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Title	Neutral diplomacy: an Irish perspective, 1939 - 1945
Authors	Murphy, Steven
Publication date	2016
Original Citation	Murphy, S. 2016. Neutral diplomacy: an Irish perspective, 1939 - 1945. PhD Thesis, University College Cork.
Type of publication	Doctoral thesis
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Download date	2026-10-13 15:35:08
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Neutral Diplomacy: An Irish Perspective, 1939 – 1945

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctorate (History)

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Submitted: September 2016

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Declaration

This is to certify that the work I am submitting is my own and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere. All external references and sources are clearly acknowledged and identified within the contents. I have read and understood the regulations of University College Cork concerning plagiarism

Signature: _____

Acknowledgements

I am greatly indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Mervyn O'Driscoll, for his constant support, encouragement and attention to detail throughout the course of my thesis. It was a privilege and an honour to have received his guidance and advice over the last few years.

I wish to thank the Department of History and all its staff, especially Deirdre O'Sullivan, Geraldine McAllister, Charlotte Holland and Dr. Detmar Klein for their assistance over the years. I am grateful for the opportunities I have received to tutor undergraduate students and for the funding I was provided to conduct research.

I would also like to acknowledge my deep gratitude for having been the recipient of the Diarmuid Whelan Memorial Scholarship 2014 – 2015. I had the honour of receiving lectures from Dr. Whelan and of attending a notable conference presentation of his at a BISA conference organised by UCC in 2006.

I am especially grateful to my fiancée, Gunnhildur Jónatansdóttir, for proof-reading this thesis and assisting me on research trips. Her unceasing support and love throughout this thesis will never be forgotten.

I wish to express my sincerest thanks to all my family and friends for their support, advice and patience, particularly my mother Breda, my father Brendan and my brother Darren, without whom I could not have reached this point.

Glossary and Abbreviations

Abwehr German foreign intelligence agency

Abwehr II German foreign intelligence sabotage division with responsibility for exploiting discontented national minorities in foreign countries

CIA Central Intelligence Agency

DEA Department of External Affairs (Contemporaneous title)

DFA Department of Foreign Affairs (Archival title)

DP Department of the President

DT Department of the Taoiseach

EOU Economic Objectives Unit

FO Foreign Office (British)

FRUS Foreign Relations of the United States

G2 Army intelligence directorate (late 1920s – late 1950s)

ICE Independent Commission of Experts, Switzerland

ICRC International Committee of the Red Cross

INDC Department of Industry and Commerce

IRA Irish Republican Army

MEW Ministry for Economic Warfare

NAI National Archives of Ireland

NARA US National Archives and Records Administration

OSS Office of Strategic Services

SNB Swiss National Bank

UCDA University College Dublin Archives

Introduction

The history of Ireland during the Second World War is a topic one would understandably be excused from thinking to have been explored *ad nauseam*.[1] A great body of scholarly research of Éire's wartime experience exists, ranging from studies on censorship, the Irish mercantile marine, espionage, the defence forces and supply difficulties. However, most wartime foreign policy analyses have focused on the country's relations with the belligerents.[2] This is true of most histories of Éire's wartime experience, and older accounts of Ireland's wartime history, which did not have the benefit of access to the archives, appear to have seen little value in exploring the country's relations outside those with the belligerents.[3] Comparatively few attempts have been made to explore Éire's relations with neutral states and international bodies.

No specific account of Ireland's relations with Switzerland exists. Michael Kennedy has written about Ireland and the League of Nations, which was based in Geneva, but his brief

[1] Ireland and Éire (the official Irish name) are used throughout this thesis for stylistic reasons. The Irish Constitution of 1937 changed the name of the state to Éire in Irish and Ireland in English. Éire (often spelled Eire) was the name used by successive British governments until the Belfast Agreement of 1998 to avoid any interpretation or suggestion that the 26 counties of Éire had a territorial claim to the 6 counties of Northern Ireland. See Mary E. Daly, 'The Irish Free State/Éire/Republic of Ireland/Ireland: "A Country by Any Other Name"?', *Journal of British Studies* (Vol. 46, No. 1, January 2007), pp. 72-90.

[2] For some specific histories of Ireland's relations with belligerent states see Seán Cronin, *Washington's Irish Policy 1916 – 1986: Independence, Partition, Neutrality* (Anvil Books, 1987); John P. Duggan, *Neutral Ireland and the Third Reich* (Gill & MacMillan, 1985); John P. Duggan, *Herr Hempel at the German Legation in Dublin 1937 – 1945* (Irish Academic Press, 2003); Ian S. Wood, *Britain, Ireland and the Second World War* (Edinburgh University Press, 2010); Carolle J. Carter, *The Shamrock and the Swastika: German Espionage in Ireland in World War II* (Pacific Books, 1977); Mark M. Hull, *Irish Secrets: German Espionage in Ireland, 1939 – 1945* (Irish Academic Press, 2003); Eunan O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland: British Intelligence and Irish Neutrality During the Second World War* (Oxford University Press, 2008); T. Ryle Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain: Ireland's Phoney Neutrality During World War II* (Gill & Macmillan, 2009) which focuses almost exclusively on Irish relations with the Allies; and, Paola Ottonello, 'Irish-Italian Diplomatic Relations in World War II: The Irish Perspective', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 10, 1999), pp. 91-103.

[3] For example, see T. Desmond Williams, 'Ireland and the War', in T. Desmond Williams and Kevin B. Nowlan (eds.), *Ireland in the War Years and After* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1970), p. 14, in which he states that "[t]he story of Ireland's neutrality principally concerns relations with Britain, Germany, the United States, and, to a far lesser extent, with Italy and Japan".

account of the war period does not deal with Irish-Swiss relations themselves.[4] This author is unaware of any attention given to Swedish connections. These gaps provide the greatest scope for the contribution of this thesis to knowledge. Dermot Keogh has written a chapter on Irish-Vatican relations during the war, but his focus was primarily on ecclesiastical concerns, leaving space for an exploration of the Vatican's value to Irish foreign policy during the war.[5] Another work of his explores Ireland and Europe, and a section of this book covers the war period, but this is a rather general overview which maintains a focus on the belligerents and was written prior to the release of key archival material.[6] More recently, Filipe de Meneses has written two articles on Irish-Portuguese relations, which provide a decent account of the diplomatic relations between the countries.[7] What is absent, however, is a consideration of the practical benefits the Lisbon legation provided Dublin logistically and this will be explored here in detail. This author knows of one researcher examining Irish-Spanish issues during the Second World War,[8] but as yet no specific account of their relations during the period exists.[9]

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[4] Michael Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations, 1919 – 1946: International relations, diplomacy and politics* (Irish Academic Press, 1996).

[5] Dermot Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican: Diplomacy of Church-State Relations 1922 – 1960* (Cork University Press, 1995).

[6] Dermot Keogh, *Ireland and Europe, 1919 – 1948* (Gill & Macmillan Ltd., 1988).

[7] Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, 'Investigating Portugal, Salazar and the New State: The Work of the Irish Legation in Lisbon, 1942 – 1945', *Contemporary European History* (Vol. 11, No. 3, Aug. 2002), pp. 391-408; Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, 'Meeting Salazar: Irish dignitaries and diplomats in Portugal, 1942 – 1960', *Archivium Hibernicum* (Vol. 64, 2011), pp. 323-348.

[8] Barry Whelan has published three articles on specific issues, but they only generally touch on Irish-Spanish relations; Barry Whelan, 'The Experience of Basque Dissidents in Ireland during the Second World War', *International Journal of Iberian* Studies (Vol. 26, No. 3, September, 2013), pp. 201-210; Barry Whelan, De Valera and Franco: parallel lives, *Scoláire Staire* (Vol. 2, Issue 3, July, 2012), pp. 6-11; Barry Whelan, 'Ireland's Minister in Spain: L.H. Kerney's diplomatic efforts to secure the release of Frank Ryan', *Saothar – Journal of the Irish Labour History Society* (no. 37, 2012), pp. 73-83. He has also presented a number of papers on Irish-Spanish affairs, though he has not made these papers available. He informed this author that he intends to write an authoritative account of Ireland's Minister to Spain, Leopold Kerney, in the future.

[9] Scholarship on this topic has focused almost entirely on a single issue; Frank Ryan and the Irish government's attempts to secure his release from a Spanish prison. This issue is dealt with in Chapter 3. Generally, Irish-Spanish relations in the 20th century have not been well researched and most treatments that do exist revolve around the Spanish Civil War period. This point was also made in Mervyn O'Driscoll and Dermot Keogh, 'Ireland's Military Engagement in Spain and Hispano-Irish Military Cooperation in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries', in Hugo O'Donnell (ed.), *Prescencia Irlandesa en la Milicia Española/The Irish Presence in the Spanish Military – 16th to 20th Centuries* (International Commission of Military History, 2014), p. 135.

The genesis of this thesis was a desire to bridge these gaps in the discourse and to explore the role Irish diplomats and representatives in the other neutral states played during the war. Over the course of researching this topic, however, this author found ample evidence that the Irish government accumulated large volumes of information on the neutrality policies and practices of the other European neutrals, both historically and contemporaneously, and this information influenced and informed the actions and decisions of Irish policy-makers. The Second World War was the first major conflict to test the fledgling state. Éire implemented neutrality but lacked experience. Consequently, the other European neutral states which successfully maintained their neutrality became increasingly important sources of information for the Irish government. By assessing their policies, actions and experiences the Irish government armed itself with useful examples of how to conduct a successful neutrality policy. Though diplomatically and geographically on the periphery of continental developments, Ireland was, nonetheless, affected by them. Irish sovereignty and neutrality faced a multiplicity of threats from both sets of belligerents throughout the war such as the possibility of invasion, supply difficulties, hostile propaganda and diplomatic pressure. Learning from their neutral counterparts was a significant element of the Department of External Affairs' (DEA) reactions to these concerns. Irish legations in Switzerland, Portugal, the Holy See, and Spain became important listening posts for Dublin and information obtained from them was of practical importance vis-à-vis supply issues, internment policies and censorship. Logistically, the continental neutrals were also crucial to the maintenance of communications with Irish diplomats in Axis territory.

Accordingly, this thesis will examine in detail the linkages between the Irish state and the other successful European neutrals with which it had some form of meaningful interaction: Switzerland, Sweden, the Holy See, Portugal, and Spain. Of these, Spain is the most problematic as the country vacillated between neutrality and official non-

belligerency, in favour of the Axis, during the war. Though the Irish government had little to learn from Spain regarding neutrality,[10] Spain is included here because the Irish legation in Madrid was an important logistical hub and it was a frequent source of controversies which could have seriously affected international perceptions of Irish neutrality. Linkages to other neutrals who did not retain their sovereignty during the war will also be given voice where appropriate. Turkey is not included as Ireland and Turkey had no meaningful interactions and the Irish government showed virtually no interest in Turkey's neutrality. Neutrals from outside Europe are excluded because the Irish government showed very limited interest in the application of their neutrality policies.

This thesis makes original contributions to knowledge in a number of ways. First it is the only comprehensive examination of Ireland's relations with all the other European neutral states that survived the Second World War with their neutrality intact. Second, it uncovers that the Irish government sought to learn best practice vis-à-vis neutrality from its neutral colleagues and what it learned influenced and informed the thinking of Irish policy-makers. Third, the thesis includes the first attempt to map the Irish communications network on the continent during the war. Finally, it highlights the important role Irish diplomats in neutral postings, and External Affairs' Legal Advisor, had on the formulation and maintenance of Irish neutrality. The other neutrals were far more important to the formulation and maintenance of Irish neutrality during the Second World War than has been previously recognised. Ireland's neutrality policy was also not as unique in its implementation as policy-makers in the Department of External Affairs envisaged at the out-set of the war. Through a gradual process of learning, Ireland's neutrality policy was progressively brought into closer alignment with the other European neutrals. Many issues

[10] In fact, the only diplomatic exchange of note, regarding Irish-Spanish relations, was an unconvincing proposal by Franco to form a league of neutral states "around a core bloc of Catholic neutrals", see O'Driscoll and Keogh, 'Ireland's Military Engagement in Spain', p. 187.

the Irish government faced during the war shared important similarities with the neutrals under examination here. This is not to say that Ireland's geo-strategic position was the same as its neutral colleagues, but the Irish faced a significant number of comparable challenges in defence of their neutrality.

Relevance to the Field

Broadly speaking, this study not only fits amongst other examinations of modern Irish history, but also within the general field of small state studies, which has experienced peaks and troughs of academic interest since post-war decolonisation.[11] Until the latter half of the 1990s, however, the European neutrals of the Second World War received relatively scant international attention.[12] Prior to that period, the historiography of the war was, understandably, primarily focused on the belligerent nations and examinations of wartime neutrality were "only of limited attraction to historians and of very little consequence to politicians and the media".[13] Since then, the policies of the European neutrals during the war — Switzerland in particular — have come under an unprecedented level of scrutiny. The overwhelming majority of this research has been country specific and only a few comparative treatments exist.[14]

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[11] For a brief history of small state studies in general, see Iver B. Neumann and Sieglinde Gstöhl, 'Introduction: Lilliputians in Gulliver's World', in Christine Ingebritsen, Iver Neumann, Sieglinde Gstöhl and Jessica Beyer (eds.), *Small States in International Relations* (University of Iceland Press, 2006), pp. 3-36. This author undertook a post-graduate diploma in Small State Studies at Háskóli Íslands (University of Iceland) during the course of this doctorate, and also interned at the Institute of International Affairs – Centre for Small State Studies in the same academic institution.

[12] This does not mean that domestic scholarly attention was absent within the neutral states. For example, there was a spike in domestic interest in Sweden on the country's wartime record during the 70s and 80s; see Johan Östling, 'The Rise and Fall of Small-State Realism: Sweden and the Second World War', in Henrik Stenius, Mirja Österberg and Johan Östling (eds.), *Nordic Narratives of the Second World War: National Historiographies Revisited* (Nordic Academic Press, 2011), p. 130.

[13] Christian Leitz, 'Swiss and Irish Neutrality in the Second World War – Comparisons and Contrasts', *Yearbook of the Centre for Irish-German Studies* (2000/01), p. 64.

[14] Neville Wylie similarly noted the paucity of books focused on a broad range of neutrals in a compendium of essays which he edited on the subject, see Neville Wylie (ed.), *European Neutrals and Non-Belligerents during the Second World War* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 3n. For other examples (which vary in their depth of analysis), see Christian Leitz, *Sympathy for the Devil: Neutral Europe and Nazi Germany in*

This thesis positions itself between both approaches by examining a single neutral state based on its government's contemporaneous knowledge of its own comparative position. In other words, it explores what the Irish government knew of the actions, policies and opinions of the other neutrals and how this knowledge influenced and informed Irish policy-making. No such attempt has thus far been made in the historiography of the Second World War. This thesis distinguishes itself within Irish historiography by focusing on Ireland's relations with the other neutrals

The approach this thesis takes is important because it challenges the unfortunate myopia of historical accounts of Ireland during the war. Major debates within the field suffer from a failure to place the Irish wartime experience in a broader, and more appropriate, historical context. This is most apparent amongst authors who propagate the view that Ireland was not neutral during the war. The arguments presented in this thesis resonate with an article written by Karen Devine which defended Irish wartime neutrality against the charge that it did not *de facto* exist.[15] A number of authors, commentators and politicians, have cited Allied-Irish intelligence sharing, the release of Allied internees, and assistance to Allied aircraft and aircrews as evidence of Ireland's Allied-friendly non-belligerence.[16] Trevor

World War II (New York University Press, 2001); Herbert R. Reginbogin, *Faces of Neutrality: A Comparative Analysis of the Neutrality of Switzerland and other Neutral Nations during World War II* (Translated by Ulrike Seeberger and Jane Britten, LIT Verlag, 2009); Jerrold M. Packard, *Neither Friend Nor Foe: The European Neutrals in World War II* (Maxwell Macmillan International, 1992); Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (The University of Chicago Press, 1959); Arnold Toynbee and Veronica Toynbee (eds.), *The War and the Neutrals* (Oxford University Press, 1956); and, Efraim Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States* (Routledge, 1988).

[15] Karen Devine, 'A Comparative Critique of the Practice of Irish Neutrality in the 'Unneutral' Discourse', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 19, 2008), pp. 73-97.

[16] Salmon, *Unneutral Ireland*, p. 8; Doherty, *Ireland, neutrality and European security integration*, p. 13; Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, p. 345, in which Dwyer concluded that "it is inaccurate to call that policy neutrality; it was determined non-belligerency"; Garret Fitzgerald, 'The origin, development and present status of Irish "neutrality"', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 9, 1998), p. 13; Harold J. Kearsley, 'Irish neutrality and the state, past, present and prospects', in Jouko Huru, Olli-Pekka Jalonen and Michael Sheehan (eds.), *New dimensions of security in Central and Southeastern Europe* (Tampere, 1998), p. 172; Roger MacGinty, 'Almost like talking dirty: Irish security policy in post-Cold War Europe', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 6, 1995), p. 129; Garret Fitzgerald, 'A myth of "traditional neutrality" developed from the Irish decision to be a non-belligerent in the Second World War', *Irish Times*, 21 October 1997; Garret Fitzgerald, 'Wartime neutrality theoretical rather than real', *Irish Times*, 29 January 2005; Stephen Collins, 'Casting off the imaginary cloak of neutrality', *Sunday Tribune*, 23 March 2003; Stephen Collins,

Salmon and T. Ryle Dwyer have both written books which specifically question Irish neutrality during the war. While Salmon adapted the chapter title ‘‘Unneutral Neutral Eire’ or Non-Belligerent Ireland?’ from an earlier article of R. M. Smylie,[17] Dwyer subtitled his book ‘Ireland’s Phoney Neutrality During World War II’. This debate is important as Irish neutrality is overwhelmingly popular in Ireland, and concern for the protection of this foreign policy option was a significant contributor to the Irish electorates’ initial rejection, by referenda, of the European Union treaties of Nice (2001) and Lisbon (2008).[18] Devine criticised the methodological approach taken by those advancing the ‘unneutral’ Ireland discourse for not examining the actual practices of other neutral states in detail and for taking their adherence to neutral obligations almost on faith.

