-Gael, and suggested that it was a secret society whose members had revolutionary ideas.\footnote{The New York Times, 11 November 1914, 7.}

Others warned against German sympathy for the Irish. A letter to the editor in the \textit{New York Times} suggested that German sympathy was not always for the Irish nationalists and instead the Germans helped aid the Ulster cause against Home Rule by providing rifles.
for the Ulster Orangemen (an organization that fought against self-government for Ireland). The letter also adamantly suggested how pleasant it was to know that those same rifles could be used on the Germans that provided them for the Ulster men.\footnote{\textit{New York Times}, 13 October 1914, 10. \textit{The Melrose Bell}, 14 November 1918, 4.}

In an effort to prevent America’s entrance into the war and to win the support of Irish Americans, Berlin attempted to persuade Catholic Irish associations to join in an Irish-German association. On January 22, 1917 Count Johann von Bernstorff, a German diplomat with a great understanding of the relationship between America and Germany, suggested in a secret dispatch to Berlin that a favorable relationship between Germany and Ireland would gain the support of the Irish Americans for Germany in the war. Yet, America’s entrance into World War I halted any agreement between Irish Americans and Germany.\footnote{\textit{New York Times}, 22 September 1917, 2.} In fact, Catholic associations remained a major supporter of the allied cause. The National Catholic War Council rallied the young members of Catholic parishes throughout the U.S. to earn money for each individual soldier. The campaign exemplified a joint venture between associations such as the YMCA, the Knights of Columbus, the Jewish Welfare Board, and the Salvation Army.\footnote{\textit{New York Times}, 22 September 1917, 2.}

As the War progressed, it became evident to most Americans that the U.S. would have some affiliation with the allies. The war also threatened U.S. neutrality. Both German Americans and Irish Americans remained opposed to American involvement or entrance into the war. Even as early as 1912, German Americans and Irish Americans protested against new legislation that violated the Hay-Paunceforte Treaty of 1901, ratified in 1902. The Treaty provided that America had full control over the Panama Canal and its construction.
and maintenance. The newly proposed legislation violated the Hay-Paunceforte Treaty by charging American ships a toll to pass through the canal. Irish and German American protesters argued that the new law gave credence to Great Britain. German and Irish Americans felt that since Americans built the canal, Americans should be able to use it freely without paying a toll.  

Furthermore, as America entered the war with the allies in 1917, the Wilson administration greatly limited German Americans ability to have an opinion in political affairs. By June, 1917 Congress passed the Espionage Act. The Espionage Act greatly limited First Amendment rights during World War I. The Act also significantly affected German Americans. The Act allowed the post office to determine whether an individual was treasonous or seditious against the U.S. government through printed material in the mail. If the post office found this to be the case, they could have taken away mailing rights from the individual. Furthermore, in October, 1917 Congress passed the Trading-with-the-Enemy Act to curb German American spy threats and to ease public opinion. The Act forced German Americans to provide English translations with any comment made within their German-dialect newspapers concerning the U.S. government. The Espionage Act and the Trading-with-the-Enemy Act directly affected German Americans. Many Socialist politicians such as Eugene Debs and Victor Berger were indicted on charges violating the Espionage Act, and some (like Debs) were thrown into federal prison for simply speaking out against the government.  

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When President Wilson took office in 1913 he aimed to maintain American neutrality. However, British propaganda circulated within the United States after the violation of Belgian neutrality. This caused great uproar from Irish and German Americans and, in turn, caused them to produce propaganda against entering the war with the allies. Yet, Wilson broke away from neutrality in 1917 and entered World War I. Several German Americans and Irish Americans supported the U.S. war efforts; others maintained their denunciation against war with Great Britain.55

So, why the sudden interest in the protection against foreign infringement upon the United States? America had remained involved until entering World War I on April 6, 1917; they had concentrated on their own expansion to the West, the industrial revolution, and by the twentieth century the tides had turned and America was ready to announce their power to the rest of the world. Irish and German Americans feared that President Wilson would not be fair and neutral when America began shipping war materials to Great Britain from private U.S. manufacturers. Yet, Wilson maintained that it was not only the right of Great Britain, Germany could participate as well. German and Irish Americans fought against these shipments by holding rallies, and large meetings, through newspaper articles, and conventions.56

On the other hand, more radical Irish Americans believed that the Irish could and would fight on Germany’s side if America were to join in with the Allies. Both the Irish and German Americans maintained large Socialist parties that gained power with the onslaught of the industrial revolution. It seemed only logical that German and Irish Americans (the two

55Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States, 590-599. Bemis, American Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, 403.
56Witke, The Irish in America, 279.
largest immigrant groups) would join together to fight local or national causes and they
joined together to fight international causes as well. German Americans formed the People’s
Council of America for Peace and Democracy. This Council was comprised of pacifists and
Socialists and was headed by Louis Lockner, a Milwaukee journalist and German American.
German Americans within this Council challenged compulsory conscription after the U.S.
entered the war by holding an anti-draft rally in New Ulm, Minnesota, a predominately
German town. Rallies demonstrated in New Ulm and Frank Little’s hanging in Butte,
Montana influenced Congress to pass the Espionage Act and various other acts to contain the
German Americans and their Socialist values and help unify the country.\(^{57}\)

In addition to German Americans, many Irish Americans supported Socialism as well. Captain Robert Monteith, an Irish Socialist who escaped from England to America, fought for Germany during the war. He left his family in America for safe-keeping and fled to Germany byway of the steamship, *Christiania*. Monteith’s explanation of the German-Irish alliance adequately portrayed the thoughts of many Irish Americans throughout the U.S. When asked if he believed he represented the feeling of Irishmen by joining the German army, Monteith responded, “There is not an Irishmen living but would like to be free of England, and those of us who have come here believe this is our only chance.”\(^{58}\) The war proved to further the Irish cause by creating a communal reaction of Irish Americans to defeat the British. The rebirth of Irish nationalism, it seemed, was well established.

By 1916, Wilson was re-elected, though not by a land-slide. In 1917, Germany resumed submarine warfare and the U.S. entered the war. After many trials and tribulations

\(^{58}\) *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 20 March 1916, 13.
by German and Irish Americans to prevent America from joining the war, their struggle was lost. After America’s entrance into war, the majority of the immigrant groups living in American supported the cause of war. Though the Irish retained a strong sense of their own culture, they had attained their Americanism and would forever put their own country first. However, some Irish maintained that it was their own right, as Americans, to denounce the decisions of the administration and President Wilson.

THE 1916 REBELLION

Meanwhile, the Irish in America continued to hold differing opinions over the issue of Home Rule; they were not a unified group of voices supporting one cause. Most Irish Americans were unaware of the eruption that was to take place and the implications it would have on Ireland’s freedom. The 1916 uprising in Dublin solidified America’s voice in Ireland’s future. Before the uprising, America remained concerned with the possibility of war. After the uprising, America, in the midst of war, faced the Irish question head on.

Though World War I quieted the Home Rule issue, compulsory conscription, which was administered in January, 1916, along with the unsettled Irish question, created a haven for fed up political factions in Ireland and in America that wanted something done for Ireland. In response, these political factions, which included members of the IRB and the Irish Volunteers, sparked an insurrection against British troops in Dublin on April 24, 1916. As the British were fighting the Germans in World War I, Irish natives, aided by Irish Americans, chose an adequate time to assert their own power against the British. The revolt
occurred on Easter Monday. By April 30th, 1916 British troops crushed the rebellion and Dublin was back under control. Most of the rebellion leaders were taken prisoner.  

Yet, before one can discuss the 1916 rebellion and the effects on Irish and Irish American politics, one must explore the years leading up to the rebellion and the organizations that were directly involved. In 1913, the Irish Citizen Army, a Socialist organization, formed to retaliate against the British government for poor tenement conditions, low-wages, and the degradation of the Irish worker. The Irish Citizen Army, led by James Larkin, fought for social justice for the Irish worker. On the event that is now known as Bloody Sunday, Larkin held a meeting on O'Connell Street in Dublin, in which the British forces ruthlessly crushed. In response, Sir Roger Casement, former British consular, traveled to America to protest and to rally support against the English, and to spread propaganda to promote Irish self-determination. Casement pronounced, "The attack of the British Army...on the Irish volunteers was an act of lawless violence." Both events were held to form a defense against the British and the inhumanities of the British government. By 1916, Larkin resided in New York, but remained outspoken about the Irish insurrection.