Invariably, these commentators point to breaches of the rules and obligations of neutrals, as established under The Hague Conventions, made by the Irish government to prove Irish non-belligerence and dispel notions of Irish neutrality. Methodologically narrow in scope, however, their treatments are not justified by comparative analysis or a consideration of the contemporaneous state of neutrality during the period. The First World War altered how neutrality was understood. Maartje Abbenhuis has argued that, during the First World War, as total warfare on a global scale replaced the more localised wars of the past, neutral states could no longer avoid becoming embroiled in hostilities and belligerent states ran

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‘Our sham neutrality has finally been exposed’, *Sunday Tribune*, 30 March 2003; Rory Keane, ‘Neutrality nothing but a “group think” mantra’, *Irish Times*, 30 July 2004.

[17] R. M. Smylie, ‘Unneutral Neutral Éire’, *Foreign Policy* (Vol. 24, No. 2, January 1946), pp. 317-326.

[18] In referenda on successive EU treaties since the Single European Act (1987), fears surrounding the impact of these treaties on Irish neutrality have consistently ranked in the top two reasons behind a voter’s decision to vote against the treaty. See Karen Devine, ‘‘The Myth of Irish Neutrality’: Deconstructing Concepts of Irish Neutrality using International Relations Theories’, *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 17, 2006), pp. 116-117; and, Karen Devine, ‘Irish Neutrality and the Lisbon Treaty’ (Paper presented at “Neutrality: Irish Experience, European Experience” Conference organised by the Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity College, Dublin and Dublin Monthly Meeting [Quakers] Peace Committee, 8/9 May 2009). http://doras.dcu.ie/14898/1/Irish_Neutrality_and_the_Lisbon_Treaty.pdf [cited 10-09-16]

roughshod over neutral rights in pursuit of their national interests and security.[19] Prior to that point, neutral states could seek to avoid notice and remain unentangled in conflicts between other powers. Circumstances, however, had changed, and, in tandem with the failure of collective security through the League of Nations, this altered international landscape is the appropriate context in which neutrality during the Second World War should be judged.[20] Prior to September 1939, the Legal Advisor in Ireland's Department of External Affairs examined the actions of the other neutrals during the First World War, and was well aware that breaches of The Hague Conventions did not necessarily equate to the abandonment of neutrality. Most, if not all, of the European neutrals that successfully maintained their neutrality during the Second World War subsequently breached The Hague Conventions in various ways; some more egregiously than Ireland. Nonetheless, with the exception of Spain's vacillation between neutrality and non-belligerence, all were considered neutral states by the belligerents. In fact, Madelon de Keizer has made the argument that Dutch neutrality was primarily unsuccessful because of a failure to appreciate the importance of concessions, flexibility and pragmatism.[21] Therefore, the premise of the 'unneutral Ireland' argument "effectively defines neutrality out of existence",[22] by failing to appreciate neutrality during this period in its proper historical context. Counter to their claims, Ireland was neutral during the Second World War, and the country's neutrality policy compares favourably to the other European neutrals.

[19] See Maartje Abbenhuis, 'Not Silent Nor Silenced: Neutrality and the First World War', in José-Leonardo Ruiz Sánchez, Inmaculada Cordero Olivero, Carolina García Sanz (eds.), *Shaping neutrality throughout the First World War* (Editorial Universidad de Sevilla, 2015), pp. 17-36.

[20] In support of this point see Abbenhuis, 'Not Silent Nor Silenced: Neutrality and the First World War', p. 34, which highlights the altered environment due to the experiences of the First World War; Jukka Nevakivi, 'Finnish Neutrality', in Jukka Nevakivi (ed.), *Neutrality in History: Proceedings of the Conference on the History of Neutrality, Helsinki 1992*, (Finnish Historical Society, 1993), p. 42, which makes the argument that rigid doctrinal neutrality only exists in theory and when evaluating neutrality "the relevant circumstances" must be taken into account.

[21] Madelon de Keizer, 'Dutch Neutrality in the Thirties: Voluntary or Imposed?', in Louis-Edouard Roulet (ed.), *Les États Neutres Européens et la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (Université de Neuchâtel, 1985), pp. 177-194.

[22] Devine, 'A Comparative Critique of the Practice of Irish Neutrality in the 'Unneutral' Discourse', p. 76.

Remarkably, advocates of the non-belligerent Éire thesis typically recognise the wartime neutrality of Sweden and Switzerland. As this thesis shows, the government saw itself as a respectable neutral state and actively sought to learn from the policies and practices of the other neutrals.

In challenging this narrative by comprehensively exploring Ireland's relations with the other European neutrals for the first time, this thesis allies itself to recent academic scholarship that has attempted to place Ireland's wartime neutrality within a broader international perspective. Bryce Evan's recent book, *Ireland during the Second World War: Farewell to Plato's Cave,*[23] assessed the social and economic realities in Ireland during the war and compared them to the other European neutrals which maintained their independence. Critical of the absence of broader contextualisation in Irish wartime historiography, Evans noted that "[t]he clear similarities between Ireland and the other neutral European states defy the sometimes stultifying narrative of Irish exceptionalism".[24] Eunan O'Halpin has similarly challenged the narrow prism through which most historians have examined Anglo-Irish relations during the war in his book *Spying on Ireland: British Intelligence and Irish Neutrality During the Second World War*.[25] O'Halpin refers to similarities between the British position regarding the German legation's radio transmitter in Ireland and their position on an Axis radio transmitter in Afghanistan. He also argued that the 'American Note' crisis of February 1944, in which the Allies demanded the removal of the Axis legations in Ireland, should be seen in a wider context of Allied pressure against other neutrals. The arguments presented here also resonate with an article written by Karen Devine which defended Irish wartime neutrality against the charge that it

[23] Bryce Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War: Farewell to Plato's Cave* (Manchester University Press, 2014).
[24] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 4.
[25] Eunan O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland: British Intelligence and Irish Neutrality During the Second World War* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

did not *de facto* exist.[26] A number of authors, commentators and politicians have challenged the view that Ireland was neutral during the Second World War due to Ireland's benevolent assistance to the Allies in intelligence sharing, releasing Allied internees, permitting overflights of a section of County Donegal, and assisting Allied aircraft that had made forced landings to take-off once again when possible. This debate is important as Irish neutrality is overwhelmingly popular in Ireland, and concern for the protection of this foreign policy option was a significant contributor to the Irish electorates' initial rejection, by referenda, of the European Union treaties of Nice (2001) and Lisbon (2008).[27] Devine criticised the methodological approach taken by those advancing the 'unneutral' Ireland discourse for not examining the actual practices of other neutral states in detail and for taking their adherence to neutral obligations almost on faith. Like Devine's article, this thesis concludes that the violations of neutrality perpetrated by Switzerland, Sweden, Spain and Portugal show Irish neutrality to have been more inviolable in some crucial aspects.

The above methodological and perspectival criticisms are, in fact, not new. As early as 1959, Annette Baker Fox made a similar criticism in her book *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II*. In presenting a comparative account of small states in the Second World War, Baker Fox stated that "[p]revious narratives have usually been *ex parte*, providing no depth of understanding about what went on except from the point of view of a single participant".[28] This thesis adds its support to these calls for broader

[26] Karen Devine, 'A Comparative Critique of the Practice of Irish Neutrality in the 'Unneutral' Discourse', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 19, 2008), pp. 73-97.
[27] In referenda on successive EU treaties since the Single European Act (1987), fears surrounding the impact of these treaties on Irish neutrality have consistently ranked in the top two reasons behind a voter's decision to vote against the treaty. See Karen Devine, ''The Myth of Irish Neutrality': Deconstructing Concepts of Irish Neutrality using International Relations Theories', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 17, 2006), pp. 116-117; and, Karen Devine, 'Irish Neutrality and the Lisbon Treaty' (Paper presented at "Neutrality: Irish Experience, European Experience" Conference organised by the Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity College, Dublin and Dublin Monthly Meeting [Quakers] Peace Committee, 8/9 May 2009). http://doras.dcu.ie/14898/1/Irish_Neutrality_and_the_Lisbon_Treaty.pdf [cited 10-09-16]
[28] Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States*, p. 7.

contextualisation and it shows throughout that the Irish government was very aware of its comparative neutral position during the war.

Methodology

Methodologically, this doctorate is a thematic analysis, organised chronologically, incorporating comparative elements. While comparisons are used to provide context, the main aim of the thesis is to highlight and analyse comparisons with the other neutrals made by the Irish government contemporaneously, and the effect this information had on Irish policy-making. This is an important distinction to make as this thesis does not purport to be a strictly retrospective comparative account of the European neutrals. The Irish government was not fully aware of every action taken by the other neutrals or all of the measures taken by the belligerents to attempt to force concessions from them. The government made decisions based on the information that was available.

The thesis is heavily based on primary archival research at the National Archives of Ireland, Dublin. The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) 200 file series provided the greatest wealth of information regarding External Affairs' interest in the other neutrals, which was supported by files contained in the 300 and 400 series, the Embassies series and the Department's Secretary files. Crucial information pertaining to the formulation and defence of Irish neutrality was found in the Legal Advisor's papers, which have yet to receive the prominence they deserve in Irish wartime historiography. Research trips to the Military Archives of Ireland in Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin, supplemented material found in the National Archives pertaining to the forced landing of belligerent aircraft. Files accessed in the University College Dublin Archives, meanwhile, provided greater insight into the establishment of Éire's censorship policy. International trips to the National

Archives in London (UK), and the National Archives and Records Administration in Maryland (USA) further advanced this author's research into the belligerent aircraft issue and provided greater detail regarding Allied pressure on Éire and the other neutrals in general. To a lesser extent, this author acquired Swiss archival documents from the Swiss Federal Archives, which contained reports from the Swiss Chargé d'Affaires in Dublin. Digital archival material from the United States and the League of Nations in Geneva and valuable published primary material, such as the *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy* series and the Army Chief of Staff Reports for the war period, were also utilised.[29]

Structure

The thesis is structured into three thematic sections containing two chapters each, and each section is chronologically organised. The first section explores how the Irish government established neutrality, and the first chapter traces the development of Irish neutrality from aspiration to formulation. Though neutral inclinations and desires are identifiable in Irish political thought from before the creation of the Irish Free State (1922) through to the Second World War, serious consideration towards the implementation of neutrality was not given until the months prior to the war. This was largely due to the fact that, until 1938, when the British government handed over three key shipping ports in Éire to Irish control, Irish neutrality in a major European conflict was not feasible. After the resolution of the ports issue, the Irish government's desire to remain neutral in the impending war was espoused publicly and tentative planning to implement and protect neutrality began. The

[29] Caitriona Crowe and Ronan Fanning and Michael Kennedy and Dermot Keogh and Eunan O'Halpin (eds.), *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy: Volume V, 1937 – 1939* (Royal Irish Academy, 2006); Crowe et al., *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy: Volume VI, 1939 – 1941* (Royal Irish Academy, 2008); Crowe et al., *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy: Volume VII, 1941 – 1945* (Royal Irish Academy, 2010); Michael Kennedy and Victor Laing (eds.), *The Irish Defence Forces 1940 – 1949: the Chief of Staff's Reports* (Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2011).

chapter also highlights that Ireland's neutrality policy was not formulated in a vacuum as policy-makers drew on international norms and were informed by knowledge of the other neutrals' policies. The second chapter argues that the expansion and re-configuration of the Irish diplomatic network in continental Europe during the early war period was, to a significant degree, instigated to profit from interactions with other neutral states.

The second section investigates the Irish government's efforts to maintain and defend neutrality between 1939 and 1944. The section begins with the third chapter which explores the threats to Irish interests and the country's independence until late 1942, when dangers were somewhat symmetrically balanced between the belligerents. The chapter also assesses Dublin's attempts to mitigate threats to neutrality through censorship. Irish censorship was comparably more severe than the other neutrals, due to the government's decision to neutralise opinion within the country, to use political censorship as a security mechanism,[30] and to protect the morals and culture of Éire's conservative society as determined by the government and the Catholic Church.[31] Rather than rake over old ground regarding Ireland's wartime censorship, this chapter uncovers how information on censorship policies in other neutral states informed Irish policy-makers during the formulation of the country's highly restrictive policy. The fourth chapter focuses on the practical benefits Éire accrued from closer contact with fellow small neutrals as a consequence of diplomatic expansion. More effective methods for the protection of shipping, for example, were discovered by examining the actions of the other neutrals and closer contact permitted modest collaboration on supply difficulties. External Affairs' communications network through neutral states was also important as it facilitated the maintenance of contact between Dublin and Irish diplomats in Axis territory. As this chapter shows, the value of Irish legations in

[30] See Donal Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland, 1939 – 1945: Neutrality, Politics and Society* (Cork University Press, 1996), p. 6.
[31] Ibid., pp. 1-2.

the neutral states regarding practical concerns affecting the maintenance of neutrality has not been given sufficient attention by historians.

The final section concentrates on the period after the winter of 1942/43, when an Allied victory grew increasingly likely. The fifth chapter uncovers how the Irish government adapted and justified benevolent policies regarding Allied overflights and the treatment of their aircrews based on what they knew of the other neutrals' policies and practices. Though this area has been researched by other historians,[32] they have failed to recognise the importance Dublin's knowledge of the actions of the other neutrals had on Irish policy. It also expands on evidence of Irish collaboration with the Allies in formulating procedures for the release of Allied aircrews and the removal of secret equipment. The final chapter highlights Irish diplomatic responses to increased Allied pressure in the final phases of the war. In the latter half of 1944, Irish actions were consciously brought into closer alignment with those of the other neutrals. However, despite following what they believed to be a successful Swiss formula in responding to an Allied *demarché* regarding Axis war criminals, the Irish government still received criticism. This may have precipitated Éire's deviation from alignment with the other neutrals regarding protocol after the death of Adolf Hitler. Rather than proactively sound out their neutral colleagues before making an official courtesy call at the home of the German Minister in Dublin, the government retroactively ascertained their positions, which did not correspond with Irish actions. In the aftermath of

[32] Paul Browne, *Eagles Over Ireland* (Paul Browne and Flying Fortress Athenry 1943 Project, 2003); T. Ryle Dwyer, *Irish Neutrality and the USA, 1939 – 47* (Gill & MacMillan, 1977); T. Ryle Dwyer, *Guests of the State: The story of Allied and Axis servicemen interned in Ireland during World War II* (Brandon Book Publishers Ltd., 1994); T. Ryle Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*; Robert Fisk, *In Time of War: Ireland, Ulster and the Price of Neutrality 1939 – 1945* (Gill & Macmillan, 1983); Joe McGowan, 'The Donegal Corridor and the Battle of the Atlantic', *History Ireland* (Vol. 11, No. 2, Summer 2003). Eunan O'Halpin, *Defending Ireland: The Irish State And Its Enemies Since 1922* (Oxford University Press, 1999); Eunan O'Halpin, 'Irish-Allied Security Relations and the 'American Note' Crisis: New Evidence from British Records', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 11, 2000), pp. 71-83; O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*; Trevor C. Salmon, *Unneutral Ireland: An Ambivalent and Unique Security Policy* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989).

the war, the Irish government broke entirely from their practice of consulting the other neutrals when faced with further Allied diplomatic pressure as the country entered a new international landscape.

In concluding the findings of this thesis, some space is also given to their impact on modern debates surrounding Ireland's neutrality in the Second World War. A significant number of academics, politicians and media commentators have called into question the very existence of Irish neutrality during the war by proffering the view that Ireland was non-belligerent in favour of the Allies. As the arguments presented here demonstrate, however, this is certainly not in tune with the Irish government's appreciation of its own comparative position during the war, and even basic comparisons of the other neutrals' war records show that their contentions do not stand up to scrutiny.

Section I

Establishing Irish Neutrality

Chapter 1:

Preparing for War and Irish Neutral Policy Formulation, 1937 – 1940

Introduction

This chapter explores the formulation of Ireland's neutrality policy from vague aspiration to codified policy and implementation. Treatments of this critical juncture have typically focused on the political imperatives which underpinned Irish neutrality. Pragmatism, desires for an independent foreign policy to assert sovereignty, domestic security concerns tied to anti-British sentiment, a sense of injustice regarding the partition of Northern Ireland, and a moral stance against involvement in big power conflicts, have all been advanced by historians as interwoven or independent rationales for Irish neutrality.[1] Neutrality was "the ultimate exhibition of Ireland's international sovereignty",[2] which was a key foreign policy goal of Éamon de Valera. It was also a "watershed in the starved

[1] See Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 75-76; Diarmuid Ferriter, *The Transformation of Ireland 1900 – 2000* (Profile Books, 2004), pp. 388-390; Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, pp. 3-4; Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, pp. 1-14; and, Thomas E. Hachey, 'The Rhetoric and Reality of Irish Neutrality', *New Hibernia Review/Iris Éireannach Nua* (Vol. 6, No. 4, Winter, 2002), pp. 31-32, in which the authors outline most or all of these causes as determinants of Éire's neutrality. O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, pp. 46-47 and Ronan Fanning, 'Irish Neutrality: An Historical Review', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 1, No. 3, 1982), p. 28, identify anti-British sentiment or the antipathies towards the British amongst certain sections of the Irish public and some government ministers as the *raison d'être* for Irish neutrality. Dermot Keogh, *Twentieth Century Ireland: Revolution and State Building* (Revised Edition with Andrew McCarthy, Gill & Macmillan, 2005), p. 110-111, argues that Irish neutrality was an exercise in *Realpolitik* and a pragmatic calculation based on Ireland's inability to effectively contribute to the war or defend against attack. Brian Girvin, *The Emergency: Neutral Ireland 1939 – 45* (Macmillan, 2006), pp. 62-64, focuses on domestic security concerns. J. J. Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985: Politics and Society* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 243, points to a pragmatic calculation based on military weakness and a desire to maintain independence by remaining outside the conflict.

[2] Michael Kennedy, 'The Foundation and Consolidation of Irish Foreign Policy: 1919 – 1945', in Ben Tonra, Michael Kennedy, John Doyle and Noel Dorr (eds.), *Irish Foreign Policy* (Gill and Macmillan, 2012), p. 30.

political relationship between Dublin and Belfast",[3] which added to the divisions between the North and the South. The policy's formulation has been credited to de Valera, "the architect of Irish neutrality",[4] and Joseph P. Walshe, the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs.[5] Brief mention has also been made of the contributions of the Assistant Secretary, Frederick H. Boland, the Department's Legal Advisor, Michael Rynne, and Walshe's Private Secretary, Sheila Murphy.[6] This chapter argues that in formulating Éire's neutrality policy, External Affairs' close watch on the actions of the other neutrals was of significant importance. It will be shown that, in the immediate pre-war period, reports on the international situation from Irish diplomats stationed in traditional neutral states were read with much interest in Dublin. Tentative examinations of their preparations for war were undertaken, which increased in volume after the war began.