The Citizen Army members played an active role in the 1916 rebellion. James Connolly, the Irish-born editor of the New York newspaper, The Harp, actively fought alongside the Citizen Army during the revolution. Connolly lived in New York as an active Socialist and writer for labor rights. Connolly returned to Ireland five years prior to the rebellion to help organize the Irish Labor Party. He was among the many executed as a result

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59 *The Melrose Bell*, 21 November 1918, 2.
of the rebellion. Connolly, Larkin, the Citizen Army members, and the Labor Party members each played a major role in the offense against the British in the 1916 uprising.\textsuperscript{62}

In 1914, several Irish Americans came to the aid of the nationalists in Ireland. Artillery marked the major source of aid needed to support the Irish Volunteers. Professor Eoin MacNeill, chairman of the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers, stated, “The Irish Volunteers look to their friends in America not so much for pecuniary aid, as for a supply of rifles.”\textsuperscript{63} All funds collected, according to MacNeill, would buy arms for the defense of Ireland. The Irish Volunteer Fund Committee of America sent approximately $100,000.00 in aid to the Irish Volunteers in 1914 alone. In one situation, linked with American involvement, artillery landed for MacNeill’s Volunteers. However, the arrival of the rifles caused a commotion and four Volunteers were killed, while several others remained wounded. This incident aroused Sinn Fein, Volunteer, and Americans reaction alike. The Committee felt the need to urge Irish nationalists to stand firmly against British defenses. Though slow to spread, the Committee became increasingly influential to many Irish natives and the Irish cause for freedom. According to Joseph McGarrity, the committee chairman, “A defenseless Ireland has always been a defrauded Ireland. We look to you as the hope of the race.”\textsuperscript{64} McGarrity recognized that America could aid Ireland and help to formulate self-determination.

On the other hand, American Orangemen societies continued their support of the Ulster cause in Ireland. Rather than being united over Home Rule, Ulster would be separated


\textsuperscript{63}New York Times, 13 July 1914, 3.

\textsuperscript{64}New York Times, 6 July 1914, 3. Feeney, Sinn Fein, 56.
from Ireland and would remain under British rule. The Orangemen, headed by Sir Edward Carson, did not want Home Rule; they wanted to remain part of the English government.

The Orangemen, originally formed in the late 1700’s, contrived their title as a symbol of the victory of William of Orange (a Protestant) over James III (a Catholic) of England. Carson and his followers denounced the Easter rebellion as a political ploy administered in a time in which Great Britain was in the midst of world war.

Also, John Redmond, of the Irish Parliamentary Party, supported the British war in favor of the success of Home Rule. Redmond and his Nationalist Volunteers assured their loyalty to the war. Though Sinn Fein and the Irish Volunteers disliked Redmond’s take on the war, Redmond felt by supporting the war, Home Rule would succeed. After the rebellion, Redmond blamed Sinn Fein and the Irish Volunteers. Upon reaction against the revolt, Redmond expressed, “...no set of newspapers or public men in this country will attempt to use what has happened in Ireland as a political weapon against any party that may exist.” Yet, to the dismay of Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party, the 1916 rebellion and World War I marked a significant change in the structure of Irish politics. Home Rule was put on the shelf, Ireland was forced into a war they did not choose, and Irish Americans supported the cause of a few powerful Irish nationalist groups that wanted an entirely free Ireland.

Meanwhile, the Sinn Fein Party leaders, though still in the formative years, were blamed for the 1916 rebellion by Redmond, and many Irish natives and Irish Americans who still held out for Home Rule. When Arthur Griffith founded the Sinn Fein Party, he did not

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67 Times, 29 April 1916, 7.
foresee a revolution. In fact, Griffith denounced the use of physical force to attain independence. However, because the general public could not differentiate between the Irish Volunteers and the Sinn Fein Party, most of the credit or blame hit Sinn Fein. According to the London Times, the week of Easter “maneuvers” were caused by the “Sinn Fein Volunteers.”\(^6^9\) The Times did not differentiate between the Irish Volunteers and the Sinn Fein Party. Sinn Fein’s alleged involvement with the 1916 rebellion caused a stigma of violence that would last for decades. Although a few Sinn Fein members joined the fight of the 1916 rebellion through their affiliation with Irish organizations such as the Irish Republican Brotherhood, the Irish Volunteers, and the Gaelic League, Sinn Fein’s popularity did not escalate until after the executions. Sinn Fein was a non-violent organization that aimed for a dual monarchy in Ireland and Great Britain. Instead, militant Irish organizations took part in the 1916 rebellion.\(^7^0\)

Each nationalist faction in Ireland that played a role in the 1916 uprising met at the funeral of the Fenian nationalist Jeremiah O’Donovan Rossa in August of 1914. To onlookers, such a small group of various nationalist factions like the Irish Volunteer Army, the Citizen Army, and the Irish Republican Brotherhood did not appear to possibly be plotting at attack against the British government. However, the eulogy, read by Padriac Pearse, signified the events to come,

“We pledge to Ireland our life, and to English rule in Ireland our hate...Life springs from death, and from the graves of patriot men and women spring living nations. ...They think they have pacified Ireland. Think they have purchased half of us and

\(^6^9\)The Times (London) 29 April 1916.
\(^7^0\)John E Kelly, “The White Reaction in Ireland,” The Nation 115, no. 2978 (1922) : 118-120.
intimidated the other half. They think they have foreseen everything...but the fools, the fools! ...Ireland unfree will never be at peace.”\textsuperscript{71}

Pearse’s eulogy invoked powerful foreshadowing of the events to come: the 1916 rebellion, the end of the Home Rule debate, and the Irish Republic representatives fight for self-determination. Meanwhile, Ireland had become a political strategy for Irish Americans and German Americans. Both were directly involved in the 1916 rebellion.

While the British government called for the cruelest of punishments for the leaders of the insurrection, there were plenty of mixed reactions from prominent Irish figures in Ireland and in America. Within the days prior to the insurrection, the leaders issued a Proclamation of the Irish Republic. In their Proclamation, they reached out to America in support of a free Ireland. After the insurrection, most Americans of Irish descent favored a free Ireland and supported the rebellion leaders. Some Irish Americans fought alongside the Irish leaders during the insurrection, while others contributed advice and money in support of the insurrection. The \textit{New York Times} reported that Irish American nationalists not only supported the revolt, but also knew of the revolt up to two weeks before it occurred. James Sullivan, former American Minister to the Dominican Republic, was arrested by British troops in connection with the insurrection in Dublin. According to Sullivan’s sister, he lived in Ireland only to care for his ailing mother, and to prepare pictures of Ireland that he was to lecture on in the U.S. Also, American citizens: Peter Fox, Joseph Gilchrist, and John

Kilgallon, physically participated in the insurrection and were arrested on Irish soil by British troops.\textsuperscript{72}

Others remained on American soil, but actively tried to sway public sentiment for the Irish cause and for the leaders of the insurrection. Judge Daniel Coahan of New York, an outspoken figure in the Irish cause, discussed the insurrection at a meeting with the Friends of Irish Freedom during Easter week. Coahan expressed, “The rising in Ireland is the greatest and most effective blow that has ever been struck at England.” Coahan further expressed his disappointment in John Redmond, leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party and Home Rule advocate, for taking the side of the British troops during the insurrection. Coahan became a lawyer and a judge in the New York Supreme Court. He was also a member of the Clan na Gael (the American version of the IRB) and the Friends of Irish Freedom. Coahan held a powerful and influential role in Irish American politics, and in linking the Irish cause with the League of Nations, and for rallying support in the anti-League of Nations movement. He held this powerful position alongside his Irish counterparts at home and abroad with fellow Irish Americans such as John Devoy and Eamon De Valera.\textsuperscript{73}

Meanwhile, John Redmond, leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party and Home Rule advocate, viewed the insurrection as, “the insanity of a small section of people once again to turn all Her (Ireland’s) marvelous victories into irreparable defeat, and to send her back, on the very eve of her final recognition as a free nation, into another long night of slavery…”\textsuperscript{74}

Redmond supported Great Britain in World War I for political reasons. He believed that


\textsuperscript{74} John Redmond, as cited in Anne Marreco, The Rebel Countess: The Life & Times of Constance Markievicz (Philadelphia: Chilton Co., 1967), 209.
Great Britain would witness Irish soldiers fighting for the allied cause, and would determine that Ireland had a right to self-government. After the insurrection, Redmond remained adamant that the leaders of the rebellion repressed Ireland further.

Members of the United Irish League of America supported Redmond in his denouncement of the revolt and also favored an Ireland under Home Rule. In support of Redmond, Justice Thomas F. Riley of the United Irish League believed the rebels deprived Ireland of the goal of self-government. Riley pronounced that the Irish fighting alongside the British in the trenches believed in self-government and demonstrated “constitutional statesmanship.” According to Riley, the insurrection leaders prevented all hope of self-government. 75

On May 3, 1916 the first of the Irish executions by the British government took place. On May 8, 1916 the last of the Irish insurrection leaders, Sean MacDermott and James Connolly, former editor of the Irish American newspaper, The Harp, died. MacDermott’s last words were, “God Save Ireland.” Connolly, though wounded by a gunshot to his leg during the insurrection, was shot strapped in a chair to keep from falling. At this point, news of the executions had spread to America. 76

By May 10, 1916 the Emmetsburg Democrat condemned the executions in Ireland. They compared the leaders of the Irish revolt, including Roger Casement, to Edward Carson of the Ulster Orangemen. The newspaper expressed that Carson did not differ from the insurrection leaders. To explain, in 1914, Carson openly defied the British government by receiving arms from the Germans as the potential of Home Rule threatened the borders of

Ulster. In response, W.I. Branagan pronounced, “The world now beholds a practical exhibition of...British misrule in the Emerald Isle.”