Historical accounts of the period immediately following the Irish decision to remain neutral typically explore the enactment of emergency legislation and Éire's relationships with the belligerents. Though a number mention the Hague Conventions as the international legal framework upon which Éire and other states based their neutrality, examinations of Irish interpretations of their rights and duties are conspicuous by their absence. The importance of External Affairs' Legal Advisor to policy formulation has also gone relatively unremarked. Aengus Nolan has claimed that: "[i]nformation surrounding the initial formulation of the policy of neutrality is lacking, and it remains unclear what preparations had been made for the implementation of that policy".[7] As this chapter will

[3] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 101.
[4] Karsh, *Neutrality and Small States*, p. 167.
[5] See Aengus Nolan, *Joseph Walshe: Irish Foreign Policy 1922 – 1946* (Mercier Press, 2008), p. 133, which describes Walshe as one of "the two main protagonists in the formulation and execution of Irish foreign policy" during the war; the other was Éamon de Valera. Also see Dermot Keogh, 'Joseph Walshe, Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs, 1922 – 46', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 3, No. 2, 1990), pp. 59-80, which highlights Walshe's control over his Department to an extent that occasionally irritated Irish diplomats in the field.
[6] Crowe et al., *DIFP: VI, 1939 – 1941*, p. xi.
[7] Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 131.

reveal, this claim is not quite accurate. Much information relating to Ireland's neutrality formulation exists within the papers of External Affairs' Legal Advisor, Michael Rynne.[8] What caused Nolan's error, perhaps, was the lack of a definitive codified policy, which, as this thesis shows, was a purposeful feature of Irish foreign policy under the direction of de Valera and Walshe. Their views were, nonetheless, supported by foundations laid down by Rynne. Though his influence on policy-making was significant, his role within the Department during the war has received scant attention. Ireland's neutrality policy was not formulated in a vacuum and Rynne assessed and analysed much of the documentation External Affairs received from other neutral states.

It is not suggested here that the policies of these neutrals altered or determined Irish policy at the beginning of the war. While External Affairs possessed much material on neutrality from the First World War, international legal texts on the rights and duties of neutrals, and reports on how the neutrals intended to defend their policies, they could not know how neutrality would be successfully maintained until later in the war. What is argued, is that the government's appreciation of actions in the other neutral states in the first months of the war solidified their importance to policy-making. Over the course of the war, their importance grew significantly.

To frame the argument, made both in this chapter and throughout this thesis, it is first necessary to briefly summarise the origins of Irish neutrality. Highlighting a number of key events during the 1930s, in particular, is crucial to any study of Irish wartime history.

[8] A former Irish Volunteer during the Irish Independence struggle who had served with Michael Collins and de Valera, Rynne earned a doctorate in law from Munich University in 1929 for a thesis in which he prophesised the return of the Treaty Ports to Ireland. He joined the Department of External Affairs in 1932 as Assistant Legal Advisor and replaced John Hearne as Legal Advisor in 1939. In 1951 he was appointed Assistant Secretary of External Affairs and later Ambassador to Spain from 1954 until 1961. See Crowe et al., *DIFP: VI, 1939 – 1941*, p. xxxi and Joseph McNabb and Michael Kennedy, 'Rynne, Michael Andrew Lysaght', *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge University Press, 2009). http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a7887 [accessed 20-02-16]

The Origins of Irish Neutrality

On 2 September 1939, a day prior to Britain's declaration of war against Germany, the Irish parliament — Dáil Éireann — affirmed Éire's neutrality in the impending war. Irish neutrality was both a pragmatic policy option and predictable. Éamon de Valera had publicly signalled Ireland's intention to remain outside an international conflict for some time prior to the war. Though Irish neutrality represented a further departure in Anglo-Irish relations,[9] it came as no surprise to London.[10] It was, in essence, the fulfilment of de Valera's goals in the 1930s to assert national sovereignty and independence in foreign policy making.[11]

Some authors trace the roots of Irish neutrality back to separatist and isolationist opinion in the early period of the 20th century, the anti-recruitment campaigns of the First World War, and the Irish independence struggle.[12] This view is supported by the failed Irish attempt, during the Anglo-Irish Treaty negotiations in 1921, to insert a neutrality clause for an Irish Free State in the event of a British declaration of war with another power.[13] However, these concepts of neutrality were predominantly associated with a desire to remain outside of British imperial wars.[14] Nationalistic anti-imperialist fervour should, therefore, not be categorised as representative of a specific neutral tradition in Ireland prior

[9] Éire was the only Dominion that did not follow Britain into the war. However, it was not the first instance of a British Dominion refusing to assist Britain in a war. In 1922 Canada refused to agree to British proposals to enter into war against Turkey during the Chanak Crisis. This incident was apparently not forgotten within the Department of External Affairs. See Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 75-76.
[10] See Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 117 and Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 105-106.
[11] Irish neutrality was "part and parcel of the goal of full sovereignty from Britain and the measure of Ireland as an independent state", see Róisín Doherty, *Ireland, neutrality and European security integration* (Aldershot, 2002), p. 31.
[12] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 75; Fanning, 'Irish Neutrality: An Historical Review', pp. 27-29.
[13] The proposal was rejected out of hand by the British negotiators who argued that a Dominion could not be neutral in a war in which Britain was involved, see Fanning, 'Irish Neutrality: An Historical Review', p. 29.
[14] Hachey, 'The Rhetoric and Reality of Irish Neutrality', pp. 27-28.

to the Second World War.[15] Éire's engagement with the concept of collective security through the League of Nations in the 1920s and 1930s also undercuts arguments along this line. The League was a body through which Ireland "had created an advocacy role for herself" in the inter-war years.[16] Whilst espousing Irish neutrality and "the camaraderie of small countries in resisting the warlike designs of the greater powers",[17] de Valera also indicated Ireland's willingness to actively partake in League actions against aggressor nations.[18]

Martha Kavanagh has argued, nonetheless, that Éire's enactment of neutrality in 1939 was "perfectly consistent with the development of Irish foreign policy at the League since the Free State became a Council member in 1930".[19] However, de Valera's support for military sanctions during the Abyssinian Crisis,[20] during which he expressed the view to the 1936 League Assembly that economic sanctions could only be effective if the League was prepared to support them by military action, again undermines such a view.[21] Kavanagh's argument has also been challenged by Thomas Hachey, who has stated that:

> There is little evidence in the press, the Dáil debates, or in the published documents on Irish foreign policy to support those who continue to perceive any general disposition toward, or possibly some formulation of, an Irish policy of military neutrality prior to 1936.[22]

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[15] See John A. Murphy, 'Irish neutrality in historical perspective', in Brian Girvin and Geoffrey Roberts (eds.), *Ireland and the Second World War: Politics, Society and Remembrance* (Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 9-10.
[16] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 186.
[17] David Fitzpatrick, *The Two Irelands: 1912 – 1939* (Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 151.
[18] See O'Halpin, *Defending Ireland*, p. 135.
[19] Martha Kavanagh, 'The Irish Free State and Collective Security, 1930 – 6', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 15, 2004), p. 103.
[20] A conflict between Italy and the Empire of Ethiopia (Abyssinia), during which Mussolini's Italy conquered and subsumed Abyssinia into Italian East Africa. League sanctions were limited and did not prevent Italian actions, see Peter J. Beck, 'The League of Nations and the Great Powers, 1936 – 1940', *World Affairs* (Vol. 157, No. 4, Woodrow Wilson and the League of Nations: Part One, Spring 1995), pp. 175-189.
[21] De Valera: "Let us face the fact that economic and financial sanctions can be made effective only if we are prepared to back them up by military measures", see National Archives of Ireland (NAI) Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) 26/94, Copy of speech by Éamon de Valera to League Assembly, 2 July 1936. See also Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 221; Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 68; and, Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, pp. 57-58.
[22] Thomas E. Hachey, 'Nuanced Neutrality and Irish Identity: An Idiosyncratic Legacy', in Thomas E. Hachey (ed.), *Turning Points in Twentieth-Century Irish History* (Irish Academic Press, 2011), p. 81.

Michael Kennedy's nuanced argument is, perhaps, most accurate. Kennedy stated that de Valera put faith in the League until 1935, but that his support for sanctions during the Abyssinian Crisis was a test; if the League failed it, de Valera was prepared to turn away from the League as a security body.[23] Patrick Keatinge has also expressed the view that Irish neutral aspirations were ambiguous and would have been negated by League military action had it occurred. He stated that neutrality only became the "aim of state policy" after the League's failure during the Abyssinian Crisis.[24] For de Valera, therefore, neutrality was conditional on the impotence of the League and it would be incorrect to point to a linear ideological neutral tradition since the foundations of the state.

Pessimism regarding the efficacy of the League of Nations to prevent another major conflict diminished the idealism of Irish support for collective security and internationalism as the government shifted focus towards nationalist self-reliance and realism.[25] Switzerland underwent a similar process. The Swiss modified their comprehensive neutrality policy in 1920 to accommodate active participation in the League.[26] Military neutrality was maintained, but their differentiated policy permitted involvement in economic sanctions.[27] However, due to deficiencies in the League the Swiss reverted to their comprehensive policy in 1938. Michael Kennedy notes that Irish disillusionment with the League can be seen in de Valera's speeches: "[w]here in 1932 he could speak of positive achievements to dispel his many criticisms, by 1935 de Valera seemed to be diagnosing the patient

[23] See Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, pp. 224-225.
[24] See Patrick Keatinge, *A Singular Stance: Irish neutrality in the 1980s* (Institute of Public Administration, 1984), pp. 14-15.
[25] Keogh made this point the title of a chapter, 'De Valera: Neutrality and the Retreat to Realism, 1939'. See Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 98.
[26] Laurent Goetschel and Magdalena Bernath and Daniel Schwarz, *Swiss Foreign Policy: Foundations and Possibilities* (Routledge, 2005), p. 15.
[27] Swiss military neutrality was recognised by the League's Council, on 13 February 1920, in the London Declaration, see Max Habicht, 'The Special Position of Switzerland in International Affairs', *International Affairs, Royal Institute of International Affairs* (Vol. 29, No. 4, Oct., 1953), p. 461.

terminally ill with no chance of a reprieve".[28] Ireland's Permanent Representative to the League of Nations in Geneva, Francis T. Cremins, also painted a pessimistic picture of the international situation due to the League's failings:

> Degeneration in the organisation of peace is obvious. Instead of a body of States reasonably armed, and bound together by treaty to settle disputes peacefully and to protect each other against aggression, all the major States and many of the smaller ones feel themselves forced to compete with their neighbours in armaments. Instead of States cultivating friendship with their neighbours, the old policy of making friends with next-neighbour-but-one is too often pursued, (e.g. France-Russia; Germany-Japan; Russia-China; Russia-Czechoslovakia; Germany-Italy; etc.), the result being a vicious policy of encirclement which settles nothing and renders distrust and eventual strife inevitable.[29]

Cremins, whom Kennedy described as a "realist",[30] sent regular reports to Dublin throughout the 1930s which consistently displayed an awareness of the League's impotence. Kennedy identified his reports as the reason for Ireland's "growing lack of faith in the League after 1935".[31] Subsequently, de Valera increasingly stated the desire of Éire to remain neutral in any future war and declarations of the government repeatedly "dwelt on sovereignty and self-determination, and the democratic rights of small nations".[32]

Whether or not Ireland could actually be neutral was far from clear in the mid-1930s. Ireland remained a Dominion of the British Empire, on which it was economically dependent, and which retained three key Irish ports at Queenstown (Cobh), Berehaven and Lough Swilly under the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty. The country's relationship with Britain was somewhat ambiguous prior to the Second World War. Since the enactment of the

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[28] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 207.
[29] NAI DFA 126/37, Francis T. Cremins to Walshe, 4 September 1937.
[30] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 191. Cremins was appointed Head of the League of Nations Section of External Affairs in 1929, the post he held until his assignment as Permanent Representative of Éire at the League in 1934. Kennedy appears to be the only historian who has assessed Cremins' career to any significant extent, though his focus pre-dates the Second World War. In addition to Kennedy's book on Ireland and the League of Nations, see also a brief CV of Cremins in Crowe et al., *DIFP: VI, 1939 – 1941*, p. xxiv, and the more in-depth Michael Kennedy, 'Cremins, Francis ('Frank') Thomas', *Dictionary of Irish Biography*.
http://dib.cambridge.org/quicksearch.do# [accessed 19-02-16]
[31] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 191.
[32] Clair Wills, *That Neutral Island: A Cultural History of Ireland During the Second World War* (Faber and Faber Limited, 2007), p. 344.

Statute of Westminster in 1931, the Dominions enjoyed equal status within the Commonwealth, thus effectively granting them sovereignty.[33] Between 1936 and 1937, the role of the Crown in Irish affairs reduced further. On 5 June 1936 the Executive Council (the *de facto* Cabinet of Irish Free State governments) took the formal decision to draft a new constitution, and a month later the Irish High Commissioner in London, John W. Dulanty, informed King Edward VIII of the Irish government's intentions. Later that year, de Valera took advantage of the abdication crisis — prompted by King Edward's decision to relinquish the throne, on 10 December 1936, so that he could marry divorcée Wallis Simpson — to pass the External Relations Act and a constitutional amendment in the Dáil.[34] These measures were a "milestone" in de Valera's efforts to revise British-Irish relations, and "enabled the external association of the Irish Free State with the Commonwealth".[35] They effectively eliminated the office of the Governor-General, some of whose powers were transferred to the Executive Council,[36] and removed almost all of the King's role in the existing constitution.[37] The King retained power over the appointment of Irish diplomatic representatives only. This "tenuous link with the Commonwealth" was maintained to satisfy Irish separatist opinion and to avoid direct confrontation with Britain.[38] During the war, the issue of appointing representatives of Éire was complicated by this compromise.

[33] Article 3 of The Statute of Westminster, 1931, states: "No Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom passed after the commencement of this Act shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to a Dominion as part of the law of that Dominion, unless it is expressly declared in that Act that that Dominion has requested, and consented to, the enactment thereof".
[34] See Keogh, *Twentieth Century Ireland*, pp. 98-99.
[35] Kennedy, 'The Foundation and Consolidation of Irish Foreign Policy: 1919 – 1945', in Tonra et. al, *Irish Foreign Policy*, p. 27.
[36] See Tim Pat Coogan, *De Valera: Long Fellow, Long Shadow* (Hutchinson, London, 1993), p. 486.
[37] The Governor-General was the representative of the British monarch in Ireland; the last of whom was Domhnall Ua Buachalla.
[38] John A. Murphy, *Ireland in the Twentieth Century* (Gill & Macmillan, 1975), p. 88.

Due to legal deficiencies in the rushed External Relations Act, a further provision was codified in June to remove the position of Governor-General entirely. The first draft of the new constitution was circulated in March 1937, and was enacted after a referendum on 1 July with 56% voting in its favour.[39] It replaced the King with a President of Ireland as head of state, who was to be elected by national vote.[40] Among a raft of new rights, the constitution granted the government executive authority over foreign policy and the Irish parliament power over decisions of war: "[w]ar shall not be declared and the State shall not participate in any war save with the assent of Dáil Éireann".[41] It is noteworthy that any direct reference to neutrality was omitted, thus lending further credence to the view that Ireland's subsequent wartime "neutrality was a means rather than an end".[42] The debate surrounding Éire's position in the Commonwealth led to a number of calls in Britain to expel the Irish Free State. However, as de Valera claimed the state was still a member, the British adopted a "policy of graceful acquiescence".[43] British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, found difficulty in accepting the idea of Ireland outside the Commonwealth and believed that to formally accept Irish neutrality would have posed a difficulty to maintaining the '"constitutional theory of the indivisibility of the Crown"'.[44] Nonetheless,

[39] The result of the referendum on the issue was: For 685,105 – Against 526,945. See Keogh, *Twentieth Century Ireland*, p. 99.
[40] Douglas Hyde, a former Senator, scholar and academic, was selected to be the first President of Ireland after inter-Party negotiations, and entered office on 25 June 1938. See Janet Egleson Dunleavy and Gareth W. Dunleavy, *Douglas Hyde: A Maker of Modern Ireland* (University of California Press, 1991), pp. 13-16.
[41] Article 28.3.1º, *Bunreacht na hÉireann* (Constitution of Ireland), p. 96. If the country were invaded, however, the government had the authority to "take whatever steps they may consider necessary for the protection of the State", Article 28.3.2º.
[42] Salmon, *Unneutral Ireland*, p. 122. Ronan Fanning emphasised this viewpoint: "For [de Valera], neutrality was merely a means to an end; the end was sovereignty and neutrality was simply the expression of a sovereignty that enabled Ireland to pursue a genuinely independent foreign policy. If at any time the protection and preservation of independence could be more effectively pursued through the modification — or even, in unforeseen circumstances, the abandonment — of neutrality, then so be it". See Ronan Fanning, *Éamon de Valera: A Will to Power* (Faber & Faber Limited, 2015), p. 185.
[43] Deirdre McMahon, *Republicans and Imperialists: Anglo-Irish Relations in the 1930s* (Yale University Press, 1984), p. 292.
[44] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 110.

the new Irish position of 'External Association' with Britain was accepted in practice by the British government.

Since the election of de Valera's Fianna Fáil government in 1932, tensions in the Anglo-Irish relationship were high. De Valera's government stopped the annual payment of land annuities to Britain — relating to loans granted to Irish tenant farmers for land purchases prior to 1922 — and introduced protectionist tariffs on imports,[45] which mainly affected British exporters. Protectionist measures, designed to reduce economic dependence on Britain and promote native industry through self-sufficiency, provoked retaliatory tariffs on Irish exports by the British government.[46] This trade dispute, dubbed an 'economic war', lasted until 1938 when there was a *rapprochement* in Anglo-Irish relations. Informed by a growing awareness of the prospect of an international war,[47] both sides signed two financial agreements on 25 April 1938; one of which settled the land annuities issue via a lump sum payment.

Talks regarding an Anglo-Irish defence agreement were also held, but they faltered over de Valera's insistence that they be tied to an acceptable resolution on the partition of Ireland.[48] An agreement was signed, however, which brought an end to Britain's control of

[45] These protectionist measures were not unusual, or even extreme, compared to other states in Europe; 17% of Irish imports were subject to licences or quotas compared to 24% in Belgium, 52% in Switzerland and 58% in France. See Charles Townshend, *Ireland: The 20th Century* (Arnold Publishers, 1998), p. 138.