The *New York Times* printed the reaction of more Irish Americans to the executions. J.C. Walsh, a Home Rule advocate in New York City, pronounced that the British government’s punishment towards the insurrection leaders remained “utterly wrong.” Joseph Gavan, Irish American lawyer and member of the controversial organization of the Friends of Peace, announced that the British did not execute Carson even when he swore against Home Rule. Nor did the British execute those that rebelled in Southern Africa just a few months before the Irish revolt. According to Gavan, the British “sowed the seeds of revolt.” In other words, the British asked for a rebellion because they allowed rebellion and treasonous behavior from some political factions and not others.

The British caused a public outcry in Ireland and America by executing the Irish rebels that planned and participated in the 1916 rebellion. Edward Ford, editor of the Irish American newspaper, *The Irish World*, believed the insurrection leaders should have been treated as prisoners of war. After all, the Irish fought alongside the British during World War I and the rebellion occurred in the midst of World War I. The execution of the leaders of the provisional government in Ireland, only served to fuel the fire between England and Ireland even more.

Irish Americans adamantly displayed their opposition towards the British government in many different ways. James Larkin, creator of the Irish Citizen Army, physically attacked an Englishmen at a Chicago protest against the executions. As the crowd wildly protested

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against the British, Matthew Newman pronounced in an English accent, "Why do you try to put over such ridiculous drivel?" Larkin responded to this by choking Newman until he gasped for breath. Larkin adamantly explained that the British should be blamed because the Irish leaders were assisted by Angela Spring-Rice, sister of the British ambassador in America. Larkin admitted that Spring-Rice actually smuggled the weapons into Ireland. 79

Moreover, the Ancient Order of Hibernians held a mass in New York City for the dead rebel leaders. Three flags stood at the altar: the United States flag, the green flag with a gold harp, and the tri-color flag of the provisional government of the Irish Republic. The Irish Women's Council held a memorial service and read poetry written by the executed Irish leaders. Also, a memorial service at Carnegie Hall memorialized the executed as martyrs for the Irish race. For the first time, Irish Americans gathered together at the Carnegie Hall memorial service and agreed to fight for a resolution for a free Ireland in the event of a peace settlement to the European war. 80

In defense of their country, the British responded against the attacks of the executions. The Nation reported three defenses to the Irish executions in an article written by James Muirhead. First of all, Great Britain had settled the Irish question when the Home Rule Bill passed in 1914. Also, America did not know about the amount of evidence upon which the British government acted on. Finally, the Irish chose to attack when England was in the midst of war, which signified that the Irish leaders were not mere rebels, but actual conspirators who committed treason. Muirhead described the artillery used to be cruel and illegal, and the leaders had little respect for private property within Dublin. Though The New York Times, 22 May 1916, 3.

Nation reported a British defense against the executions, the overall feeling in America staunchly opposed the executions ordered by the British government.⁸¹

After the executions, many events sparked Irish Americans further involvement in Irish affairs after 1916. Three specific events escalated Irish American involvement in the fate of Ireland and caused the U.S. government to, at the very least, react to the Irish Americans. First of all, America participated in the Irish relief effort soon after the rebellion. Secondly, the U.S. government unveiled a new German plot by Irish Americans. Also, the United States focused on the trial of Sir Roger Casement and the British government in the summer of 1916. Irish Americans pushed the U.S. government to recognize and take action on the Irish question.

To explain, most Irish American organizations supported relief for the Irish immediately after the executions. An Irish Relief Fund Committee of America was instituted at a meeting of approximately five hundred men and women. The meeting focused on the conduct of the British soldiers towards the Irish rebels and the executions that followed. Members of the Relief Fund Committee aimed to provide aid for the widows and children of the Irish rebels and leaders. The Committee also created June 10th as the day in remembrance of the Irish martyrs of 1916.⁸²

A second event took place that gained controversial publicity for a few prominent Irish Americans. A new German plot resulted after the insurrection. The U.S. government kept a close eye on the relationship between Irish Americans and Germany. In fact, the government knew of the impending Irish rebellion to some degree before it took place.

Patrick Egan, member of the United Irish League of America in support of John Redmond, denounced John Devoy as planning the Irish revolt. Devoy's involvement arose out of an incident with the German ambassador in America. On April 18, 1916 the United States secret service investigated the papers of Captain Wolf von Igel, a German embassy staff member. The U.S. suspected Captain Wolf von Igel of illegal involvement in the war. The secret service found eight papers that mentioned the Irish rebellion. The papers not only mentioned the shipment of arms from Germany to Ireland, but they also mentioned Devoy and Cohalan as conspirators.⁸³

In the wake of legislative questioning, John Devoy, editor of the Irish American newspaper, The Gaelic American, blamed the British government for the suspicion. Upon speculation of the alleged German plot, Devoy claimed the accusation was a, "stupid assumption based on nothing but a desire to injure the Irish cause."⁸⁴ Devoy had lived in New York as a revolutionary nationalist for the Irish cause most of his life. Though born to a Fenian father in Ireland, Devoy was sentenced for treason as a young Fenian against the British. He was allowed to go to America where he began his journalism career at the New York Herald, and finally created his own Irish American paper.⁸⁵

New York Supreme Court judge, Daniel Cohalan, emphasized that the German plot was a conspiracy of the British government to destroy Cohalan and Irish American influence over the Irish question. Moreover, Cohalan admitted that he had never heard of von Igel. The Boston Clan na Gael thanked Devoy and Cohalan for uncovering the British plot to destroy the Irish Americans and their fight for Irish freedom. Clan na Gael members

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believed that the British plot was aided by the Wilson administration in finding the papers. They further noted their disapproval in the Wilson administration for lack of support in aiding Irish Americans. Cohalan and Devoy continued in their efforts to rally the Wilson administration behind Irish Americans to help gain self-determination for Ireland. 86

Even after the alleged German plot, various Irish American organizations still maintained their alliance with Germany. For instance, the Boston Friends of Irish Freedom, an organization that originated as a result of the German-Irish alliance, created a resolution that stated in the event of a peace settlement in the war, Germany would not sign unless it guaranteed Ireland’s freedom. The Friends of Irish Freedom sent this resolution to Robert Lansing, Secretary of State, and asked him to administer it to the German ambassador. 87

Irish and German American relations receded when America entered the war with the Allies in 1917. Before the 1916 rebellion, Irish Americans served as the middle men in association with the native Irish and native Germans. After 1916, most German-Irish affairs were handled by the native Irish alone. After all, in the event of World War I, Irish Americans could be seen as plotting against the United States through their association with Germany. The British government feared that Germany would set up submarine bases off the coast of Ireland. If this had been done, Ireland would have directly threatened American lives. 88

The trial of Roger Casement became the third event that caused Irish Americans further involvement in Irish affairs. Just days before the revolt, Sir Roger Casement, an active Irish nationalist who promoted the Irish cause throughout America, attempted to land a

88 The Literary Digest, 15 June 1918, 17.
German boat, full of artillery to be used for the insurrection, on the west coast of Ireland. Casement was caught and taken prisoner by British troops. Many Americans had mixed reactions towards Casement. Most of the American public and the British government felt that Roger Casement, along with Irish American leaders and Germany, caused the Irish rebellion in 1916. To many Americans, Casement was a very powerful leader. America’s mixed emotions towards Casement possibly stemmed from the fact that Casement never actually supported the Irish cause until he was fired from his position as a British consular. Casement had been a humanitarian and was knighted for his work in South Africa. However, he also rallied support for the Irish cause in the U.S. prior to the rebellion.

Casement was found guilty of treason on June 29, 1916 in Great Britain. He was sentenced to be hanged. His trial brought great publicity within the United States media. Casement’s mental condition was in question by many who knew him, as well as the general American public. Many Irish Americans rallied the newspapers to present the Casement issue to the public, and continuously asked the administration to intervene on Casement’s behalf. Casement’s sister, a native of Philadelphia, hoped to obtain the President’s intercession in her brother’s death. Yet, President Wilson feared disapproval from the British government. After all, America had not yet entered the war with the British. President Wilson responded to Casement’s sister via Joseph Tumulty, Wilson’s private secretary and Irish American. “We have no choice in a matter of this sort...It is absolutely necessary to say that I could take no action of any kind regarding it.”

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Even some U.S. Senators raised voices of concern in the matters regarding the Easter rebellion and Roger Casement. In late June, Senator James Martine proposed a resolution that President Wilson ask for a “stay” in the event of Casement’s execution. For days, the Senate argued over a less controversial resolution. By August 2, 1916 the State Department sent an official copy of the decided Senate resolution to the London embassy. Yet the British government did not heed the advice of the Senate. Casement was hanged on August 3, 1916. The British government did not respond to either the State Department, nor to the Senate; they only unofficially suggested they were not impressed by the measures the Senate tried to take to prevent the deaths of the Irish prisoners. From this point on, most Irish Americans viewed Wilson with a critical eye because of his failure to intervene on behalf of the Irish prisoners, and because most Irish Americans believed the Senate resolution seemed to be delayed until after the death of Roger Casement.91

After Casement’s execution, Irish Americans faced further frustrations in the path towards Irish freedom. Irish Americans became more vocal about the issue of self-determination. Most Irish American believed that the British government had gone too far in handling the 1916 rebellion, and also believed the American administration should have done more. All in all, Irish Americans continued to fight throughout World War I and throughout the peace talks to settle the Irish question.

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CHAPTER 3
THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND THE PEACE TALKS

After the 1916 rebellion, most Irish Americans directed their efforts towards America’s entrance into World War I. During the war, Ireland was divided over Home Rule and complete independence for Ireland. Home Rule lost momentum during World War I. In 1918, George Barnes, Labor member of the British war Cabinet, described Ireland within an article in *The Nation*.

"Ireland is full of combustible material. There is an insurgent people on the one hand and the soldiery on the other. A spark from either side may kindle a feeling likely to create a disaster that will spoil everything. The position is just that which was present at the opening of the American War of Independence," 92

When America entered World War I with the Allies, most Irish Americans supported the U.S. Yet, some remained divided as to Ireland’s fate. In the meantime, Sinn Fein gained a great deal of momentum after the executions of the 1916 Irish rebellion leaders. The leaders of Sinn Fein became the voice behind the Irish cause for self-determination. They reached out to Irish America for help to attain independence and looked to the end of World War I for the answer. 93

John Redmond remained the leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party after the 1916 rebellion. He became a controversial figure. Redmond supported the Irish cause because Irish soldiers’ commitment to the war with England proved that Ireland was ready for Home Rule. Some Irish Americans, especially those in the United Irish League of America,

92 *The Nation* 106, no. 2760 (1918) : 1.
supported Redmond and remained attached to the idea of Home Rule and rallied behind the war.

Conscription raised another issue of concern for Irish natives before and after the 1916 rebellion and raised more questions as to the future of Ireland. Compulsory service was issued for Ireland as early as 1915. Also by 1915, the Irish amounted to one out of fifteen allied soldiers. In fact, the numbers rose so high, that many native Irish sought other alternatives.\(^94\) By 1915, America remained neutral, so many Irish fled to America. Yet, the British interfered in Irish emigration to America because so many Irish fled in fear of conscription. The British referred to emigration during the war as “scandalous attempts” to flee enlistment, while native Irish and Irish Americans began to question Ireland’s involvement in a war with England.\(^95\)

Though the native Irish Catholic Church adamantly opposed compulsory conscription for Ireland, America’s own Catholic clergy had mixed emotions regarding the subject. Ireland’s Catholic clergy disagreed with conscription, but did not necessarily reveal their own feelings regarding the political agenda of Ireland. One Catholic clergyman expressed, “...the bishops have always followed rather than led in times of national crises...they take, like their people, their religion, not their politics, from Rome.”\(^96\)

The conscription controversy remained until 1918. The issue on whether or not to continue compulsory military service in Ireland passed in the House of Commons and caused deep reflection on the Irish cause for many representatives of the Irish Convention. America had mixed responses to conscription as well. For example the New York \textit{World} pronounced,

\(^{96}\) \textit{The Literary Digest}, 8 June 1918, 30.
“Hundreds of thousands of Americans are on their way to the front in response to a summons exactly like that which the British Empire is now to extend to Ireland.” While The Times of Tampa, Florida felt the Irish should be honored to fight for the allied cause of liberty. After all, if the allies did not win World War I, could the Irish have gained their freedom? Either way both the leaders of nationalist Ireland (those in favor of self-government) and Sinn Fein (those in favor of a Republic) knew that American opinion had the capacity to make or break Ireland’s future.

By the summer of 1918, Britain pulled its policies of Home Rule and conscription. Home Rule could not measure up against Sinn Fein as the primary power in Ireland and Edward Carson as the primary power in Ulster. Also, Prime Minister David Lloyd George felt Sinn Fein aimed to engage the Germans in another plot to challenge British authority. It became clear that most Irish leaders and citizens would not settle for Home Rule. George Creel, a member of the Committee on Public Information in America, wrote a resignation letter to Wilson. Within the letter, Creel urged him to deal with the Irish question and David Lloyd George. “Make no mistake about the Sinn Fein. It controls Ireland absolutely…all old Home Rule leaders have been swept out of power and are absolutely discredited. The cry today is for an Irish Republic.” Creel urged Wilson to propel Prime Minister Lloyd George to put through a dominion status bill. Most native Irish nationalists felt the Home Rule issue was simply benched for a period of time and not altogether thrown out.

Thomas James Walsh, Democratic Senator from Montana and well known Irish American politician, urged President Wilson to entice Lloyd George into a speedy resolution

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97 New York World as cited in The Literary Digest, 27 April 1918, 13.
99 The Literary Digest, 6 July 1918, 22.
to the Irish question at the Paris Peace Conference, in response to Lloyd George's refusal to enact Home Rule in Ireland. In a letter sent to Wilson on December 2, 1918 Walsh expressed, "A vast multitude of people in this country, not alone those of Irish descent, regard the continuance of English rule in Ireland as unjustifiable..." Walsh continued, "Sentimentally the Irish question is the only one that any longer remains as a barrier to the entire friendship of English-speaking peoples." Wilson's response signified the President's continual response to Irish Americans who asked the administration to interfere on behalf of Ireland. Wilson, though appreciative of Walsh's concern for a solution to the Irish question, expressed, "Until I get on the other side (referring to Paris) and find my footing in delicate matters of this sort I cannot forecast with any degree of confidence what influence I can exercise...I shall keep this important interest in mind." Walsh's letter only foreshadowed the events to come in which Irish Americans aimed to present the Irish question to the leaders at Paris, while, the Wilson administration continued their efforts to quiet Irish American voices.101

Before the war ended in 1918, and since the executions of the 1916 rebellion, Irish Americans had asked the administration repeatedly to step in and do something to aid the Irish cause. In 1917, the United Irish American Societies pledged a resolution and forwarded it to the President, asking him to intercede on behalf of the Irish in America. Within the resolution it was pronounced, "...we earnestly hope that the freedom of Ireland will come as a result of action by the United States." In April, 1917 the Boston branch of the Clan na

100 Link, ed., The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Vol. 53, Thomas J. Walsh, 1918, 299-300.
102 New York Times, 23 April 1917, 8.
Gael urged Wilson to request Ireland's freedom from the British government. Even the labor unions mailed their wishes to President Wilson and asked him to do his best to fulfill an Irish Republic.

The President received many requests to intercede on behalf of Ireland. John Crimmins, an Irish American who sympathized with Ireland, expressed in a letter written to the President, "it would be most timely and would have the heartfelt gratitude of millions of people...for Ireland as a small nation to have autonomy...if an emergency should arise there would be all for one and one for all..." Sir Horace Plunkett, a powerful figure in the fight for an independent Ireland, traveled to America to influence powerful Irish Americans to intercede on behalf of the native Irish. Upon his visit to America, Plunkett wrote to the President. Plunkett urged Wilson to mention the issue of Irish self-determination at the peace talks. Plunkett believed that the majority of Americans took the Irish view, and did not sympathize with the English. Not only had the United States been the one place for the Irish to go to flee British persecution, the U.S. also resembled the birth of democracy in which America had attained its own freedom a century and a half before. Still, the President remained silent.