[46] See Andy Bielenberg, and Raymond Ryan, *An Economic History of Ireland Since Independence* (Routledge, 2013), pp. 13-14; L.M. Cullen, *An Economic History of Ireland Since 1660* (Second Edition, B.T. Batsford Ltd., London, 1987), pp. 176-180; Jonathan Haughton, 'The Historical Background', in J. W. O'Hagan (ed.), *The Economy of Ireland: Policy and Performance of a Small European Country* (Gill & Macmillan, 1995), pp. 30-32; and, Kieran A. Kennedy, Thomas Giblin and Deirdre McHugh, *The Economic Development of Ireland in the Twentieth Century* (Routledge, 1988), pp. 41-48.

[47] Lee points a large volume of scholarly work to support the contention that concerns of an approaching war were a factor and that "[c]hanging circumstances in Ireland, Britain and Europe reinforced the case for conciliation on the British as well as on the Irish side", see Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985*, pp. 211-212; Fanning has similarly noted that the uncertain international situation contributed to British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain's "preference for policies of appeasement in Anglo-Irish, as in Anglo-German, relations", see Fanning, Ronan, *The Irish Department of Finance, 1922 – 58* (Institute of Public Administration, 1978), p. 296.

[48] See Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 69-75. The minutes of the meeting between de Valera and British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, make this explicit: "As a result of this further and very full re-examination of the position[,] the Government of Éire had decided that they could not assume responsibility for sponsoring

the so called 'Treaty Ports'.[49] This agreement "unreservedly revoked" Britain's right,[50] under the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, to claim naval and military facilities in Éire. De Valera's acknowledgement of British security concerns, combined with internal British assessments that the ports were in poor condition, would require significant investment, and sufficient forces to defend against a hostile Irish population, paved the way for the agreement.[51] The British were willing to foster more friendly relations "with a view to acquiring some of the facilities they needed" in the future.[52] De Valera framed it as a recognition of Irish sovereignty over the twenty-six counties,[53] which effectively "eliminat[ed] the crown from Irish domestic affairs".[54] Britain's First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill, was a vocal opponent. He foresaw difficulties in a future war if the ports, which he described as the "sentinel towers of the western approaches",[55] were unavailable to Britain, despite de Valera's assurances that Ireland would not permit Irish territory to be "used as a base of attack on Britain".[56] Control of the ports provided Éire with greater freedom to pursue an independent neutrality policy, which was the stated "desire of the Irish people and the desire of the Irish government".[57] Legal Advisor to External Affairs, John J. Hearne,[58] advised de Valera that the decision to be neutral rested,

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a Defence Agreement on the lines contemplated so long as no hope could be held out to them that Partition would be terminated", see NAI Department of the Taoiseach (DT) S10389 (Annex), Minutes of the conference between representatives of the United Kingdom and Ireland, 23 February 1938.

[49] Robert Fisk has described the hand-over of the ports in 1938 in great detail, see Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 1-11.

[50] Murphy, *Ireland in the Twentieth Century*, p. 94.

[51] O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, p. 29.

[52] Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 123.

[53] See Ronan Fanning, 'Small States, Large Neighbours: Ireland and the United Kingdom', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 9, 1998), p. 23.

[54] Mervyn O'Driscoll, 'Concluding Thoughts', in Dermot Keogh and Mervyn O'Driscoll (eds.), *Ireland in World War Two: Neutrality and Survival* (Mercier Press, 2004), p. 286.

[55] Churchill recalled the negotiations of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, during which he was advised by the Admiralty of the importance of retaining use of the Ports in a war to protect food supplies to Britain. See *House of Commons Debates (Hansard)*, Winston Churchill, 5 May 1938.

[56] NAI DFA 2003/17/181, John W. Dulanty (Irish High Commissioner to London) report to Walshe on meeting of de Valera and Malcolm MacDonald (Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs), 15 January 1937.

[57] NAI DFA Paris Embassy P5/5, Walshe to Seán Murphy, 17 February 1939.

[58] Hearne was instrumental in the drafting of the Irish Constitution in 1937. He subsequently became Ireland's first High Commissioner to Canada in 1939, and he was replaced as Legal Advisor to External Affairs by Michael Rynne. See Crowe et al., *DIFP: VI, 1939 – 1941*, p. xxvi; Brian Kennedy, 'The Special Position of

not "upon constitutional considerations nor upon any treaty engagement with Great Britain", but with the government and the Dáil.[59] His Assistant, Michael Rynne, also quoted the Canadian position to de Valera, which was in tune with that of the Irish; "Canada was wisely bound by no commitments to remain neutral or engage in war. When the issue arose the Canadian Parliament would decide".[60] In early 1939, Walshe advised the US Chargé d'Affaires in Dublin that Ireland would remain neutral in an upcoming war, but that "[n]o official declaration of neutrality would be made".[61] On 19 February 1939, de Valera made a radio broadcast in which he declared Éire's intention to remain neutral in the event of a war.[62] Though ultimately Éire was the only dominion to choose neutrality, like Éire both Canada and the Union of South Africa held parliamentary votes on whether or not to support Britain in war.[63] De Valera's goals, to achieve independence and sovereignty, were bound up in the country's ability to determine its own foreign policy. As Ronan Fanning has stated:

> In practice small states can rarely implement an absolutely independent foreign policy. Their freedom of choice is inhibited by the great powers within whose spheres of influence they happen to fall. In practice, therefore, the yardstick of independence for such small states is their ability to act independently of neighbouring great powers.[64]

John Hearne', *The Irish Times*, 8 April 1987; Marcus Bourke and Michael Kennedy, 'Hearne, John Joseph', in McGuire and Quinn (eds.), *Dictionary of Irish Biography*. http://dib.cambridge.org/quicksearch.do# [accessed 19-02-16]

[59] NAI DT S/5096, Assistant Legal Advisor to External Affairs, Rynne, expressing the views of Hearne to de Valera, 6 July 1938.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 114.

[62] Radió Teilfís Éireann (RTÉ) Archive, radio broadcast of Éamon de Valera, 19 February 1939. http://www.rte.ie/archives/2014/0219/505127-ireland-to-be-neutral-in-event-of-war-de-valera/ [cited 17-08-16]

[63] See Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, p. 13.

[64] Ronan Fanning, 'Irish Neutrality', in *Neutrals in Europe: Ireland* (Conference Papers 11, The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 1990), p. 1.

Defensive Preparations

Heightened international tensions formed the background to re-calibrations in the Anglo-Irish relationship in the late 1930s. Here it will be shown that Irish defence preparations were totally inadequate for war despite tentative explorations of military preparations in Switzerland. The government was kept well informed of growing anxieties on the continent by their representative at the League of Nations, Francis Cremins, but, financial prudishness trumped defensive concerns. The Irish government was not oblivious to the threats however, and German aggression was on the mind of Joseph Walshe, in 1938:

> As you know, we have the right to neutrality in any war in which England may be involved, but everybody here recognises that Germany would not hesitate for a moment to attack this country if by doing so she could hope to achieve her purpose of defeating England.[65]

The European neutrals faced a grave threat from a Nazi regime which "held small states in contempt",[66] and that believed these weaker Powers should be "pushed to the periphery, maintained in marginal areas and border zones or destroyed".[67] Walshe's acknowledgement of the German threat, however, was not matched by increased defensive preparations in Éire.

While other neutral states were preparing in earnest to defend their neutrality by force if necessary, the Irish were stymied by a Department of Finance with little time for defence spending. On 8 September 1938, de Valera said that steps were being taken to prepare the country for war,[68] but this betrayed the fact that the Irish government persistently

[65] University College Dublin Archives (UCDA) P194/550 Michael MacWhite Papers, Walshe to MacWhite, 26 July 1938.
[66] Amry Vandenbosch, 'The Small States in International Politics and Organization', *The Journal of Politics* (Vol. 26, No. 2, May, 1964), p. 300. Also, see Leitz, *Sympathy for the Devil*, p. 2, which mentions Hitler's personal distaste for neutrality and the belief amongst some Nazi commentators that neutrality had no place in the international system.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 69.

"economised on defence".[69] In January 1937, the Minister for Finance, Seán MacEntee, was added to the committee on national defence. Eunan O'Halpin's description of MacEntee's character underscores the difficulties faced by the Army in securing funding:

> [A] published poet and something of an intellectual, an insatiable reader of memoranda and a 'woefully long-winded' speaker, he could argue a point indefinitely […] [r]elishing a debate on so obviously economically unproductive an investment as defence spending, he took issue with almost every assumption underlying the army's case.[70]

MacEntee was not alone however. Labour Party leader, William Norton TD, expressed his opinion regarding the economic folly of defence spending to the Dáil in March 1939:

> I believe now, that it is quite impossible for a small nation of 3,000,000 persons, largely a peasant population, with undeveloped resources, low productivity and a low national income, to be able to raise for armament and defence purposes the gigantic sum which some of the powerful military and commercial nations of Europe are able to raise for this purpose to-day.[71]

A concomitant lack of co-ordination, within the Department of Defence,[72] and a lack of political interest — ever since 1924 when 250 officers either resigned or were discharged over a decision to reduce the size of the army — also inhibited defence preparations.[73] During the 1920s and the 1930s:

> politicians remained fearful that the army itself might once more get ideas above its station, and that the old problem of the ultimate allegiance of its officers might arise again. They sought to contain the army by denying it money and by exercising extremely tight control on every aspect of its activities.[74]

It was not until 1934 that the Irish government began to examine the importance of "organised, regular-army resistance, rather than a system of guerrilla war".[75] Despite this apparent step in the right direction, a report compiled by Col. Liam Archer — Director of G2 (military intelligence) — in 1936, made it clear that, were Britain to take control of

[69] Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985*, p. 234; also, see Henry Patterson, *Ireland Since 1939: The Persistence of Conflict* (Penguin Ireland, 2006), p. 51.
[70] O'Halpin, *Defending Ireland*, p. 139.
[71] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 74, No. 17, Col. 2258, 22 March 1939.
[72] Peter Young, 'Defence and the New Irish State, 1919 – 1939', in Keogh and O'Driscoll (eds.), *Ireland in World War Two*, p. 34.
[73] O'Halpin, *Defending Ireland*, p. 100.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Young, 'Defence and the New Irish State', p. 28.

whatever Irish facilities she deemed necessary for her defence, then all the Irish Army could resort to was a campaign of guerrilla warfare.[76] The poor state of Irish defences before the war has been regularly commented upon by historians. At their most damning, they state that Éire "was virtually devoid of any military capabilities",[77] and "lacked the means of defending the country".[78] Éire had only two tanks by 1937, the first of which was purchased in 1935.[79] At the beginning of September 1939, the defence forces stood at 7,494 Regular Army, 4,298 Reserves and a Volunteer Force of 6,298, giving a total of 18,090 troops available for mobilisation.[80] However, the Volunteers were inadequately trained as their equipment was obsolete.[81] As Joe Lee has stated, Ireland also "lacked the intellectual, administrative, managerial and technological infrastructures, as well as many of the raw materials, necessary to build up an arms industry quickly".[82] The State had "no air service worth the name",[83] as the Air Corps was not even capable of "policing the skies over Dublin",[84] and the country had "only the vocabulary of an air defence system".[85] Colonel Michael J. Costello,[86] had sought a definite policy for the Air Corps in the early 1930s;

[76] Ibid., p. 29.
[77] Leitz, 'Swiss and Irish Neutrality in the Second World War', p. 70.
[78] Cronin, *Washington's Irish Policy*, p. 129.
[79] The order had been for two but the second tank had accidentally burnt while undergoing a test in Sweden, hence they had to wait until 1937 before a free replacement was provided. See Theo Farrell, '"The Model Army": Military Imitation and the Enfeeblement of the Army in Post-Revolutionary Ireland, 1922 – 42', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 8, 1997), p. 121.
[80] NAI Department of Finance (DFIN) S4/72/39, Memorandum re: Cost of Army Mobilisation, 6 September 1939. Fisk puts the strength of the army at 19,783 comprised of 7494 Regulars, 5066 Reservists, and 7223 Volunteers, but the Department of Finance's estimate is given primacy here. See Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 77n.
[81] Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985*, p. 235.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Eunan O'Halpin, 'Irish Neutrality in the Second World War', in Wylie (ed.), *European Neutrals and Non-Belligerents*, p. 287.
[84] Patterson, *Ireland Since 1939*, p. 51.
[85] O'Halpin, *Defending Ireland*, p. 156.
[86] Col. Costello was Commandant of the Military College in the Curragh in 1933. In May 1939, as Assistant Chief-of-Staff to General Michael Brennan, he travelled to the United States to buy armaments but was restrained by the frugal proclivities of the government towards defence spending. See Pauric J. Dempsey and Shaun Boylan, 'Costello, Michael Joseph ('Mickey Joe')', in James McGuire and James Quinn (eds.), *Dictionary of Irish Biography*.
http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a2084 [accessed 19-02-16]

however, rather typically, he was thwarted by a lack of finance.[87] Ireland's Marine Service was established only after the war began and consisted of "two ex-fisheries patrol boats with six motor torpedo boats on order from Britain".[88]

The government was not unaware of the need to ensure Irish defences. After the Munich Crisis,[89] in 1938, there was a "temporary change in the Irish Government's attitude towards Anglo-Irish defence co-operation".[90] As we have seen, however, the talks hit a brick wall once de Valera arrived in London with the issue of partition firmly stuck in his mind. It may seem remarkable that de Valera — a man who "spoke from a position of exceptional military weakness, even by the standards of small states"[91] — should reject a comprehensive common defence policy with a neighbouring power, which possibly posed the most serious threat to Irish security. However, as Robert Keohane has said, "it is clear that possession of superior military or economic force cannot guarantee small-power compliance with big-power interests".[92] Regardless, the Irish did later engage in sporadic periods of liaison concerning defence cooperation with the British and eventually some specialist Irish personnel were sent for training in Britain; thus, "during the war there was no consistent Irish disavowal of external help".[93]

Though Irish preparations for war were wholly inadequate, the government did engage in tentative explorations of the policies and practices of the other European neutrals. These examinations were infrequent, typically ad hoc, and rarely displayed more than mild curiosity. It was only after the war began that the government came to appreciate the value

[87] Young, 'Defence and the New Irish State', p. 32.
[88] Patterson, *Ireland Since 1939*, p. 51.
[89] In which Nazi Germany annexed the Sudetenland, a German-speaking portion of Czechoslovakia, with the agreement of a range of European powers; but not Czechoslovakia itself.
[90] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 73.
[91] Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985*, p. 243.
[92] Robert Keohane, 'The Big Influence of Small Allies', *Foreign Policy* (No. 2, Spring, 1971), p. 162.
[93] Salmon, *Unneutral Ireland*, p. 145.

of learning from their neutral colleagues. Nonetheless, reports on defensive measures in other small states, particularly Switzerland, were received often in Dublin. In 1937, Francis Cremins informed External Affairs of a raft of measures being implemented in Switzerland to protect the populace from aerial attacks. He reported on plans to prevent gas attacks from the air,[94] provided documents from a public exposition on black-out procedures,[95] and detailed reports of black-out tests being undertaken in the country.[96] In May 1939, Michael Rynne also distributed information obtained from Cremins pertaining to aerial defensive measures in Switzerland to the Department of Defence on the instructions of de Valera.[97] Though aware of Swiss measures for some time, Clair Wills' description of an Irish black-out test in 1939 shows that Irish preparations were poorly organised:

> In Dublin, in Cork, and in numerous towns across the country, there was real confusion over the need for air raid precautions. People had been painting their windows and buying blackout curtains for some weeks, partly under the influence of announcements on the BBC and in English papers. The Irish authorities themselves were confused, issuing a flurry of contradictory instructions about safety and supplies. On 1 September the Department of Defence sent telegrams to local authorities in east-coast towns calling for them to reduce their lighting to 25 per cent. In the game of Chinese whispers that followed, the gardaí gave instructions for a complete blackout even in isolated districts. Where house lights were left burning near Dublin on 2 September, a small plane flew low and flashed warning signals, although many shops and even the bus company failed to comply with the confused blackout orders.[98]

Ireland's lack of preparation for aerial warfare was a source of frustration for Fine Gael T.D. Dr. Thomas O'Higgins,[99] who remarked in the Dáil on 8 February 1939 that he "should be better satisfied with any form of protection than none, even if it was only an aluminium umbrella".[100]

[94] NAI DFA 241/53, Cremins to Walshe, 2 February 1937.
[95] Ibid., 22 February 1937.
[96] Ibid., 14 May 1937.
[97] NAI DFA 241/53, Michael Rynne to Peadar MacMahon (Secretary of the Department of Defence), 26 May 1939.
[98] Wills, *That Neutral Island*, p. 48.
[99] O'Higgins later served as a member of the defence council after the German defeat of France in 1940.
[100] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 74, No. 1, Col. 190, 8 February 1939.