Though Irish Americans forever hoped that Wilson, the voice of democracy, would intercede in Irish affairs, they would be denied a voice in the U.S. President. Wilson's League of Nations was, perhaps, the greatest controversy in the minds of most Irish Americans. Through his ideologies, Woodrow Wilson demonstrated the glimmer of hope

103 *New York Times*, 30 April 1917, 8.
that the Irish needed at the end of the war. Wilson saw beyond the U.S. and into the small
countries full of oppressed people. He wanted to succeed at making every small nation an
independent one, with the help of allies such as Britain and France. By 1887, Woodrow
Wilson already had a plan set forth that the United States would somehow aid the rest of the
world into a democratic state of self government. Irish natives had attempted to create an
independent Ireland throughout modern history. They sought the help of both Irish
Americans and the Wilson administration and his vision of a League of Nations to help
smaller nations achieve self-determination. After all, America had fulfilled its own
independence, why shouldn’t the rest of the world attain it too? Yet, perhaps because of
Wilson’s more or less friendly relationship with Great Britain throughout most of his
administration, he failed to be mindful of the Irish situation.107

Wilson was adamantly aware that many diplomatic changes would need to take place
after the war. Wilson discussed with Lloyd George the effects of his League of Nations.
Wilson’s agenda for the League of Nations was as follows: that no nation should be
permitted to acquire land by conquest, that there should be equal rights for small nations, war
munitions should be manufactured by nations and not privately, and that there be some type
of bond between nations so that world war would not happen again.108

On January 8, 1918 President Wilson expressed his Fourteen Points to Congress.
Within his Fourteen Points, Wilson guaranteed that after the war, the independence and the
rights of small states would be granted through the League of Nations. Within Wilson’s
pronouncement he discussed the “impartial adjustment of all colonial claims” and that the

107 Tumulty, Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him, 392. Harley Notter, The Origins of the Foreign Policy
108 The Literary Digest, 3 July 1920, 1. Notter, The Origins of the Foreign Policy of Woodrow Wilson,
329-331.
“interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of
the government.” Wilson’s speech struck a dissident chord with native and American Irish
populations. The Irish agreed with his vision, yet Wilson did not recognize Ireland
throughout the peace process. He did not guarantee the right of the small nation of Ireland.109

In November, 1918 the war ended and the allies succeeded to victory. In 1919,
Wilson had two minorities that remained a potential problem for his foreign policy
endeavors. The Zionists in Palestine held a large political representation in the U.S. Irish
Americans proved to be another minority group that served to make Wilson’s last years in
the Presidency very challenging. Both minorities looked at the Peace Conference with hope
that their efforts would be supported.110 On June 28, 1919 the Peace of Versailles was
signed, which took extensive power away from the Germans. To many German Americans
dismay, Germany, though still a united nation, was dismantled and owed excessive debt.
Also, Wilson presented the Covenant of the League of Nations to the Senate. On July 1921,
the United States actually officially ended the war with Germany by Congressional
resolution. The League, however, never made it into the peace agreement.111

The Irish American newspaper, The Sinn Feiner, adamantly opposed the League of
Nations and believed that Irish Americans had a duty to make America “a decent place to
live in” and “safe for democracy.” The Sinn Feiner aimed at rallying Irish Americans to help
Irish natives attain a Republic.112 Yet, The Sinn Feiner was not the only newspaper to voice
concern over the League of Nations. General discontent about the League of Nations arose

109 Bemis, American Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, 413-426.
111 Bemis, American Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, 413-442.
112 The Sinn Feiner, 12 June 1920, 7 & 10.
when Americans began realizing that the U.S. would take center stage in helping out
countries that most people did not necessarily have a general interest in. Irish Americans,
however, had an interest in the League of Nations because it served to help those oppressed.
America remained a friend to Ireland, because Ireland remained under British rule.\textsuperscript{113}

To outspoken Irish Americans such as Judge Daniel Cohalan, the League of Nations
and the Peace of Versailles meant that American policy was further linked with British
policy. Judge Cohalan asked for an interview with Wilson to request permission for a
committee to go to Paris and to present the Irish question at the peace talks. Wilson refused
to meet with Cohalan. In a letter to Wilson concerning the peace talks and Cohalan, Frank L.
Polk, Wilson’s Under-Secretary of State, emphasized that in the midst of the fight for the
League of Nations, the less opposition is better. In other words, Irish Americans fighting for
a cause in which the U.S. government could not fix created controversy and bad propaganda
for the League of Nations.\textsuperscript{114} Cohalan and the Friends of Irish Freedom adamantly opposed
the ratification of the League of Nations and even voted for and endorsed the Republican
ticket in 1920 to oppose Wilson.\textsuperscript{115} Wilson remained opposed to Judge Cohalan because of
his tainted image as a German supporter. Yet, he feared Irish and German support of the
Republican ticket in 1920, and their opposition to the League of Nations. Prominent
politicians speculated that the Irish would no longer vote for the Democratic ticket in 1920
due to the treatment that Great Britain and America showed the Committee.\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{113} “Where the American People Stand,” \textit{The Nation} 110, no. 2861 (1920): 572-573.
\textsuperscript{114} Link, \textit{The Papers of Woodrow Wilson}, Vol. 55, Frank L. Polk, 1919, 407. Carroll, \textit{American
Opinion and the Irish Question}, 204.
\textsuperscript{115} Wittke, \textit{The Irish in America}, 290-91.
\textsuperscript{116} Link, \textit{The Papers of Woodrow Wilson}, Vol. 55, Frank L. Polk, 1919, 407. John Milton Cooper, jr.,
\textit{Breaking the Heart of the World} (UK: University of Cambridge, 2001), 139.
An Irish American delegation to present the Irish cause at the peace talks remained in the works. Prior to Cohalan's effort to engage in a meeting with President Wilson, Irish Americans held a convention to select delegates to attend the peace talks in Paris. Yet, before the Irish American delegation was chosen, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee submitted a resolution requesting the President to interfere in the Irish cause. Frank Polk wrote to Secretary of State Robert Lansing in 1919 expressing his concern over Irish interference with the President's goals at Versailles. Polk knew the Irish would somehow stay involved in the foreign policy of the U.S. and the Paris peace talks; the question was just to what extent.\textsuperscript{117}

Meanwhile, in 1919 Irish Americans held a third Irish Race Convention in Philadelphia on February 22 and February 23. The goal of the Convention was to unify the Irish race throughout America, as well as to choose a delegation to ask Wilson's support in attaining Irish self-government. Upon hearing about the Irish Race Convention and the delegates chosen, Polk, the Under-Secretary of State, issued a warning to Wilson signifying that if the delegates wanted to go to Paris or even Ireland, there would be an issue of allowing passports. A refusal to issue passports and refusing passage for the delegates to travel to Paris would potentially cause an uproar within the Irish American community. Yet, issuing passports and allowing the delegates to travel to Paris would, perhaps, cause unforeseen problems for Wilson and David Lloyd George at the peace talks. To Wilson, Irish Americans had become not only a meddlesome group, but also a threat to his policies, and to his administration. In fact, a group of senators, including Thomas Walsh from Montana, threatened Wilson with the notion that the League of Nations and even the

Democratic Party would feel the consequences if the Peace Conference did not include a mention or some aim or progression toward a solution for the Irish question.\textsuperscript{118}

The Race Convention did not have an easy time trying to administer the Commission to represent the Irish question at the peace talks. Wilson’s refusal to initially meet with the delegation (due to Cohalan’s presence) and to allow the Irish question to be presented at the peace talks created an atmosphere of distrust among the Irish American population. Timothy O’Brien, a priest in Hutchinson, Minnesota, wrote Joseph Tumulty and expressed his abhorrence at Wilson’s refusal to initially meet with the Commission. “Speaking for myself, there is one Democratic vote the less from this forward, and one opponent the more for Mr. Wilson’s League of Nations; and I believe I have at least a little influence in this community.”\textsuperscript{119} Wilson’s initial refusal to adhere to an interview caused great controversy within the Irish American community and towards Wilson’s League of Nations.

After a formal speech at the New York Metropolitan Opera House on March 4, 1919 Wilson returned to the offices of the Opera House to meet with Al Smith, Irish American and Governor of New York. A committee of twenty-five had been chosen by the Irish Race Convention. They waited in the Club Room of the Opera House to meet with President Wilson. As mentioned above, Wilson initially refused to meet the committee because Judge Daniel Cohalan, Chief Justice of the New York Supreme Court, was present. Wilson expressed upon refusal, “I will not attend the meeting if Cohalan is there because he is a traitor.” Wilson was disturbed at the disloyalty Judge Cohalan displayed when he


sympathized with German Americans during World War I. Wilson refused to meet with Judge Cohalan and waited until he left the room to meet the other delegates meant to represent the Irish in Paris.

At the Metropolitan Opera House, John W. Goff, Former New York Supreme Court Justice and Chairman of the Committee, asked the President, "...representing, as we do, millions of your fellow American citizens, I ask you if you will present the Peace Conference at Paris the right of Ireland to determine the form of government under which she shall live." The committee asked the President to take action in the steps towards creating an Irish Republic. They asked the President to present the Irish question at the Paris Peace Conferences and to arrange a meeting at the Peace Conference for the delegates representing the Irish Republic. The American delegates aimed to protect the native Irish who represented Ireland at Paris. The Irish Republic representatives included: Eamon de Valera, Arthur Griffith, and George Noble Plunkett.

The record shows that no answer was given from the President and that the President simply responded that it was an issue between Great Britain and Ireland, and not his own. In fact, the President grew increasingly frustrated with the Irish Americans because he felt the Democratic ticket could be lost in 1920 (with the German Americans support as well). However, at the Opera House, Wilson did try to explain to some extent the handling of "small nations" at the peace talks and why Ireland did not fall within the League of Nations assurance for all small nations to be free. "...the Irish question has not yet been presented to the Peace Conference, and those other countries are falling into our laps ...on account of the

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120 Link, ed., The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Vol. 55, Diary of Dr. Grayson, 1919, 411.
breaking up of the powers with which we were at war ... I will have to use my best judgment as to how to act." \(^{123}\)

After the initial meeting at the Metropolitan Opera House, the delegation remained undeterred and appointed a subcommittee of three prominent Irish Americans. They were chosen to go to Paris to ensure the safety and protection of the native Irish leaders that represented the Irish Republic in the Paris peace talks. The following Irish Americans formed the American Commission on Irish Independence: Frank Walsh, a former member of Wilson's War Labor Conference, Edward Dunne, former mayor of Chicago and governor of Illinois, and Michael Ryan, former president of the United Irish League.

The American Commission on Irish Independence met with approval and support from many Irish Americans. Eugene Francis Kinkead, former congressman from New Jersey and President of the Jersey Railways Advertising Company, wrote to President Wilson, in support of Irish self-determination. Kinkead recognized that a few Irish Americans chose to disengage from support of American during the war, most notably those involved with the radical and German-allied, Friends of Irish Freedom. Yet, Kinkead also recognized that Wilson had not turned away from just causes, including those in which he envisioned within his League of Nations. Kinkead adequately urged the President to hear Ireland's and it's citizens rights to determine their own government. Within the doctrine of the League of Nations and the Fourteen Points, as well as within the doctrine of America's own democratic government, Wilson chose to ignore his own beliefs. Kinkead and most of the Irish living in America asked why. \(^{124}\)


The Irish American constituents arrived in Paris on April 11, 1919. Ray Stannard Baker, director of press for the American Commissions to Negotiate Peace, repeatedly promised the constituents a meeting with Wilson. Wilson saw the delegates on April 17. However, the President insisted he could not discuss the Irish question with David Lloyd George anymore than to suggest that the Irish in American were mostly united on the Irish question. Instead, Wilson indicated that his talks with Lloyd George would focus solely on the German treaty. 125

Colonel Edward House, Wilson’s advisor on foreign affairs, often channeled information between Wilson and the British government concerning Irish affairs. On May 10, 1919 House illustrated the stalling tactics in which Lloyd George used to avoid meeting with the American delegates. After postponing two meetings, the Irish Americans traveled to Ireland. The U.S. government issued only restrictive passports to the Irish American delegates in which they could only travel to and within France.

The British government, on the other hand, issued diplomatic visas in order to the send the delegates to Ireland. The U.S. did not have control over Great Britain issuing the American constituents passports within Europe. From this point on, the Wilson administration felt the issue was out of their hands, and essentially, it was.126

The Irish American delegation spent ten days in Ireland, in which they met with the leaders of the Irish Republic, held several rallies in which the Americans spoke out to proclaim American support for Irish self-government. It was the trip to Ireland that Lloyd


George used as a reason or excuse to rescind his promise to meet with the Irish American delegation. In a letter written to Colonel Edward House, Lloyd George explained, “I gather from the fact that you do not take any notice of the quotations from the speeches which have been made by the Irish American representatives in Ireland that you disinterest yourself in their conduct.”

Lloyd George blamed the Irish American Committee and their behavior in Ireland, and shunned any idea of a prospective meeting. In response, Colonel House simply recorded in his diary his explanation of the events that took place in Ireland. House explained, “...he (Lloyd George) permitted these Irish Americans to go to Ireland, and he evidently conceived this way of getting out of it.”

All in all, the Irish American delegation attempted to aid Irish Republican leaders in attaining self-government for Ireland. After their trip to Ireland, they requested from Robert Lansing, Secretary of State, a “safe conduct” trip from Dublin to Paris for de Valera, Griffith, and Noble and a return trip for the Irish natives. They explained their trip to Ireland and the conditions in which they witnessed. The committee explained, “We went there for the purpose of conferring with the representatives of the Irish People, and ascertaining for ourselves at first hand the conditions prevailing in that Country.”

Lansing responded by issuing a letter to Committee member, Francis Patrick Walsh. Within the letter, Lansing expressed, “…reports were received of certain utterances made by you and your colleagues during your visit to Ireland. These utterances, ...gave...the deepest offence to those persons with whom you were seeking to deal…” According to Lansing, because of the actions

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created by the delegates in Ireland, any future efforts would simply be wasted.\textsuperscript{130} Joseph Tumulty, private secretary to Wilson, originally urged Secretary of State Lansing to ask Wilson to give the Committee and the Irish Republican delegates a chance in Paris.\textsuperscript{131} However, Tumulty explained in a letter written to Wilson that the administration had already unofficially arranged for the delegates of the Irish Republic to represent Ireland at Paris until the American Committee went to Ireland. Tumulty and the administration were concerned with creating a breach between Great Britain and the U.S. after the Committee upset Lloyd George in Ireland.\textsuperscript{132} The Irish were overlooked at the peace talks and the Irish (American and native) did not receive a voice.

Prominent politicians speculated that the Irish would no longer vote for the Democratic ticket in 1920 due to the treatment that Great Britain and America showed the Committee. As mentioned above, German and Irish Americans held great power over the Democratic ticket and losing either vote would be devastating to the 1920 ticket.

Through the diary of Ray Stannard Baker, it seemed evident that the Irish American Committee had simply become a menace to the Wilson administration because the Committee created confusion and misunderstanding within the administration and between the U.S. and British governments. Baker noted, “The Irish Americans, Walsh, Dunne & Ryan are back here from revolutionary Ireland & like every group of restless agitators came first to our office. They get everybody they get into contact with into hot water.”\textsuperscript{133} Yet, evidence suggests that Wilson did hear those Irish American voices that asked for his help.

\textsuperscript{130} Link, ed., \textit{The Papers of Woodrow Wilson}, Vol. 59, Robert Lansing to Francis Patrick Walsh, 1919, 513-514.
\textsuperscript{131} Link, ed., \textit{The Papers of Woodrow Wilson}, Vol. 60, Joseph Tumulty, 1919, 331-332.
\textsuperscript{132} Link, ed., \textit{The Papers of Woodrow Wilson}, Vol. 60, Joseph Tumulty to Woodrow Wilson, 1919, 298.
However, he felt unable to act on the issue. During his time in Paris, Wilson corresponded frequently on the Irish question. Wilson’s views on the Irish committee, however, remained unfavorable; especially after their trip to Ireland prior to the peace conference.\(^{134}\)

Private secretary to the President, Joseph Tumulty, wrote his memories of Wilson in 1921. As an Irish American, Tumulty remained interested in the Irish cause. Yet, he felt torn by his admiration for the President, and his own cultural heritage. He even acknowledged to the President that certain immigrant groups could make the road to the League of Nations very difficult. “There is vicious drive against the League,” Tumulty warned, “resembling German propaganda, backed by Irish and Jews.”\(^{135}\) Yet, Tumulty felt that Wilson, even long before it became an outspoken issue, knew the Irish agitation would only increase with British oppression. Wilson also knew that a national crisis would occur as a result of this. In fact, in a discussion with Tumulty about the Irish question, Wilson said:

> “The whole policy of Great Britain in its treatment of the Irish question has... been based upon a policy of fear and not a policy of trusting the Irish people... Faith on the part of Great Britain in the deep humanity and inherent generosity of the Irish people is the only force that will ever lead to a settlement of this question... I have tried to impress upon the Englishmen... there never can be a real comradeship between America and England until this issue is definitely settled and out of the way.”\(^{136}\)

Wilson felt the opportune time to handle the Irish question was after the League Covenant was voted into the treaty and once a “world court” was established. Though the idea of democracy for the world struck a chord with many citizens across the world, it seemed

\(^{134}\) Tumulty, *Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him*, 402.


\(^{136}\) Tumulty, *Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him*, 394-95.
Wilson’s League wasn’t to be. Though it is inconclusive as to whether or not Wilson believed in Home Rule or a Republic, through his remark to Tumulty, it is obvious that he at least pondered over the Irish question.\footnote{Tumulty, \textit{Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him}, 405.}

In fact, it seemed as though Wilson knew the events that were to come. Though speculation loomed as to how much the United States and even Great Britain knew about the 1916 rebellion, it is clear that Wilson could foresee that an unsettled Ireland posed a very difficult problem for Great Britain. Unfortunately for Wilson, it posed a difficult problem for the United States as well. It seemed Wilson did not take actual sides in the matter. He denounced Great Britain for not doing something about the problem, he denounced Edward Carson for going against his own government in the rejection of Home Rule, and he denounced the Irish who created rebellion against the English government.\footnote{Tumulty, \textit{Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him}, 396-97.}

\begin{center}
SOCIAL ISSUES: SUCCESSES AND PROBLEMS
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By December 1918, Sinn Fein won the election by an overwhelming majority against the Irish nationalists (those in favor of a Free State). Sinn Fein then announced the plans for a completely independent Ireland, an Irish Republic. The Irish Free State, issued in 1921, consisted of a Parliament in Dublin, called the Dail Eireann or Irish Assembly, and Eamon de Valera was the president of the Irish Republic. Eamon de Valera was born in the U.S. in 1882, but quickly moved to Ireland as a youth with his Irish mother. De Valera held close ties with America during the fight for a free Ireland.