During the spring of 1939, the government began to take more notice of Swiss defensive measures. On 17 February, MacEntee sent a letter to Walshe seeking details regarding the periods of training which recruits to the Swiss Militia Army were required to undergo.[101] The Swiss were in the process of passing a Bill that would provide for an "extension of the first period of training for recruits".[102] Assistant Secretary of External Affairs, Frederick Boland, indicated to MacEntee the reasons behind this move, perhaps signalling his belief that such a measure would be of use in Ireland:

> You will notice that the principal reasons given for the extension of the period of training are increased mechanisation, the higher standard of moral [sic] and discipline required to face attack with modern methods of warfare, and the fact that the modern infantryman is required to act both on his own initiative as heretofore and also as a member of a group responsible for the operation of a mechanised arm.[103]

In March 1939, Cremins' report from Geneva highlighted the "increasing danger in which the small Western States would find themselves in the event of war".[104] Availing of the opportunities to sound out the views and concerns of colleagues at the League, Cremins was able to capture their anxieties:

> I asked the local Consul-General for Poland how he thought the situation would develop, but he professed to know nothing. From other sources I gather, however, that there are many differences between Poland and the Reich, and that the latter is becoming increasingly a threat to Poland. I have it confidentially from Mr. Lester[105] that the situation in Danzig is serious, and that developments provoked by Germany may be soon expected there.[106]

Frederick Boland informed Cremins that de Valera had asked him express his thanks for the report, which he read "with much interest".[107] The value of Cremins' reports from Switzerland was well established by this point and the influence of the information he provided Dublin throughout the war is a prominent feature of this thesis. Cremins' detailed

[101] NAI DFA 241/29, Seán MacEntee to Walshe, 17 February 1939.
[102] Ibid., Frederick H. Boland to MacEntee, 9 March 1939.
[103] NAI DFA 241/29, Boland to MacEntee, 16 March 1939.
[104] NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Walshe, 20 March 1939.
[105] Refers to Seán Lester, Deputy Secretary General of the League of Nations from 1937 to 1940, after which he became the League's final Secretary General. See Douglas Gageby, *The Last Secretary General: Seán Lester and the League of Nations* (Dublin, Town House and Country House, 1999).
[106] NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Walshe, 20 March 1939.
[107] Ibid., Boland to Cremins, 27 March 1939.

reports and his objective style provided intriguing insights into life at the heart of Europe.[108] Switzerland, as the traditional neutral,[109] was an important source of neutrality-related material for External Affairs. In April 1939, in response to the growing anxieties, the government sought information pertaining to the implementation of Swiss neutrality. Before leaving his post as Legal Advisor to External Affairs, John J. Hearne asked Cremins to provide answers to: "(1) the position in Switzerland during the war of 1914 – 18 of aliens citizens of belligerent states and (2) the position of alien citizens of other neutral States".[110] Cremins subsequently forwarded copies of published measures and decrees on the topics. It is no surprise that the Irish government were interested in Swiss policies. As Christian Leitz has explained elsewhere, the "nature and longevity of Switzerland's neutral status have made it an example to other states proclaiming neutrality".[111]

Irish interest in Switzerland was not one-sided. In June 1939, the Swiss National Council voted to upgrade the country's consulates in Venezuela and Éire to legations.[112] The Swiss Consul General in Dublin, Dr. Charles Benziger,[113] who took up his appointment in 1935,

[108] Michael Kennedy has observed that "[h]is reports manage to merge the events of high politics with everyday life to give an overall account of day-to-day life in Europe on the outbreak of the war", see Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 242.

[109] Switzerland's neutrality was guaranteed in international law in 1815 after the Napoleonic Wars, see Habicht, 'The Special Position of Switzerland in International Affairs', p. 460. It has been said elsewhere that "[t]he Swiss success as a neutral state makes it a model to which others may strive", see Neal G. Jesse and John R. Dreyer, *Small States in the International System: At Peace and at War* (Lexington Books, 2016), p. 69. Though this recently released book (June 2016) contains a chapter on Irish neutrality, it does not add anything new to the historiography and it occasionally contains some historical inaccuracies, particularly when referencing events in the 1930s. For example, it dates the Irish constitution to 1938 instead of 1937 and conflates the Irish constitution with the United Kingdom's Eire (Confirmation of Agreements) Act, 1938, which handed control of the 'Treaty ports' to the Irish government. Therefore, it is not included further.

[110] NAI DFA 414/24/9, Cremins to John J. Hearne Esq., 20 April 1939.

[111] Christian Leitz, *Nazi Germany and Neutral Europe during the Second World War* (Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 10.

[112] The National Council (Nationalrat/Conseil National) is the lower house of the Swiss Federal Assembly. The proposal to upgrade the Caracas and Dublin consulates to legations was initiated in March 1939 and voted on in in the National Council on 19 June.

[113] A summary of Benziger's career, prior to this appointment in Dublin, was included in an article in the *Irish Independent* after his retirement from the post in 1946: "Few diplomats in Dublin ever have been so liked and respected as Dr. Benziger [...] who is chairman of the famous Catholic Publishing House of Einseideln – the sixth generation at its head – and who studied art and law in Freiburg, Paris, and Munich, entered the Swiss Foreign Office in the Great War and was sent to Vienna. From a later mission through the Baltic and Eastern European countries he returned to Berne, to become Director of the Consular Service. In 1931 he was chosen by the League of Nations for the difficult chairmanship of the German-Polish Harbour

requested a superior rank to gain greater access to the Irish government.[114] During the Council debates, the rationales presented for the establishment of a legation in Dublin were to gain greater diplomatic acceptance for their representative and to improve trade relations, while the costs were said to be negligible. Most members of the Council favoured the move, though strong arguments were presented against the proposal. Council member Paul Meierhans, for example, highlighted that a number of other countries were of greater importance to Swiss trade interests, there were only about 50 Swiss in Éire, and Irish-Swiss trade was not significant.[115] In relation to arguments that the expense was trivial, he observed that 'what costs nothing, is usually worth nothing'.[116] While defending the proposition, Giuseppe Motta also suggested that Francis Cremins might be appointed by the Irish as Chargé in Berne, though he cautioned against allowing him hold the title while based in Geneva at the League of Nations. The Swiss government wanted to keep a distance between the League and the Swiss state and they did not wish for other nations to make similar appointments. The proposal ultimately passed 78 votes to 19, and the consulate was "elevated to a Legation" on 6 November 1939.[117]

During the debates in the National Council, it was also mentioned that the Irish planned to appoint a representative to Switzerland, suggesting reciprocity lay at the core of the Swiss proposal.[118] This author found no documentation in the Irish archives on the

Board of the Free City of Danzig, but refused Danzig's invitation for a second term of office". See *Irish Independent*, 20 March 1946 and NAI PRES 1/P624 for more information on his career in Ireland.

[114] The Swiss understood that Ireland took a strict line in granting direct access to the government only to diplomats above the level of Consul (i.e. Chargé d'Affaires). See SBA 153/3883, Message from the Conseil Fédéral authorised by Philipp Etter (Swiss President of the Confederation for 1939), 23 March 1939. See also *Official Gazette of the Federal Assembly, 1939* (Vol. IV, Document 7, No. 3883), 19 June 1939. http://www.amtsdruckschriften.bar.admin.ch/viewOrigDoc.do?id=20032837 [accessed 24-07-12]

[115] Paul Meierhans stated that Irish-Swiss trade amounted to CHF 1.6 million per year compared to CHF 15 million for Canadian-Swiss trade, yet relations between Switzerland and Canada were only on the consular level. See Ibid.

[116] Translation of "was nichts kostet, gewöhnlich auch nichts wert ist", see Ibid.

[117] NAI PRES 1/P624, Briefing document for President Douglas Hyde, 6 November 1939.

[118] Mention was also made of the fact that the Irish press were aware of the possibility of a new Swiss legation opening in Dublin and it would be a loss of prestige to Switzerland if they voted against its creation.

government's intention to open a legation in 1939. Cremins' reports from Geneva that year also do not appear to indicate any knowledge of Irish intentions to open a legation. It is possible that Swiss politicians received this information from Dr. Benziger, who may have contacted members of the Irish government. Cremins' report to Dublin on 4 May 1939, informed them that, in the event of war, delegates who were not accredited to Switzerland itself would probably leave. He also requested instructions on what he should do in the event that he needed to dispose of code books and documents.[119] This report may have influenced thinking in External Affairs and a legation may have been considered to ensure the presence of an Irish diplomat in Switzerland. Unfortunately, due to the lack of documentation, this is all speculative. Cremins did not betray any knowledge of a proposed Irish legation and in October he told Dublin that in the absence of instructions regarding the destruction of documents he would use his own initiative.[120] Whether or not the creation of a legation in Switzerland was seriously considered in 1939, it does not diminish the obvious value to Dublin of retaining a presence there, which is most clearly seen through Cremins' reports.

Unlike the Irish, whose neutrality was only feasible after 1938, the Swiss pushed to implement restrictive measures to protect their neutrality policy well in advance of the war. This included a ban on party uniforms in 1933,[121] the creation of the Swiss Federal Police

[119] NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Walshe, 4 May 1939.
[120] Ibid., 16 October 1939.
[121] A similar ban was passed by the Dáil in February 1934, but its purpose was to curb to the influence of a "clerico-fascist" group of Irish Christians called the National Guard, led by Eoin O'Duffy. O'Duffy was a former Army General who later served as Garda (Police) Commissioner, but he was sacked from the top policing position by de Valera in February 1933. The National Guard wore blue shirts as a uniform, leading to their more commonly known moniker, 'the Blueshirts'. Some members of the Blueshirts engaged in sabotage and public agitation and there were fears that O'Duffy would attempt a Mussolini-esque march on the Dáil. The government cracked down on the organisation which eventually merged with two Opposition parties, Cumman na nGaedheal and the Centre Party, to form Fine Gael. O'Duffy was elected President of the party, though he did not hold a Dáil seat. The Irish government's ban on uniforms, therefore, differed from the Swiss in its rationale. It was proposed as a domestic party political measure to curb the influence of fascistic elements of the main Opposition party, not to protect neutrality. Though the Seanad rejected the legislation, this only delayed its implementation by 18 months. See Keogh, *Twentieth Century Ireland*, pp. 82-89. For more detail regarding the Blueshirts see Mike Cronin, *The Blueshirts and Irish Politics* (Four

in 1935, a failed attempt to ban Freemasonry by referendum in 1937,[122] and Federal Council Decrees against "propaganda material threatening the security of the state" and "activities threatening the security of the state and for the protection of democracy" in 1938.[123] Domestic restrictions in Ireland arrived comparatively late despite the fifth-column threat posed by the Irish Republican Army (IRA).[124] Links between the IRA and the Nazis began in 1937 when the organisation's Chief-of-Staff, Tom Barry, undertook a trip to Germany to elicit support for attacks on British military installations in Northern Ireland.[125] This plan was over-ruled in April 1938 during an IRA convention however, in favour of another proposal, made by their new Chief-of-Staff, Seán Russell.[126] Russell's 'S-Plan', which did not involve German backing,[127] called for a bombing campaign in Britain in 1939. On 12 January of that year, the IRA sent an ultimatum to the British government demanding "the withdrawal of all British armed forces stationed in Ireland".[128] They gave the British four days to signify their intentions of a military evacuation and "for the issue of [a] Declaration

Courts Press, 1997) and Mike Cronin, 'The Blueshirt Movement, 1932-5: Ireland's Fascists?', *Journal of Contemporary History* (Vol. 30, No. 2, April 1995), pp. 311-332. For more on O'Duffy during this period, including his admiration for the corporatism of Mussolini's Italy, see Fearghal McGarry, *Eoin O'Duffy: A Self-Made Hero* (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 200-233.

[122] Freemasonry was associated with left-wing causes, "anti-clericalism, republicanism and [a] willingness to admit Jews". Swiss Fascists, who proposed the ban, were no doubt influenced by German initiatives to persecute Freemasons, whom Hitler linked to Jews, see Paul Calderwood, *Freemasonry and the Press in the Twentieth Century: A National Newspaper Study of England and Wales* (Routledge, 2013), pp. 80-85. Swiss Catholics were also at the forefront of the campaign to ban Freemasonry and the German Propaganda Ministry was found to have had an active, though indirect, role in the Swiss initiative, see Karl Loewenstein, 'Legislative Control of Political Extremism in European Democracies I', *Columbia Law Review* (Vol. 38, No. 4, April 1938), p. 616n and Karl Loewenstein, 'Legislative Control of Political Extremism in European Democracies II', *Columbia Law Review* (Vol. 38, No. 5, May 1938), p. 743n.

[123] Independent Commission of Experts (ICE) Switzerland: *Final Report*, pp. 84-85. www.uek.ch [cited 12-08-15]

[124] For specific histories of the IRA during this period, see J. Bowyer Bell, *The Secret Army: A history of the I.R.A., 1916 – 1970* (Sphere Books, 1972) and Tim Pat Coogan, *The I.R.A.* (Fontana Books), 1971.

[125] David O'Donoghue, 'New Evidence on IRA/Nazi Links', *History Ireland* (Vol. 19, No. 2, March/April, 2011), p. 36.

[126] Ibid., p. 37.

[127] The Germans were interested in the bombing campaign, but provided nothing more than "moral support", see Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 88.

[128] IRA ultimatum to British government, 1939, *Wolfe Tone Weekly*, 4 February 1939, in Arthur Mitchell and Pádraig Ó Snodaigh (eds.), *Irish Political Documents 1916 – 1949* (Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 1985), p. 220.

of Abdication"[129] in respect to Éire. Their demands not met, there followed a rather ineffective bombing campaign targeted at factories, power stations and telephone exchanges, which did not match the tone of their ultimatum.[130] To clamp down on IRA activity, the government passed a Prevention of Violence Bill in July 1939,[131] but strong domestic restrictions to protect neutrality, though drafted and approved in early 1939, were only enacted in September.[132]

Irish preparations for war remained sluggish during the summer of 1939. In June, the Dáil debated the introduction of an Air Raid Precautions Bill and a new Defence Bill was scheduled to be circulated for debate in September, but events pre-empted further planning. On 24 August, External Affairs issued a command to the Irish legations in Paris, Rome, Berlin, Madrid and to Francis Cremins to provide daily appraisals of the international situation.[133] Irish Minister to Italy, Michael MacWhite, reported that the British were packed and ready "to burn the code books and archives", and that the French were similarly ready to leave.[134] In France itself, Con Cremin noted that public opinion was "that the situation is rapidly deteriorating".[135] De Valera reassured the German Minister in Dublin, Eduard Hempel, that Éire was "a neutral State", but, owing to economic, geographic and political reasons, a certain consideration towards Britain had to be made.[136] On 31 August, Cremins' final report on the international situation before the outbreak of war gave Dublin a clearer picture of Swiss preparedness:

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[129] Ibid.
[130] See Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 85.
[131] See Bell, *The Secret Army*, p. 203.
[132] The Emergency Powers Act that was implemented in September had been drafted and approved by January 1939, but its enactment was delayed until a war emergency was declared, see Fanning, *The Irish Department of Finance*, p. 309.
[133] NAI DFA Secretary's Files S75, Rynne to Irish Legations in Paris, Rome, Berlin and Madrid and to the Permanent Delegate to the League of Nations in Geneva, 24 August 1939.
[134] NAI DFA 219/6, Michael MacWhite to Walshe, 24 August 1939.
[135] NAI DFA Paris Embassy P19/34A, Con Cremin to Walshe 24 August 1939.
[136] UCDA P150/2571 Éamon de Valera Papers, Memorandum of Walshe on Irish neutrality for de Valera entitled: 'Note for a conversation with the representative of Germany concerning Ireland's neutrality', 25 August 1939. Also see Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 99-100.

> The emergency measures are in evidence here. Public buildings, railways, bridges, etc. are guarded by military. Columns of soldiers in full kit march undemonstrably [sic] through the town on the way to their stations. Certain essential foods and food products, such as sugar, rice, oatmeal, salt, etc. are temporarily off the market, and people are using the reserve stocks which, a few months ago, they were directed by the authorities to lay in. And today, for the first time for years, re-appeared five-franc notes instead of the ordinary silver five-franc pieces. All these measures bring home to the population the seriousness of the situation...[137]

Implementing Neutrality

Here it will be shown that Irish neutrality was not formulated in a vacuum; but, rather, it was informed by a knowledge and consideration of the policies of the other neutrals throughout the Phoney War. While the government pursued an independent policy, External Affairs kept a close watch on the implementation of neutrality policies in Europe to stay broadly in line with them. From the start of the war, the government accumulated numerous reports and documents pertaining to the operation of the other European neutrals' policies from their diplomats based in them. They were Francis Cremins (Irish delegate to the League of Nations in Switzerland), William Macauley (Minister to the Holy See), Leopold Kerney (Minister to Spain), and Seán Murphy (Minister to France and Belgium). Switzerland was a particularly important source of neutrality material for External Affairs' Legal Advisor, Michael Rynne, who possessed "a thorough knowledge of French, German and Italian".[138] The organisational structure of the Department granted much influence to the Irish diplomats and civil servants it contained. Michael Kennedy has explained this succinctly:

> The diplomat *en poste* was Headquarter's eyes and ears abroad. Through confidential reports they supplied raw information to Headquarters from which policy was formulated by an inner core of top civil servants. Policy was then transmitted back to the diplomat in the field to be executed.[139]

[137] NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Walshe, 31 August 1939.
[138] NAI DT S/2039, Walshe to Secretary Department of the President, 4 January 1932.
[139] Michael Kennedy, 'Our men in Berlin: some thoughts on Irish diplomats in Germany 1929 – 1939', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 10, 1999), p. 53.

It is argued here that Rynne was a key figure in framing Éire's neutrality policy, whose highly detailed and influential reports for Walshe and de Valera were informed by his knowledge of neutrality practices abroad. His analyses provided a framework which set the legal limits of available policy choices.[140] De Valera and Walshe, in turn, preferred not to formally constrict Irish policy by expressing it publicly. This ambiguity has been attributed to de Valera's 'realism',[141] as a lack of explication provided flexibility in decision-making, and Walshe's laconic style.[142] Dermot Keogh has referenced T. Desmond Williams' thoughts on de Valera's constructive ambiguity, which highlights this point: "the ambiguity which lay over his [de Valera's] intentions was a secret source of strength because if none knew exactly what was his policy in any future contingent circumstances, few doubted that he himself knew it".[143] In simple terms, Irish policy was pragmatically flexible.