A proclamation of an Irish Republic had been announced twice before the elections of 1918. However, the executions of the 1916 insurrection leaders, the compulsory military
service of the Irish in WWI, the inability to push Home Rule through, and the growing strength of the Sinn Fein party allowed the Irish majority to ratify an Irish Republic. British opposition remained steadfast and strong, however, and the Irish continued their efforts to gain support from America.\textsuperscript{139} During and after the peace talks, the Sinn Fein party rallied the American public to financially and politically aid Irish independence. Eamon de Valera, President of the Irish Republic, and member of the Sinn Fein party, came to America in 1921 to ask for monetary aid and allies in the U.S. De Valera, an American citizen, campaigned for the issue of Irish freedom through his Irish American friends and supporters.\textsuperscript{140}

In efforts to maintain and strengthen the population of Ireland and to aid Irish efforts, the Republic issued a proclamation prohibiting Irish emigration and asked America to assist them in this effort. “We...request all members of Irish organizations abroad, and men and women of Irish birth or descent to aid us to this end.” An effort to prohibit emigration to American happened previously. In 1903, the Gaelic League of New York, an organization aimed at preserving Irish history, language, and culture, asked their fellow Irish Americans to help prevent more Irish emigration to the U.S. Irish Americans aided both times by refusing employment to those wishing to emigrate, by not paying for a friend or relative to emigrate, and to reject anyone without membership of an Irish organization with a certain cause.\textsuperscript{141}

Soon after de Valera’s trip to America, Sinn Fein won the election of 1918, and the Anglo-Irish War began. Throughout the war, Michael Collins and the Irish Republican Army (IRA) ambushed many British authority figures stationed throughout Ireland. Ireland was a state of war and many Irish prisoners worried for their lives. The American

\textsuperscript{139}The Sinn Feiner, 28 May 1921, 1.
\textsuperscript{140}The Nation 112, no. 2897 (1921) : 28.
\textsuperscript{141}The Sinn Feiner, 8 January 1921, 2. The New York Times, 22 November 1903, 10.
publication, *The Sinn Feiner*, urged Americans to aid the Irish in their struggles against the British. Also, *The Sinn Feiner* related many political issues to the well-being of the Irish population within the U.S. as well.\(^\text{142}\)

*The Sinn Feiner* was founded on behalf of Eamon de Valera and his vision of an Irish Republic in June 1920. At this same time, Eamon de Valera traveled to America once again in an effort to spread propaganda concerning the Irish cause, and to raise money for Irish support. It served as a method of propaganda to fuel the fire of America’s involvement in attaining an Irish Republic.\(^\text{143}\)

The *Sinn Feiner* continued propaganda within the U.S. and gained America’s assistance for the IRA, the IRB, and the Sinn Fein party in winning the war against Great Britain. Ultimately, as noted in *The Sinn Feiner*, without America’s support, Ireland would not become a Republic.\(^\text{144}\) In the summer of 1920, *The Sinn Feiner* pronounced, “The war is not over yet, boys, she may call on us again when her back is up against the wall.”\(^\text{145}\)

Within propaganda against the British government, *The Sinn Feiner* referred to British prime minister, David Lloyd George as, “…a ghost of the English autocrats of 1776 who wanted to keep America in bondage to England.”\(^\text{146}\) Further comparisons continued regarding the American Revolution and the fight for Irish independence. *The Sinn Feiner* accused the British government of continuing the same warfare they used on the Americans during their fight for independence. “When the British discovered that France had thrown in her lot with the struggling American Colonies they were determined to waste and ravage, to

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\(^\text{142}\) *The Sinn Feiner*, 5 March 1921, 1.  
\(^\text{143}\) *The Sinn Feiner*, 29 October 1921, 18-21.  
\(^\text{144}\) *The Sinn Feiner*, 19 March 1921, 1.  
\(^\text{145}\) *The Sinn Feiner*, 12 June 1920, 7.  
\(^\text{146}\) *The Sinn Feiner*, 25 December 1920, 15.
sack and plunder everything American.” In comparison of American’s own fight against the British, *The Sinn Feiner* cited Ireland as just another victim of British domination. The editors of *The Sinn Feiner* asked the American public, and more specifically, the U.S. government, to remember their own struggle against the British and to join forces to face them again. 147

As the war continued between Great Britain and Ireland, American citizens remained directly involved, just as they had been during the 1916 rebellion. To illustrate, a priest, traveling to America to testify on behalf of the Irish people about the atrocities committed by the Black and Tans and Royal Constabulary of the British forces, was murdered before he could make it. 148 American students from Taft University in Massachusetts protested against the murder of fellow student, Kevin Barry. The students sent letters of protest to Senator Lodge and Senator Walsh stating that the “only crime was that he fought for his country.” 149 In fact, America remained so closely bound to the Irish issue, that *The Sinn Feiner* speculated that America may join forces with Ireland in the war against Great Britain. 150

Yet another American citizen perished when Irish American, John O’Brien, was killed by British soldiers in November 1920. Witnesses to the scene believed that O’Brien would not have been shot had he not been an American. Perhaps due to the Irish propaganda throughout America and its hindrance towards an Irish solution, *The Sinn Feiner* claimed the British hated Americans in Ireland. After the U.S. Presidential elections of 1920, the Irish

147 *The Sinn Feiner*, 8 January 1921, 12.
149 *The Sinn Feiner*, 8 January 1921, 15.
150 *The Sinn Feiner*, 23 November 1920, 1.
remained unconvinced and lost faith that the U.S. government would ever intervene on Ireland's behalf. \(^{151}\)

Meanwhile, Irish Americans aimed to enhance the Irish cause within the general American public by creating the American Committee for Relief in Ireland. Dr. W.J.M.A. Maloney, along with the help of Oswald Villard, editor of the liberal magazine the *Nation*, raised awareness and gained support to form a committee to investigate the violent turmoil within Ireland. The Committee rallied the American public to give Ireland financial and political aid. By 1920, the Committee had eight members, including social worker Jane Addams, Rev. Norman Thomas, a Socialist Presbyterian minister, and James Maurer, a Pennsylvania labor leader. Most, if not all of the members of the Committee were active in social concerns and each displayed a liberal mentality, which concerned those in the more conservative venues. The Committee headquarters were located in New York, but circulated reports and publicity on Ireland throughout the United States. \(^{152}\)

Prior to the Relief Committee, local or state Irish American relief organizations rallied the general American public to support the Irish cause. By January, 1921, the *Sinn Feiner* reported that the Irish Relief Committee of Philadelphia rallied Americans to support the Irish cause. A shipment of five thousand tons of food, clothing, and various commodities was transported on the Moore-McCormack Commercial Irish Line to Irish ports in Dublin, Cork, and Belfast. Also, the Red Cross and the Ancient Order of Hibernians Ladies' Auxiliary unit of Philadelphia sent several cases of supplies and food to Tralee, Ireland. \(^{153}\)

\(^{151}\) *The Sinn Feiner*, 13 November 1920, 1.  
\(^{153}\) *Sinn Feiner*, 8 January 1921, 3.
However, by February, the American Relief Committee reported the social unrest in Ireland by publishing the British Labor Commission on Ireland. Thousands of factories that produced food essential for the Irish had been destroyed by the Anglo-Irish War. Moreover, thousands of people were homeless because their homes had been destroyed or burned. They received urgent requests from Ireland to rush money to aid the victims of the war. The Committee sent an initial allotment of $57,500 for food, clothing, and supplies.¹⁵⁴

By March, 1921, the Sinn Feiner published a report about conditions in Ireland, while maintaining that Americans could help Ireland through the support of the American Relief Committee and a Quaker based relief Committee from Philadelphia that had reported about conditions directly from Ireland. The Sinn Feiner compared conditions in Ireland in the early 1920's to the situation in Ireland during the potato famine of the 1840's. During the famine, Ireland lost approximately three million people through death or immigration. In comparison, the Sinn Feiner expressed, "In short, conditions in Ireland show a prospect not merely as bad, but even worse than that which seventy years ago cut her population in two. The Irish nation, indeed, is threatened with extinction unless America comes to her help."¹⁵⁵ The powerful words signifying that Ireland or at least the Irish culture could become extinct may have been exaggerated by the Sinn Feiner, simply because they were an Irish newspaper. However, it was indeed possible through centuries of war, colonization, starvation, and political turmoil that those inherently Irish could have become an extinct culture through assimilation. Yet, evident in the voices of the Irish in America as just one example, the Irish did not become extinct and held on to their culture when it could have

¹⁵⁴Sinn Feiner, 5 February 1921, 5.
¹⁵⁵Sinn Feiner, 19 March 1921, 9.
easily been lost. Overall, the American Committee for Relief in Ireland may have been a mixture of social and humanitarian concerns for the native Irish, and a political tactic to try to rally not only Irish Americans but the general American public to support the Irish cause.