Irish Interpretations of Neutral Rights and Duties

On 2 September 1939, the same day that Dáil Éireann affirmed Irish neutrality, de Valera's government promulgated legislation to grant them sweeping new powers. The Emergency Powers Act covered "subversion, rationing, official secrets, the functioning of the legal system, policing, price controls, censorship, and safeguarding supplies of food and other essentials".[144] Some of the new measures included a provision for the extension of arrest

[140] Interestingly, Gösta Engzell, the head of Sweden's Legal Division within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also wielded highly significant influence over foreign policymaking in relation to Sweden's response to the Holocaust, see Paul A. Levine, *From Indifference to Activism: Swedish Diplomacy and the Holocaust; 1938 – 1944* (Uppsala University, 1996), pp. 79-90. Whether or not the legal advisors of other neutral states' foreign ministries had such influence during the war is worthy of further research.
[141] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe,* p. 119.
[142] Nolan, *Joseph Walshe,* p. 155. Walshe was highly secretive, even with his senior colleagues. He had a penchant for keeping what he deemed sensitive information off paper, either by not writing it down or having it destroyed. See Keogh, 'Joseph Walshe, Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs, 1922 – 46', pp. 60n and 72-73.
[143] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe,* p. 119.
[144] Mervyn O'Driscoll, *Ireland, Germany and the Nazis: Politics and Diplomacy, 1919 – 1939* (Four Courts Press, 2004), p. 268. For more detail on the Emergency Power Orders see Seosamh Ó Longaigh, 'Emergency Law in Action', in Keogh and O'Driscoll (eds.), *Ireland in World War Two,* pp. 36-47.

and search powers to An Garda Síochána, compulsory land cultivation, curfews, and the formation of temporary police forces.[145] Cognisant of the difficulties that lay ahead, de Valera informed the Dáil:

> It is not, as some people appear to think, sufficient for us to indicate our attitude, or to express the desire of our people. It is necessary at every step to protect our own interests in that regard, to avoid giving to any of the belligerents any due cause, and proper cause, of complaint. Of course, when you have powerful States in a war of this sort, each trying to utilise whatever advantage it can for itself, the neutral State, if it is a small State, is always open to considerable pressure. I am stating what every one of you knows to be a fact. Therefore, I stated, when I was speaking of our policy of neutrality on a former occasion, that it was a policy which could only be pursued if we had a determined people, people who are determined to stand by their own rights, conscious of the fact that they did not wish to injure anybody, or to throw their weight, from the belligerent point of view, on the one side or the other.[146]

As it has been said elsewhere, to declare neutrality was easy, "the difficulty was in preserving it".[147]

The outbreak of the conflict saw the Department of External Affairs "thrown into disarray",[148] as the government sought to defend a policy of neutrality, of which they had no experience. Dermot Keogh has argued that External Affairs was highly influenced by the Vatican's neutrality from the beginning of the war. According to Keogh, T. Desmond Williams informed him that de Valera consulted the Holy See's Secretariat of State extensively before the war regarding their neutrality. Williams cited the Assistant Secretary, Boland, as his source.[149] Though Keogh has stated that "it is unlikely that de Valera slavishly followed the Vatican in this matter",[150] he also stated that "Irish neutrality mirrored Vatican neutrality".[151] Keogh, unable to find documentation to support these assertions, suggested the paperwork may have been burned by External Affairs in the summer of 1940.[152] Naturally this claim is impossible to verify, but a significant number

[145] See Ó Longaigh, 'Emergency Law in Action', pp. 36-47.
[146] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 77, No. 1, Col. 3, 2 September 1939.
[147] Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985*, p. 242.
[148] Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 133.
[149] Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 143.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid., p. 160.
[152] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 118.

of documents covering the initial nine months of the war were destroyed on de Valera's instructions due to fears of a German invasion in the summer of 1940.[153] It is certainly true that Irish diplomats were advised by Walshe to keep close contact with Papal Nuncios within their host states during the war. Walshe, a former Jesuit,[154] who was particularly interested in reports from the Vatican,[155] was given "considerable latitude" by de Valera to manage the affairs of the Department, leading some Irish diplomats to wonder if his instructions reflected his own personal view or de Valera's.[156] In fact, during the summer of 1940, Walshe favoured the assessments of the Papal Nuncio to France on the French political situation over that of the Irish Minister, Seán Murphy. Walshe instructed him to bring his views into line with the Vatican's representative, which provoked an exchange of terse communications between him and Murphy until Walshe backed down and claimed a misunderstanding.[157] During the exchanges Walshe emphasised that it was of utmost importance for Dublin to know the views of the Vatican on developments in France.[158] It is clear, therefore, that considerations of the Vatican's stance on issues were given significant weight.

Keogh's assertion that none of the other neutral states were "as influential on Irish thinking as the Vatican",[159] however, is difficult to validate. For practical concerns such as protecting the inviolability of neutral territory, internment of belligerent soldiers, ensuring adequate supplies, and dealing with belligerent political and economic pressure, the other neutrals were of greater importance. De Valera had also previously shown an ability to

[153] See Crowe et al., *DIFP: VI, 1939 – 1941*, p. xi, and pp. 459-466, for a detailed list of the documents destroyed, which included an unknown number of Walshe's files.
[154] Walshe was a member of the Order for 13 years. See Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, pp. 8-9 and Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, pp. 13-14.
[155] Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 160.
[156] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 114.
[157] See Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, pp. 161-163 and Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 140.
[158] See Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 163.
[159] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 118.

pursue twin-track objectives balancing considerations of the Vatican's position with broader concerns of international relations. During discussions in the League regarding the Soviet Union's membership in 1934, he took the middle-ground between Vatican concerns about religious freedom in the USSR and his more "universalist" view of League inclusiveness.[160] Therefore, while the Vatican line was an influence on Irish thinking, it did not determine Irish foreign policy. This twin-track outlook was also evident in the priorities of the civil servants within External Affairs during the war. While Walshe kept a close eye on reports from the Vatican, Rynne kept a close watch on the other neutrals and presented his observations to both Walshe and de Valera.

On 1 September 1939, Rynne produced a memorandum for Walshe detailing the legal implications of a neutrality policy in order to "set down some clear propositions with regard to our practical duties and rights as neutrals".[161] Rynne examined the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, which were a series of treaties and negotiations that established rules and regulations for warfare in international law. He observed that they were "still almost universally recognised",[162] but made clear that infringements on, and of, the rights and duties of neutrals had occurred in the past.[163] In light of such precedents, he advised a 'wait and see' policy on some of the finer points to determine the level of adherence internationally to neutral obligations. As Keogh has stated:

> Ireland sought to implement neutrality strictly by the book at the beginning of the Emergency. Belligerents were notified of Ireland's status. The Department of External Affairs kept a close watch on the actions of the other neutrals, but the legal officer at Iveagh House, Michael Rynne, argued that each new historical situation called for developing a new interpretation of the law if it so suited Irish needs.[164]

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[160] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, pp. 198-199.
[161] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne to Walshe, 1 September 1939.
[162] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne to Walshe, 1 September 1939.
[163] While the 1899 Hague Convention focused exclusively on warring parties, the 1907 Convention included two sections pertaining to the rights and duties of neutral states in war. See The Hague Convention 1907, Sections V and XIII.
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/lawwar.asp [cited 21-02-16]
[164] Keogh, *Twentieth Century Ireland*, p. 112.

Keogh's somewhat contradictory summation of Éire's initial policy is apposite. The policy was presented along strict lines based on international law, but Irish interpretations were flexible from the beginning. While a neutral state was expected to forbid its citizens to leave the country to join military service with a belligerent nation, Rynne suggested, "our eventual attitude to these matters may be stricter or laxer depending on the reactions of the belligerents".[165] The latter attitude subsequently proved to be the case as the Irish government effectively turned a blind eye to citizens enlisting in the British Army. The total number of men and women from Éire who fought for the British Armed Forces during the war is still not known, but, most current estimates put the figure between 50,000 and 80,000.[166] Rynne presented Walshe with a legal justification for this practice in December 1939. In his view, though "[m]any authorities take the strong line [... that ...] a neutral State ought never to allow its citizens enrol for service abroad",[167] the Hague Conventions outlined that "'the responsibility of a neutral Power is not engaged by the fact of persons crossing the frontier separately to offer their services to one of the belligerents'".[168] He felt, therefore, that Ireland was "not likely to be accused of a definite breach of [its] neutral status".[169] Rynne's memorandum also highlighted the legal difficulties surrounding over-flights by belligerent aircraft:

> Besides the rules affecting the ships, troops and nationals of belligerents, there is a generally accepted rule about aeroplanes to the effect that *a neutral State ought not to permit the military aircraft of a belligerent to overfly or land on its territory.*
> Whether this will mean that we will be bound to have recourse to force against belligerent planes which overfly Ireland and refuse to descend after signals, is a matter that can be left in abeyance, as the law is not very clear on it[.][170]

[165] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Rynne to Walshe, 1 September 1939.
[166] See Richard Doherty, *Irish Men and Women in the Second World War* (Four Courts Press Limited, 1999), p. 25; Leitz, 'Swiss and Irish Neutrality in the Second World War', p. 73; Geoffrey Roberts, 'Neutrality, Identity and the Challenge of the Irish Volunteers', in Keogh and O'Driscoll (eds.), *Ireland in World War Two*, p. 274; Murphy, *Ireland in the Twentieth Century*, p. 103.
[167] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne to Walshe, 12 December 1939.
[168] Ibid., Rynne's quote of Article 6 of Convention V from the Hague Convention of 1907.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid., Rynne to Walshe, 1 September 1939.

To leave this particular question in abeyance was not difficult, as the state possessed no meaningful air force. Were a plane to land on Irish territory, however, Rynne pointed out that "we must make it known that we propose to intern military planes which land on our territory until the war comes to an end".[171] This was immediately put to the test, on 3 September, when a British flying-boat landed off the shores of Skerries, Co. Dublin. Rather than follow neutral obligations to intern the aircraft and crew, de Valera permitted them to leave supported by a flexible interpretation of neutral obligations proffered by Rynne. This will be treated in greater detail in Chapter 5.

Rynne was a senior member of the Department, below only de Valera (Minister), Walshe (Secretary) and Boland (Assistant Secretary),[172] and his memoranda helped shape the Irish position in the early months of the war. Reports received in Dublin about neutrality policies in other European states, both historical and contemporaneous, aided him in his task of establishing the foundations of Éire's neutrality policy. On 1 September, the same day that Rynne produced his lengthy and detailed memorandum on neutrality in practice for Walshe, he also received official statements from Francis Cremins pertaining to Swiss neutrality, including an article on their official declaration of neutrality, which he kept for reference.[173] As more neutrals declared their neutrality, External Affairs sought to obtain copies of the official decrees. On 7 September, Irish Minister to the United States, Robert Brennan, sent a copy of the US declaration of neutrality and proclamations relating to arms embargoes to belligerents and rules for citizens travelling by sea.[174] On 8 September, having taken notice of newspaper reports regarding Belgium's adoption of neutrality, Rynne wrote to Seán Murphy, in Paris, asking him to "endeavour to obtain a copy of the

[171] Ibid.
[172] Rynne considered himself third in official terms in the departmental bureaucratic structure, but this excluded the Minister (de Valera). See NAI DFA 10/PS/18, Rynne to Boland, 5 June 1948.
[173] NAI DFA 414/24/9, Cremins to Walshe, 1 and 2 September 1939.
[174] NAI DFA Washington Embassy Files, Robert Brennan to Walshe, 7 September 1939.

Belgian declaration of neutrality for the Minister's information".[175] With efficiency, Murphy complied the same day. A copy of the declaration of neutrality made by the Scandinavian Group — the Kingdom of Denmark and Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the Finnish Republic — was also provided by the Swedish Consul in Dublin.[176] On 14 September, Assistant Secretary Boland, wrote to the Irish Minister in Spain, Leopold Kerney, seeking the text of Spain's neutrality decree. He was also instructed to report on Spanish censorship and measures taken, in general, to legislate for Spanish neutrality.[177] However, Spain appears to have been an outlier in respect of preparations. Kerney's eventual report informed Dublin that they had not implemented any special legislative or military measures in September, and had appeared to be little concerned with defending neutrality.[178]

As in Portugal, an official public declaration of Irish neutrality was not made.[179] However, on 12 September 1939, the government presented an *aide-mémoire* to the British, French and German governments detailing restrictions on military vessels and aircraft in Irish territorial waters and over Irish airspace.[180] This precluded British use of the Treaty Ports, as Churchill had feared. De Valera assigned the task of composing the document to Rynne.[181] John P. Duggan, who interviewed Rynne in his later years, stated that a formal written document was against the wishes of Walshe, who preferred to allow space for the British way of "muddling through", but the decision was de Valera's.[182] Rynne composed

[175] NAI DFA 241/81, Rynne to Murphy, 8 September 1939.
[176] NAI DFA 241/107, Swedish Consul Nils L. Jaenson to DEA, (undated) signed by Walshe.
[177] NAI DFA 219/2, Boland to Leopold Kerney, 14 September 1939.
[178] Ibid., Kerney to Walshe, 22 September 1939.
[179] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, p. 289.
[180] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers 2/202/38, Unsigned proclamation to the British, French and German governments, 12 September 1939.
[181] The document heavily references the legality of Irish restrictions under the Hague Conventions and alludes to knowledge of measures undertaken in other neutral states. A note Rynne made in pen, in 1954, highlights that the document is important. See Ibid., Aide-Mémoire for the British, French and German governments, 12 September 1939.
[182] Duggan, *Neutral Ireland and the Third Reich*, pp. 72-73.

the *aide-mémoire* based on his knowledge of the Hague Conventions. Indicative of his use of reports received from Irish diplomats in neutral states, he also outlined that the government was acting "in accordance with the practices of the other neutrals" by imposing restrictions on belligerent submarines.[183] A few days later, External Affairs sent a telegram to the Irish Minister at the Vatican, William Macauley, to "notify [the] Vatican officially of Ireland's neutrality".[184] Only states that had direct diplomatic relations with Éire were notified of the country's position.[185] Macauley was also instructed to tell the Irish Chargé d'Affaires ad Interim in Berlin, William Warnock,[186] to inform the German government if he had "not already done so".[187]

The issue of the *aide-mémoire* was the first with which the recently proposed United Kingdom Representative to Éire, Sir John Maffey, had to contend.[188] Maffey informed de Valera, on 14 September, that the British government was profoundly disappointed to read of the need to affirm the imposition of the restrictions and begged for the document not to be released. He told de Valera that, if he made the *aide-mémoire* known, it would excite further negative opinion in Britain towards Ireland and add to problems of the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain.[189] De Valera did not make a commitment but he did agree

[183] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers 2/202/38, Aide-Mémoire for the British, French and German governments, 12 September 1939.
[184] NAI DFA Holy See Embassy 20/34, Walshe to William Macauley, 19 September 1939.
[185] See NAI DFA Secretary's Files P4, Walshe to Hearne, 31 October 1939.
[186] Warnock was promoted to Chargé d'Affaires ad Interim from First Secretary after the Irish Minister to Germany was dismissed from his position by de Valera for his anti-British, pro-Nazi views and abrasive attitude in communications with External Affairs, see Duggan, *Neutral Ireland and the Third Reich*, pp. 30-31.
[187] NAI DFA Holy See Embassy 20/34, Walshe to Macauley, 19 September 1939.
[188] Maffey was presented to the Irish government as Britain's "very best man [they] had available in the whole field of [their] public life", see TNA PREM 1/340, Anthony Eden to Neville Chamberlain, 9 September 1939.
[189] See Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 107-112 and Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, pp. 17-20, which both contain extracts from the meeting between de Valera and Maffey. John P. Duggan wrote, in 1985, that the *aide-mémoire* had disappeared, and that Rynne had jokingly told him that its disappearance was a 'mini-Watergate', see Duggan, *Ireland and the Third Reich*, pp. 72-73. In 2004, Duggan again queried the lack of clarity around the *aide-mémoire* and its "mysterious muzzling", see Duggan's review of O'Driscoll, *Ireland, Germany and the Nazis*, in *History Ireland* (Vol. 12, No .3, Autumn, 2004), p. 62. The document, however, was contained in Rynne's papers held in the National Archives and can also be viewed in Crowe et al., *DIFP: VI, 1939 – 1941*, pp. 23-24.

to permit the British Admiralty appoint liaisons to assist Irish efforts in watching the coast of the island for submarines. De Valera also told Maffey that the Irish would wirelessly broadcast positions of submarines to the world, which, because of geographical realities, would only be of benefit to the British Navy.[190] De Valera told Maffey he "had put in the ban on submarines to please [them]", but he had to balance that with a restriction on aircraft.[191] Maffey told de Valera that they expected Irish neutrality to be emphasised in a general way, but not by rigid rules.[192] Anthony Eden, British Dominions Secretary, believed formal recognition of Irish neutrality by the United Kingdom would also pose a serious difficulty as Éire was still part of the Commonwealth.[193] De Valera, however, was informed by Hearne or Rynne, in April 1939, that there was no legal requirement for Éire to make an official declaration of neutrality:

> Declarations of neutrality, whatever form they may take in practice, are simply declarations of policy or intention and do not per se create rights cognisable by international law. That is to say, a State is neutral until it declares war or embarks on, or intervenes in hostilities without a declaration of war […] Declarations of neutrality are accordingly optional only[.][194]

Hearne, who was appointed Irish High Commissioner to Canada in June 1939, was only instructed on how to present Irish neutrality at the end of October. Walshe telegrammed that "[y]ou need not unduly emphasise that from a legal standpoint no general enactment yet made equivalent to formal declaration of neutrality".[195] He added that Ireland's neutrality was communicated to the belligerents and states with which Éire had direct relations. As no declaration was legally required, or subsequently made, it seems likely that

[190] See TNA PREM 1/340, Maffey to Eden (subsequently shown to Chamberlain), 24 September 1939.
[191] TNA PREM 1/340, Maffey to Eden (subsequently shown to Chamberlain), 24 September 1939.
[192] See Ibid. and Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 107-108. Fisk used a different document to this author in his book, but both are summaries of conversations between de Valera and Maffey in mid-September.
[193] See Ibid. and Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 110.
[194] NAI DT S/5096, Unsigned, but certainly from the Legal Advisor (Hearne) or his Assistant (Rynne) to de Valera, 25 April 1939.
[195] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P4, Walshe to Hearne, 31 October 1939.

de Valera, who wrote to Chamberlain to express his sympathy with his difficulties,[196] did not wish to create any unnecessary additional problems for either Éire or Britain at that time. The decision not to issue a public decree of Irish neutrality like other neutral states, and de Valera's decision to ask Rynne to compose the *aide-mémoire* against the opinion of Walshe, show the importance and influence of External Affairs' Legal Advisor during the policy formulation stage.

Keeping a Close Watch on the Neutrals

On 16 September, Rynne surmised that "[i]t is becoming increasingly evident that the maintenance of our neutrality is going to involve us, practically every day, in difficult decisions of policy".[197] Writing on the peculiarities of the Irish neutral position the following week, he observed:

> In general, we will, no doubt, endeavour to keep our policy in line as far as we can with that of such small States as Belgium, Holland and Denmark. It should, however, be remembered that most of the European neutral countries find themselves surrounded by rival belligerents. Ireland's geographical position is almost unique in Europe in that she has as her immediate neighbours two belligerents which are fighting as allies in the present war. Moreover, whereas other neutral countries have been compelled by circumstances and enabled by their previous experience to deal with their particular neutrality problems in a comprehensive manner, this country has taken, so far, scarcely any overt steps to establish in law the status [of neutrality] for which the Taoiseach declared himself in favour as far back as February last.[198]

The geo-strategic position in which the continental neutrals found themselves did not correspond with the relatively safe position of Ireland. In the context of playing down comparisons he felt may be made in the Dáil, regarding the neutrality policies of other states, Rynne submitted that, "as few comparisons as possible should be made between the Government's neutrality programme here and the practice of neutrality in other countries

[196] De Valera hand-wrote this message to Chamberlain: "I would like you to know how much I sympathise with you in your present anxieties". See TNA PREM 1/340, de Valera to Chamberlain, 22 September 1939.
[197] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Rynne to Walshe, 16 September 1939.
[198] Ibid., 26 September 1939.

which are in but few respects similar to our own".[199] De Valera was no doubt influenced by this argument when he distanced Irish censorship concerns from those of Switzerland and Belgium during a debate in the Seanad (Senate) in October.[200] However, Rynne often referred to the actions of the other neutrals in his memoranda during September. He also advocated learning from the examples of the press in other neutral states, particularly Belgium.[201] Though Rynne praised the Belgian press for their objectivity, External Affairs learned in the middle of October that the Belgian government "envisaged imposing a strict censorship".[202] It seems likely, therefore, that attempts to distance the government from comparisons with them had much to do with deflecting unwelcome questions in the Dáil while Éire's strict policy was still being formulated.

During the Dáil session on 27 September, the government received wide-ranging questions from Opposition TDs regarding the rationing of petrol, war risks insurance, unemployment, supplies and other more minor matters, such as the price of eggs. Francis Cremins had sent External Affairs material relating to similar issues in Switzerland on 11 September, and it may have arrived in Dublin prior to the Dáil session. Cremins included:

> […] copies of the multifarious laws and decrees which are being brought into force by the Federal Authorities to meet the situation in which Switzerland finds itself. These bear on many subjects, for example, neutrality and maintenance of neutrality; organisation of war economy; use of wireless stations; limitation of exports; insurance of transports against war risks; prices and cost of living; grinding of corn, etc.; provisional rationing of petrol and oil; entry of aliens, etc. etc. The bringing into force of compulsory service for work of national importance is especially interesting. This has been rendered necessary of course by the withdrawal of labour for military service.[203]

Cremins also remarked that Geneva was "much quieter than usual", owing to the general mobilisation under which "so many men [were] withdrawn for military service".[204] Irish

[199] Ibid.
[200] *Seanad Debates*, Vol. 23, No. 11, Col. 1244, 4 October 1939.
[201] NAI DFA Legal Adviser's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne to Walshe, 15 September 1939.
[202] NAI DFA 219/21, Murphy to Walshe, 10 October 1939 (received in Dublin on 16 October 1939).
[203] NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Walshe, 11 September 1939.
[204] Ibid.

defensive measures, which were poor by comparison, were queried during the Dáil session. Minister for Defence, Oscar Traynor, was questioned by Dr. O'Higgins as to the numbers of men mobilised. Traynor replied that he did not think "it is in the public interest, at the moment anyhow, to give the figures".[205] When asked if that was also the Taoiseach's view, he replied that it was. Rynne composed a memorandum in September that was likely produced prior to the Dáil sitting. He highlighted how Holland and Switzerland ensured their neutrality in the First World War through military deterrence,[206] and he also compiled a list of the defensive preparations in other neutral states:

> Belgium has proceeded with complete mobilisation measures, so that the country now has an efficient army of nearly 750,000 under arms. The force is superior to the Belgian army of 1914 and the Belgian frontier forts, constructed on the same lines as the Maginot Line, although not so elaborately, are more formidable obstacles than the pre-war system of isolated fortresses. [...] The Belgian Government asked parliament for special powers and a special credit of 2,000,000,000 francs (about £11,000,000).
>
> Mobilisation of the Netherlands army and navy was carried out on 29th August, a few days before the invasion of Poland. [...] The order affecting the army includes the reservist classes from 1924 up to an including 1939.
>
> The Danish Government, on September 1st, called up five classes of men, totalling 40,000. Parliament met on the same night to pass several urgent emergency measures. Previously, only 8,000 men were under arms, equivalent to one year's supply of recruits. The Navy had a further 2,000. It is claimed in official circles that an army potential of 100,000 trained men could, in case of necessity, be mobilised in 24 hours. Arrangements are complete to call up members of the Auxiliary Services for civilian assistance and defence.
>
> The Swiss Federal Council decided on 28th August to proceed with the full Swiss frontier mobilisation. This involved calling to the colours between 80,000 and 100,000 men. It was announced on September 1st that general mobilisation would take place on the following day. On 11th September it was reported that Switzerland had completed her general mobilisation and has now between 500,000 and 600,000 well equipped men under arms to defend her neutrality.[207]

Rynne's reservations about drawing comparisons between Ireland and the other neutrals was likely influenced by his knowledge of defensive preparations abroad. In another lengthy memorandum Rynne composed for de Valera the day before the Dáil session, he advised that:

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[205] *Dáil Debates,* Vol. 77., No. 2, Col. 251, 27 September 1939.
[206] NAI DFA Legal Adviser's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne, undated but September 1939.
[207] Ibid., Memorandum of Rynne entitled 'Neutrality', undated but September 1939.

> The comments and criticisms of Deputies [Irish parliamentarians] regarding the steps already taken to establish and preserve our present status might result in placing this Department, and the Government as a whole, in the highly vulnerable position of having to explain in minute detail the particular brand of neutrality adopted by this country. So far as we know, no other foreign Minister nor head of State of a neutral country has felt bound to render account of the operation of the neutrality policy to Parliament since this war began.[208]

De Valera's subsequent remarks in the Dáil, on 27 September, were a call for unity: "no Government could carry on here if the type of cross-examination, which seemed to be thought as natural in the case of some Deputies to-day were to be indulged in".[209] Rynne's advice, and de Valera's remarks, lend themselves to a view that the reason they believed comparisons with the other neutrals were to be avoided was to prevent unwelcome criticism.

Irish defence preparations fell far short of the other small neutrals. Ireland may have been geographically removed from German aggression, but there were long-held views in the Irish government "that Britain was most likely to attack Ireland".[210] Rynne made note of the possibility that the British might demand a return of the Treaty Ports regardless of the 1938 agreement which handed them over to Éire:

> [E]ven the clearest and most emphatic treaties have been unable to withstand the pressure of necessity […] When a State found itself fighting with its back to the wall, it preferred life to the observance of its promises. [...] The fact is that, in time of peace States agree to certain legal rules by which they refuse to be bound when urgent self-interest dictates a contrary course. History is strewn with such broken promises.[211]

In November, External Affairs sent a number of Swiss reports on the organisation of their military to the Department of Defence. One such report contained press cuttings from Swiss newspapers detailing "ways and means by which money may be found to pay the heavy expense connected with general mobilisation".[212] Another outlined methods of maintaining

[208] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers 2/202/37, Rynne to Walshe, 26 September 1939.
[209] *Dáil Debates,* Vol. 77, No. 2, Col. 260, 27 September 1939.
[210] O'Farrell, '"The Model Army"', p. 122.
[211] NAI DFA Legal Adviser's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne entitled 'Neutrality', undated but September 1939.
[212] NAI DFA 241/75, Rynne to Department of Finance, 3 November 1939.

"a high morale amongst the troops during the period of mobilisation".[213] On 5 October, Cremins sent copies of the emergency measures taken by Switzerland during the First World War,[214] which he later updated.[215] Rynne noted that these reports were "removed for use".[216] Operations of the Swiss military and defences were examined closely throughout the war. De Valera himself recalled a trip to Switzerland a few years previous where he had experienced Swiss black-out tests and he mused on the use of similar mechanisms in Ireland.[217]

Nonetheless, though the Irish government was aware of an organised general mobilisation in Switzerland since the start of September,[218] Irish mobilisation that month was slow and lacked strong organisation. Three weeks after the outbreak of hostilities "nearly all units were under strength and many units provided for had not even been organised".[219] Furthermore, equipment was old or in poor condition and "many personnel were only partly trained, and neither of the brigades had any experience of working as a combat team".[220] Not all saw the need for defence however. De Valera's call for unity in the Dáil on 27 September makes this clear:

> We are asked, for example, in that connection: "Why have you mobilised the Army; is it going to be expensive?" It is going to be expensive. But again, the very people who ask why do we mobilise the Army or why do we put ourselves into a position of defence and increase the expenditure by so doing, would be the first to criticise the Government if, through lack of taking the necessary precautions, we were driven from our present position of neutrality, or if the national interests were seriously damaged in any way. Every one of the small States in Europe has had to face the expense of the mobilisation of an Army many times greater than our Army. I do not know if there is any other State in Europe that has had such a small standing army as we have been maintaining for years past. But of this I am certain, that there is no State in Europe to-

[213] NAI DFA 241/75, Cremins to Walshe, 13 November 1939.
[214] NAI 414/24/9, Cremins to Walshe, 5 October.
[215] Ibid., Cremins to Walshe, 29 November 1939.
[216] Ibid., 5 October 1939 and 29 November 1939.
[217] *Seanad Debates*, Vol. 23, No. 11, Col. 1260, 4 October 1939.
[218] NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Walshe, 2 September 1939.
[219] Young, 'Defence and the New Irish State', p. 34.
[220] Ibid.

> day that is not maintaining a force many times the size of the force which we are maintaining, and having to bear the cost of it, too.[221]

Dublin was aware that the other neutral states were prepared to defend their neutrality, and Rynne appears to have assumed that they would do so in strict accordance with international law. He emphasised what he believed to be Ireland's unique interpretation of neutrality, "there is no example of a State in this or any other war (except ourselves) intending to repatriate the crews of belligerent military aircraft which may land upon the neutral national territory".[222] It is likely that Rynne's thoughts on the matter were related to de Valera's decision, on the day the war began, to permit a British flying-boat and its crew that had landed off the Dublin coast to take-off again. Ultimately, the Irish government did not carry out the intentions Rynne noted — many Allied aircrews and all German aircrews were interned — and the neutrals did not follow international law in this area as rigidly as, perhaps, he assumed. Again, this point will be explored in more depth in Chapter 5 as it became a larger issue later in the war, and the neutrals were formulating policy in the absence of legal precedents in 1939. Later evidence would show him that other neutrals were also willing to repatriate air crews. Keogh has stated that Walshe also took the Vatican's publicly declared policies at face value, and was unaware that that their actions in private differed.[223]

Irish efforts to keep their neutrality broadly in line with that of the other small neutrals can be seen in their approach to the League of Nations Assembly in December 1939. The Twentieth Assembly had been scheduled for September, but was pushed back to December due to the war. Walshe instructed Cremins to "communicate formally to the Secretary General of the League that Ireland intends to maintain neutrality in the present war".[224] The

[221] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 77. No. 2, Col. 268, 27 September 1939.
[222] NAI DFA Legal Adviser's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne, undated but September 1939.
[223] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 118.
[224] NAI DFA 227/87, Walshe to Cremins, 4 October 1939.

upcoming session was a source of some concern for Walshe, who believed that "[p]olitical initiatives would be embarrassing to us and probably other neutrals as well".[225] Cremins was informed to enquire "what views [the] Scandinavian and other neutrals [were] taking re holding of [the] Assembly session".[226] He reported that there was agreement amongst the neutrals that the Assembly should take place but they were very anxious that nothing should arise "which would be of embarrassment to neutral countries, and especially to the Swiss Government".[227] The Swiss government did not wish to incur any negative ramifications arising out of antagonistic initiatives from a body which did not contain Germany or many states friendly to her.[228]

The beginning of the Winter War between the Soviet Union and Finland put the Assembly in further doubt, but the Assembly did take place and Cremins represented Éire instead of de Valera, who did not see how the League could "act effectively in the matter".[229] Not wishing to commit to any hard-line stance, such as that of proposing the expulsion of the Soviet Union from the League,[230] Cremins was informed by telephone to express Ireland's attitude as one which "would take full account of the views of the neighbouring States [the Scandinavian states]".[231] The Assembly took place without much incident to the relief of Cremins, who surmised that it had been "a tense week".[232] Cremins' speech at the Assembly was in accord with the view of the neutrals, and Walshe, that embarrassment be avoided:

> The appeal of Finland which is now being considered by this Session of the Assembly is not at all a simple matter. The wrong done to Finland is in no sense obscure, and, in ordinary times, most States would, I imagine, have no difficulty in formulating a

[225] NAI DFA 226/31, Re-produced in Memorandum Cremins to Walshe, 27 October 1939.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid.
[228] For more information on the final League Assembly, see Beck, 'The League of Nations and the Great Powers, 1936 – 1940', pp. 177-178.
[229] NAI DFA 226/46, de Valera to Carl J. Hambro (Geneva), 8 December 1939.
[230] The Soviet Union was, however, expelled on 14 December 1939.
[231] NAI DFA 226/46, Cremins to Walshe, 12 December 1939.
[232] NAI DFA 226/46, Cremins to Walshe, 15 December 1939.

> policy. But in these times which bristle with difficulties for many States, it is no simple matter for a State which is situated far from the scene of action to fix its attitude, in view of the general complexities of the situation and of the conflict of interests which exists for many countries.[233]

Irish interest in the League was effectively at an end. From Berlin, Warnock's report of the German view of the League was that it was "moribund – if not dead".[234] Cremins' position, however, did not lose its importance. Information on the operation of Swiss neutrality continued to flow from him to Dublin. For inexperienced neutral Ireland, the availability of reports and reference material from an experienced neutral such as Switzerland continued to be of great importance.

Conclusion

This chapter has located the practical genesis of Irish neutrality in its international context. The failure of the League of Nations to effectively address the Abyssinia Crisis indicated the impotence of the organisation to protect small states against larger powers. Consequently, European small neutral states re-established more comprehensive neutrality policies. Ireland's reaction to the degeneration of the international system was to pursue the freedom of manoeuvrability to adopt neutrality through the return of the Treaty Ports. Following the Munich Crisis and failed Anglo-Irish defence talks in 1938, de Valera's government signalled Ireland's intention to remain neutral in a future conflict. In doing so, the Irish government was adopting the common course of Europe's other small states. Ireland's wartime neutrality policy was, therefore, not an ideological response, but a pragmatic response to the failure of collective security. It is also true, however, that Irish

[233] Ibid., Statement by Cremins to League of Nations Assembly Committee of Twelve on the Russian Invasion of Finland, 1 January 1940.
[234] NAI DFA 219/4, William Warnock to Walshe, 13 January 1940.

neutrality served the nationalistic desires of the de Valera administration to emphasise Irish independence and sovereignty.

Though having sought the freedom to pursue neutrality, efforts by Irish policy-makers to consider the practicalities of its implementation were made rather late. Until 1939, Irish interest in the operation of the neutrality policies of the other neutrals was both ad hoc and infrequent. While tentative explorations of Swiss defence policies were undertaken, they had little impact while the Irish Army was constricted by the Department of Finance. It was not until after the Taoiseach's public declaration of Ireland's intention to remain neutral, in early 1939, that External Affairs' Legal Advisor reviewed material relating to Swiss neutrality in the First World War. Reports on international affairs from the Irish delegate to the League of Nations, however, were of much interest in Dublin. Cremins' reports have been mentioned by Michael Kennedy in his work on Ireland's membership of the League of Nations, but his importance as a key set of eyes and ears in the heart of Europe has not received sufficient mention in the historiography of the period.

After the war began, the Michael Rynne assumed a highly influential role in shaping Ireland's neutrality policy. He reviewed numerous documents and reports from Irish diplomats in neutral states, which influenced his memoranda for de Valera and Walshe. While the government viewed their interpretation of neutrality as specific to the Irish situation, they were also concerned with keeping Irish policy broadly in line with other small neutral states. Irish neutrality was communicated to the belligerents and states with which Éire had direct relations, but no public declaration was made. The *aide-mémoire* informing the belligerents of Irish intentions to restrict use of their waters and airspace affirmed Éire's neutral rights, but was not broadcast publicly to avoid unnecessary anti-Irish feeling in Britain.

Irish policy, therefore, was pragmatic. It was ambiguously friendly to Britain, but was portrayed as legalistically strict on an official basis. The government wished to avoid comparisons with other neutral states who they believed faced different geo-strategic threats as Ireland was firmly within the British defensive zone, but was anxious to learn of their reactions to comparable problems. This counter-balancing of threats and interests was the essence of "[b]alancing on a neutral tightrope".[235]

[235] Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 133.

Chapter 2:

Diplomatic Expansion and Consolidation, 1940 – 1941

Introduction

As shown in the previous chapter, Dublin was receiving information on war preparations in other neutral states since 1937. In the first few months of the war, the operation of the other neutrals' neutrality policies was not known in detail, but the government formulated Irish policies based on what knowledge they had of them. During 1940 a subtle change in External Affairs' priorities transpired. The government began to identify specific areas of interest in Swiss policies and Francis Cremins was instructed to provide material. Interest in the workings of the Portuguese state is also visible from early 1940 and this chapter shows that the government concluded there were pragmatic advantages to obtaining closer relations with other neutrals. The culmination of Irish interest in their practices, and the benefits of greater information exchanges through closer contact with them, precipitated the creation of Irish legations in Switzerland and Portugal, and contributed to the decision to ensure experienced diplomatic representation at the Vatican.

The opening of legations in Berne (1940) and Lisbon (1941) was a significant development for Irish foreign policy. From the foundation of the state to 1939, Ireland had established diplomatic relations with only nine states: Britain (1922), USA (1924), Holy See, France and Germany (1929), Belgium (1931), Spain (1935), Italy (1938) and Canada

(1939).[1] Keatinge has suggested that the legations in Italy, Switzerland, Portugal and Sweden (1947), were created to assist "the establishment of friendly relations with most of the remaining west European states".[2] He argued that the failure of the League's collective security prompted the Irish government to "extend its diplomatic scope".[3] His contentions are, however, too general. In fact, there were compelling reasons to open new legations in Portugal and Switzerland and their establishment represented a shift in External Affairs' priorities towards closer relations with similar small neutral states. The value of the legations as listening posts on the continent, from where the government could glean useful information on neutrality, and their logistical importance, also made their creation rational and important.