As the Anglo-Irish War escalated in Ireland, American’s social and political issues fired up. Alfred E. Smith, Governor of New York, represented the first Irish American to run for the nomination of the Democratic presidential ticket. However, his disagreement with prohibition (he did not agree with the temperance movement) and the rapid rise of the Ku Klux Klan prevented him from winning the nomination in 1920 and again in 1924. 156

The KKK and the threat of communism made a come back in the 1920’s as a result of new immigrants from Eastern Europe and the rise of the Irish Americans. The threat of communism resulted in the Red Scare, which caused even more agitation towards German Americans and their effort to build a strong Socialist party. Also, as a result of the Klan’s rise, anti-Klan organizations like the American Unity League of Chicago, aimed to strike out against the Klan by exposing prominent members. Catholic and Jewish citizens spoke out against the Klan’s bigotry. 157

The Sinn Feiner condemned the Klan as British sympathizers. The newspaper had already boycotted British insurance agencies in America. They aimed to take the “Anglo-Saxonism” out of the American government. The Sinn Feiner accused President Harding of believing in “Anglo-Saxon” ideals. They grew increasingly concerned with the rest of America; most importantly, those that were not of Anglo descent. “What are the Irish, the German, the Italian, the Spanish, the French and all the other elements… in the Republic and

157The Literary Digest, 23 December 1922, 31.
in its national life?" The Sinn Feiner argued that the safety and well-being of the U.S. belonged with those elements in which they accused the Harding administration of denouncing.\(^{158}\)

The Sinn Feiner condemned the Irish Americans who believed that they were not only doing enough for Ireland, but also for themselves. With the threat of the KKK and its British sympathizers, the newspaper felt Irish Americans needed a wake up call. They spoke out against settling for minor political achievements, and aimed at creating not only a voice, but a powerful voice within the U.S. government.\(^{159}\)

While the KKK threatened Catholic public figures, the Sinn Feiner fought to persuade many more Irish and Catholic citizens of America to join political offices. The newspaper believed that because the Harding administration had not done anything to release America from its "foreign entanglements" set forth by the Wilson administration; the country lay exposed to foreign interests and foreign governments. The Sinn Feiner even proclaimed that the native Irish were years ahead of the American Irish in their ability to face facts, in their national duties, and their political agendas. Upon arriving on American soil, Irish immigrants became Americans. Yet, the Sinn Feiner accused Irish Americans in the twentieth century of apologizing from where they came from. They feared that the Irish culture would assimilate within the "Anglo-Saxon" majority and lose sight of their originality.\(^{160}\)

Through several newspaper articles from the Sinn Feiner, it appeared that the Irish American magazine spoke more of homeland issues than issues in Ireland. The newspaper

\(^{158}\)The Sinn Feiner, 12 November 1921, 12.
\(^{159}\)The Sinn Feiner, 12 November 1921, 7-8.
\(^{160}\)The Sinn Feiner, 12 November 1921, 7-8.
regarded the Klan as dangerous. Its writers believed that the Klan would form an invisible government within the United States, which they referred to as a Republic, and that Britain would form a Klan of its own.\footnote{\textit{The Sinn Feiner}, 1 October 1921, 4-5.}

The \textit{Sinn Feiner} even consulted a Century Dictionary and found the term “brutal.” According to the \textit{Sinn Feiner}, “brutal” was described as, “In Irish districts, men deteriorated in size and shape, the nose sank, the gums were exposed, with diminished brain and brutal form.” The \textit{Sinn Feiner} responded to this finding by expressing, “occasionally there are one or two Irishmen who are as good looking as the homeliest Englishman...It’s strange how those men (those referred to as “deteriorated and diminished)...hold the world’s record in athletic contests...” The newspaper findings signified propaganda used by not only the British, but by the Irish as well. Overall, through the above examples, the \textit{Sinn Feiner} aimed at ridding America of its British propaganda.\footnote{\textit{The Sinn Feiner}, 26 June 1920, 3.}

The \textit{Sinn Feiner} was not the only Irish American newspaper to speak out against “Anglo America.” John Devoy’s, \textit{Gaelic American}, also feared Britain’s stronghold on the U.S. In one newspaper article, the \textit{Gaelic American} denounced private schools in which most of the staff came from England, Scotland, or Canada. “...no Americans would stand a chance of getting employment in these hotbeds of Anglicization.” The newspaper criticized the schools for teaching their students to love and admire England, and for generally ignoring American ideals. The most important aspect of this article was that it centered on American issues, and feared that British propaganda and their control of private schools would “de-Americanize” the system. This signified that since the Irish landed on American soil, they
became American; this was their place of refuge. The Irish symbolized the first refugees, yet, they felt their new found identity was being threatened by those they fled from.\(^{163}\)

Though the *Gaelic American* and *Sinn Feiner* spoke adamantly against British propaganda within the U.S., the *Boston Herald* claimed that British-American federations arose throughout the U.S. to increase citizenship. British American organizations helped to maintain social reform and to aid the U.S. government during World War I. They also assisted British residents to become U.S. citizens. Though the British organizations proclaimed their patriotism to the United States, Irish immigrants had one major conflict with British propaganda in the U.S. That is, if the U.S. government supported the British whole-heartedly, they could not support the Irish.\(^{164}\)

\(^{163}\) *The Gaelic American*, 7 May 1921, 4-5.

CONCLUSION

By 1920, the British redesigned the Home Rule Bill to ease the tensions of the two main divisions of the Irish cause. The Home Rule Bill in 1920 exercised the potential to place Ireland in a dominion status. In other words, two Parliaments and two councils would reside. One Parliament would be for Ulster (and Great Britain), and the other for Southern Ireland. In 1922, Ireland became a Free State. Though the name resonated a positive change and independence, most Sinn Fein members remained unsatisfied and would endure more years of endless struggle to receive complete freedom. With the acceptance of a Free State, de Valera and the Dail Eireann met with criticism from a few Irish Americans. The Gaelic American editor, John Devoy, denounced de Valera as making a split in Ireland to support his own image. However, most felt that the Irish had suffered enough, and that though a Free State only mimicked a Republic, it was better than nothing.165

As mentioned above, Irish Americans adopted American traditions long before there was an Irish Free State. By 1922, many could not understand the physical hardships in which natives of Ireland went through. The fighting did not stop once a Free State had been established, and many Americans felt the Irish were pushing their luck. Surely, Great Britain would not agree to grant independence for the Irish. Irish natives were successful at gaining independence, without most of the support Irish Americans had granted them during their fight for independence in the early part of the twentieth century.

The 1920’s marked a significant and prosperous time in the U.S. Many Irish Americans entered politics on a national scale such as Alfred Smith, though the ultimate political success of the Irish Americans came in 1961, when John F. Kennedy, a third-

generation Irish American, became President. Others fought against growing oppression from the KKK. While many Irish Americans directly represented bootleggers that made their money from prohibition.

In 1924, the U.S. issued new immigration legislation that restricted many immigrants, and included a quota to put a cap on the many “foreigners” the government wanted to keep out. Perhaps the government became tired of appeasing such powerful minority groups such as the Irish and the Germans. The government also grew wary of the increasing social and political threats immigrants brought with them. The Irish had a much more difficult time immigrating to America after 1924, and thus, the Irish question no longer served to attract so many Irish Americans. Irish Americans had their own lives to live as American citizens.¹⁶⁶

Irish Americans would revive their interest in Irish causes in the 1960’s and 1970’s mainly due to the Civil Rights Movement. By the mid 1990’s the U.S. government finally recognized that an Irish solution needed to be warranted by a larger, more powerful government. President Clinton stepped in to oversee the peace talks in Northern Ireland.

Irish Americans grew increasingly frustrated by their efforts to achieve freedom for Ireland. From 1914 to 1922, the Irish tried to rally the U.S. government behind the Irish cause. Their efforts remained ineffective. However, their support granted financial support, physical support, and political support for the native Irish. Their efforts did not go unnoticed by the native Irish. Irish American nationalism increased in the early twentieth century to produce a united cause throughout the Irish American community, and to protect what they had left behind.

¹⁶⁶Daniels, Coming to America, 281.
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