Francis Cremins, in particular, appears to have been the most useful source of information on neutrality policies abroad. Reasons for this can be attributed to Switzerland's long experience of neutrality, the Vatican's lack of similarity with larger nations, Spain's lack of neutrality policies, and the fall of neutral Belgium, which was the only other European neutral with whom Éire had diplomatic relations until late 1941. Additionally, the confluence of international diplomats posted to the League of Nations in Geneva and Switzerland's position as "one of the main European Crossroads",[4] made the country "a good barometer of continental opinion".[5] Unfortunately, a large number of files have been destroyed which would have given greater insight into Irish diplomacy during 1940. Due to invasion fears, Cremins incinerated all the confidential reports he could find

[1] Based on the list compiled in Crowe et al., *DIFP: VI, 1939 – 1941*, pp. 469-470; this list was preferred to that set out in Patrick Keatinge, *The Formulation of Irish Foreign Policy* (Institute of Public Administration, Dublin, 1973), pp. 110-111, which dates the establishment of relations with Britain to 1923 and Belgium to 1932.
[2] Keatinge, *The Formulation of Irish Foreign Policy*, p. 111.
[3] Ibid.
[4] W. P. Grieve, 'The Present Position of "Neutral" States', *Transactions of the Grotius Society* (Vol. 33, Problems of Public and Private International Law, 1947), p. 100.
[5] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, pp. 237-238.

up to at least 31 May 1940. Similarly, Joseph Walshe destroyed an unknown number of his files marked 'Secret' during that year,[6] the Berlin legation files for the period were destroyed in an RAF air raid in 1943, the Irish High Commissioner's Office files in London were shredded in the 1950s due to water damage, and the Washington legation files were destroyed for reasons unknown.[7] As Switzerland was clearly a neutral of interest to Dublin, much of the missing material may have been helpful in assessing External Affairs' specific interest in Swiss neutrality policies. The scale of developments on the continent made the regular reports from Éire's diplomatic posts across Europe all the more valuable.[8] Nonetheless, surviving material that does exist, while somewhat disjointed, displays Cremins' usefulness to Dublin.

The first section of this chapter explores the reasons for the establishment of diplomatic relations with Switzerland, Dublin's requests for information, and Cremins' role after his new appointment. Cremins' function was not merely to foster friendly relations with another Western European government, but to act as the eyes and ears of External Affairs within a traditionally neutral country that was a hotbed of international diplomatic activity. Kennedy's assessment that Berne "became a key part of the Irish diplomatic framework on the continent during the war",[9] rightly highlights Switzerland's increased importance to Dublin after 1940. A treatment of Éire's relationship with the League of Nations, after Cremins assumed the duties of Chargé d'Affaires, is also included. Though the League was

[6] Keogh notes that John Belton (an Assistant Principal Officer in External Affairs in 1940 who later served as an Irish diplomat in various guises in Britain, Sweden, Spain, West Germany, Finland, Norway and Canada) had heard from Joseph Walshe's private secretary that de Valera ordered Walshe to destroy the files and to destroy the order to destroy the files. See Keogh, 'Joseph Walshe, Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs, 1922 – 46', p. 60n.

[7] See NAI DFA Berne Embassy Files, Geneva Series 1/6, Cremins to Boland, 31 May 1940; Crowe et al., *DIFP VI: 1939 – 1941*, p. 465 and Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 243. Kennedy also confirmed to this author privately, on 15-08-16, that the High Commissioner's files were indeed shredded.

[8] See Crowe et al., *DIFP VI: 1939 – 1941*, p. xiii, which highlights the regular reportage of Irish diplomats in Paris, Berlin, Rome and Geneva.

[9] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 246. Also mentioned in Kennedy, Cremins, Francis ('Frank') Thomas, *Dictionary of Irish Biography*. http://dib.cambridge.org/quicksearch.do# [accessed 19-02-16]

of no real practical use by that time, Éire's continued membership served to avoid further international isolation.

Relations between Ireland and the Vatican are examined in the next section. The absence of a senior diplomat at the posting from the summer of 1940 — after the Irish Minister left for the United States on health grounds — presented difficulties for External Affairs. Dublin was unwilling to leave the post in the hands of a junior diplomat, and the consolidation of Irish representation at the Holy See emphasised the legation's importance to Irish domestic and foreign policy. The chapter concludes with an exploration of the reasons behind the establishment of formal relations with neutral Portugal. Dr. António de Oliveira Salazar's *Estado Novo* (New State), was of interest to members of the government and ecclesiastical circles in Ireland. As a fellow neutral country beset by internecine conflict in its recent past, and unified by a staunchly Catholic dictator, similarities with de Valera's Ireland and Portugal were made. The establishment of a legation in Portugal reflected the government's desire to protect Irish neutrality by learning from their fellow neutrals. Practical logistical concerns of establishing a presence at a neutral entry point to Europe via Lisbon's port also made the creation of a legation an attractive proposition.

Overall, this chapter shows that recalibrations to the Irish diplomatic network after the summer of 1940 were pragmatic responses to the expansion of the war and symbolic of External Affairs' shifting attitude from implementing a unique Irish neutrality policy to one more closely aligned to the other neutrals.

Switzerland

On 9 April 1940, the so called 'Phoney War', during which military engagements were relatively light, ended when Germany invaded neutral Denmark and Norway. The Irish government subsequently became more interested in typical defence concerns. Francis Cremins' reports from Geneva highlighted deep anxieties in neutral Switzerland in the immediate aftermath of the German offensive. On 10 April, Cremins informed Dublin of remarks, made in the Swiss National Council,[10] regarding the tendency of the belligerents "to disregard the rights of neutrals".[11] The Swiss lower house recognised "the consequent danger to small peaceful States", and Cremins noted a growing feeling amongst the Swiss population that "the turn of Switzerland will come eventually".[12] Joseph Walshe was similarly pessimistic. German successes prompted him to ask Leopold Kerney what the Spanish government's likely reaction would be "if Germany's chances of winning [the war were] increased".[13] If Kerney replied, however, it is possible the document was destroyed.[14] A report from the Irish Minister to Italy, Michael MacWhite, survives from this period,[15] and states that the tone of the Italian press had changed from neutral to pro-German and anti-Ally, to the point that "one might be inclined to conclude that the country [was] being prepared for an eventual intervention on the side of Germany".[16]

In light of the expansion of the war, Francis Cremins' reports from Switzerland focused increasingly on military defence matters. On 19 April, Cremins highlighted domestic

[10] Switzerland's bicameral Federal Assembly comprises the Council of States (upper house) and the National Council (lower house).
[11] NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Walshe, 10 April 1940.
[12] Ibid.
[13] NAI DFA Madrid Embassy 5/4, Walshe to Kerney, 12 April 1940.
[14] Éamon de Valera ordered the destruction of documents within the DEA, in May 1940, due to fears of a German invasion. See Crowe et al., *DIFP VI: 1939 – 1941*, p. xi.
[15] A copy of the report was retained by MacWhite and appears amongst his personal papers held in University College Dublin. See UCDA P194/540 Michael MacWhite Papers, MacWhite to Walshe, 15 April 1940.
[16] UCDA P194/540 Michael MacWhite Papers, MacWhite to Walshe, 15 April 1940.

security concerns in Switzerland. He detailed how the Swiss had issued directions to counter German methods, such as fifth-column activity and parachutists. He explained that the precautions were taken because "those methods [had] impressed many small neutral States including [Switzerland]".[17] Michael Rynne clearly thought the report important as he retained it for use. However, as will be shown in the next chapter, the Irish government did not increase defence preparations until after the German offensive against Belgium, the Netherlands and France, on 10 May. Cremins, meanwhile, continued to supply information on Swiss preparations. On 3 June, reflective of heightened fears of German attacks against other neutrals, he forwarded material relating to the construction of shelters in Switzerland in the event of aerial bombardment.[18] As a consequence of German aggression against small neutral states, the priorities of External Affairs underwent a significant though subtle shift. As shown in the previous chapter, during the Phoney War, Dublin received, analysed, and formulated policy informed by information obtained from Irish diplomats in the other neutral states. After the end of the Phoney War, however, External Affairs began to make pointed and specific requests for information from Cremins as their interest deepened.

The withdrawal of the British Expeditionary Force at Dunkirk, and German advances into France, brought heightened fears that a German invasion of Britain and Ireland would follow. On 10 June, Cremins was instructed by External Affairs to obtain copies of a decree — from Swiss President Marcel Pílet-Golaz and the General of the Swiss Army, General

[17] NAI DFA 414/24/9, Cremins to Walshe, 19 April 1940.
[18] Following a conversation with a diplomat at Berne, he ascertained the necessary materials used in their construction; "the walls are stayed inside by means of heavy beams of wood, and steel doors are provided. The second exit is regarded as indispensable". NAI DFA 241/53, Cremins to Walshe, 3 June 1940.

Henri Guisan[19] — that told "the Swiss people what to do in the event of an invasion".[20] On 13 June, he was given an even more important task. External Affairs instructed him to act as intermediary for communications between Dublin and the Irish representative in Berlin, William Warnock. This link was crucial to Irish diplomacy over the summer of 1940 when Joseph Walshe thought a German victory was assured, and German intentions towards Éire were a source of serious concern. Cremins was told:

> Ask Warnock to address his mail and telegrams for us to you for transmission here if German authorities decline to accept them addressed direct STOP Please tell Warnock not to forward secret dispatches to you unless he can use bag STOP The Personal Code Telegrams received by you for transmission should of course be transmitted in personal code.[21]

Cremins does not appear to have recorded the number of telegrams he relayed in 1940, but in 1941 he relayed 126 telegrams from Warnock to Dublin. Based on these figures,[22] it can be presumed that the number from June 1940 until the end of the year was considerable. In August, Cremins was also instructed by Dublin to inform them of the Swiss approach to internment. The first forced landing of a German aircraft in Éire had taken place on 20 August, during the Battle of Britain, when a Focke Wulf Condor crashed into Mount Brandon, County Kerry. Six German airmen were subsequently interned in the newly constructed K-Lines internment camp in the Curragh, County Kildare.[23] On 24 August, Cremins wrote to the Head of the Political Department of the Swiss Foreign Office to ascertain under what conditions internees could be visited and fraternise with the local

[19] Pílet-Golaz was Swiss President for the year of 1940 and was succeeded by Ernst Wetter. For an account of his role during the Second World War, see Neville Wylie, 'Pílet-Golaz and the Making of Swiss Foreign Policy: Some Remarks', in Georg Kreis (ed.), *Switzerland and the Second World War* (Frank Cass Publishers, London, 2000), pp. 158-170. Guisan was the General of Swiss Army (a rank rarely used) for the duration of the war. For an English language biography of Guisan, see Willi Gautschi, *General Henri Guisan: Commander-in-Chief of the Swiss Army in World War II* (Front Street Press, 2003).
[20] NAI DFA Berne and Geneva Letterbooks, Dr. Nicholas G. Nolan to Cremins, 10 June 1940.
[21] Ibid., DEA to Cremins, 13 June 1940.
[22] NAI DFA Berne Embassy Box 4 Be 3/11, Annual Report of the Berne Legation for 1941, Cremins to Walshe, 10 January 1942.
[23] The mountain was hidden behind thick cloud at the time of the forced landing and the crew were lucky to have survived. This incident is examined in detail in Dwyer, *Guests of the State*, pp. 24-30.

population, as well as the measurements of their confined area.[24] On 5 October, Cremins forwarded information on these internees to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).[25] Cremins sent a number of reports to Dublin pertaining to Swiss internment practices, which detailed the university courses offered to internees, trials for escapees, and distractions by way of entertainment provided to those in the internment camps.[26] Switzerland was an important exemplar of neutrality in action for the Irish government. In recognising similar problems and searching for solutions amongst the other neutral states, Éire had become engaged in a continuous process of learning regarding the conduct of neutrality.

The Irish government was brought into closer contact with Switzerland in October 1940, when External Affairs opened a legation in Berne and approved the appointment of Francis Cremins as Chargé d'Affaires. The timing of this move signified the importance of the information Cremins was able to glean from the country to the maintenance of Irish neutrality. His new appointment would take him away from the diplomatic circles in Geneva, which were reduced in number anyway, and bring him closer to institutions of the Swiss federal government, from which he could obtain more neutrality related material. As we have seen, Cremins was also already performing many of the duties of an official Irish representative to Switzerland anyway, such as reporting on international affairs and relaying information of Swiss governmental initiatives. He had also provided some consular duties and support to Irish citizens in Switzerland.[27] For all these reasons,

[24] My approximation of the original French text: "(1) Tous les internés militaries peuvent-ils recevoir des visites? Quelles sont les restrictions y relatives? (2) Les internés sont-ils autorisés à recontrer des personnes habitant localement et à quelle condition? (3) Comment les internés sont-ils confines et dans quelles limites?" NAI DFA League of Nation Series X (X.160), Cremins to Head of the Political Department at the Swiss Foreign Affairs Division, 24 August 1940.
[25] NAI DFA Berne and Geneva Letterbooks, Walshe to Cremins, 5 October 1940.
[26] NAI DFA 241/204, Cremins to Walshe, 16 October and 26 October 1940.
[27] In October 1939, Cremins wrote to Dublin to ask if he could extend the diplomatic passports of Seán Lester and Edward Phelan in a crisis situation, see NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Boland, 16 October 1939. William Norton commented in the Dáil on Cremins: "I should like to take this opportunity [...] to pay a tribute to the

Cremins' appointment was easy to justify. Cremins was well respected by de Valera, who commended him for rendering a "very efficient and satisfactory service in the Geneva post".[28] In the Dáil, de Valera set out the reasons for the creation of the new legation in Berne:

> It is important that we should have diplomatic relations with Switzerland. Everyone knows that Switzerland is one of the great small countries of Europe. Its traditions and culture, and the fact that great channels of communication pass through that country, all make it desirable that we should be represented there. A number of our citizens go to Switzerland from time to time as tourists and also for health purposes. It is desirable that we should have a representative there to give them the assistance which only a State representative can render.[29]

It is interesting to note that de Valera made no reference to Switzerland's neutrality. Though speculation, it is possible that for political reasons the Taoiseach did not wish to provide space for comparisons between the countries neutrality policies. It is also possible that he wished to avoid any suggestion that Ireland was learning from the Swiss as this would be to concede a degree of weakness or inexperience on the part of the Irish government. Regardless, the deepening of ties between the two countries met with broad approval, and went unopposed by the Opposition parties. Fine Gael TD Professor John Marcus O'Sullivan mentioned that "as Switzerland is in the very centre of Europe, it is very desirable, particularly at the present time, that we should have a person there to represent the interests of this country".[30] Costs were also considered negligible, with the difference between opening an office in Berne versus maintaining the office in Geneva estimated at

courtesy and efficient service which our representative at Geneva has rendered to our people. I know from personal knowledge that he has rendered excellent service to many people who were there for the first time. I had occasion myself to avail of services, which he gave very generously and very courteously, regarding travel facilities throughout the country. I am sure that, in his hands, our representation there will be perfectly safe, and that his deportment will enhance not only his own reputation but the reputation of the State."
See *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 81, No. 1, Col. 63, 2 October 1940.

[28] NAI DT S12118/A, Memorandum of Walshe for de Valera, 11 October 1940.

[29] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 81, No. 1, Col. 62, 2 October 1940. See also NAI DFA 217/39, External Affairs memorandum for de Valera on establishment of an Irish legation in Berne, undated but October 1940; the memorandum is also reproduced in Crowe et al., *DIFP VI: 1939 – 1941*, pp. 370-371.

[30] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 81, No. 1, Col. 62, 2 October 1940.

£10.[31] On 11 October, Cremins presented his credentials to Swiss President Pílet-Golaz, who received him cordially and spoke about Irish neutrality, trade and general affairs.[32]

Cremins' appointment brought a balance to representation between Ireland and Switzerland, after Dr. Benziger's promotion to Chargé in Dublin the year previous. Though no reason for the delay in appointing Cremins as Chargé was given, it seems reasonable to suggest that the Irish government was satisfied with the information he could obtain until the summer of 1940. From then, until Cremins' appointment, External Affairs' requests for information gained a greater degree of specificity and Ireland's geo-strategic position began to more closely resemble their fellow neutrals. These concerns may have been the catalysts which prompted the desire to establish closer relations with the Swiss government. Swiss interest in Ireland, however, does not appear to have been on the same level. Despite having raised the status of Dr. Benziger to Chargé in November 1939, the Swiss did not seek to send him diplomatic mailbags, unlike their arrangements in other countries of more importance to Switzerland.[33] It was only after the Irish proposed to send mailbags to Cremins that the Swiss requested a similar arrangement as a reciprocal measure. Diplomatic mailbags contained confidential reports, newspapers, code-books and sundry items for legations. That an exchange of mailbags was not sought by the Swiss until an exchange was proposed by the Irish, shows that while Éire looked to Switzerland as an archetype of neutrality, Swiss interest was more passive. This point is further evidenced by the fact that Dr. Benziger appears to have made very few approaches to the Irish government on behalf of Swiss interests or for information on Irish policies. Benziger's reports to Berne were informed by conversations with some Irish TDs, fellow diplomats and from Irish

[31] Ibid., Col. 61.
[32] NAI DFA 217/39, Cremins to Walshe, 11 October 1940.
[33] NAI DFA 233/124, Swiss Post Office to Patrick Little (Minister for Posts and Telegraphs), 23 January 1941.

newspapers.[34] Benziger was generally dismissive of Éire as a country from which the Swiss could learn of useful policies. Near the end of the war, he informed Berne that Éire was likely to be the *slumreichste* (richest in slums) country of Europe.[35]

External Affairs, by contrast, was very interested in Swiss policies and they had pressing work for Cremins. Due to the continuance of belligerent over-flights, Dublin was anxious to discover how the Swiss dealt with similar situations. On 18 November, Joseph Walshe instructed Cremins to:

> [S]end regular telegraphic reports on general outlook as seen from your post including reports on your conversations with Swiss Ministers and officials and general impression in Switzerland on progress and probable outcome of war. In particular, report fully all infringements of Swiss neutrality by air or otherwise stating actions taken by Swiss Government and reply made by offending belligerent. Wire short summary of measures taken in connection with flights over Switzerland at night.[36]

Cremins' reports of over-flights of Swiss territory were of major importance as the war progressed, as will be seen in Chapter 5. On 13 December 1940, he relayed to Dublin the content of meetings he held with representatives of other states. The Nuncio, for example, informed him that he did not believe the British would attack to seize the Treaty ports for fear of inflaming American opinion, while the Spanish Minister believed Ireland was safe from attack in general. The American Minister believed Germany would seek to end the war quickly, and the German Minister told him that Irish neutrality was a "matter of life and death" and "not to depart from it".[37] Cremins found that "people generally consider danger to Ireland comes from one side or the other according to their own predilections".[38]

After his appointment, Cremins' reports from his new post continued to "merge the events of high politics with everyday life",[39] and they frequently included observations on

[34] For example, see SBA I/A/4/1942, Dr. Benziger's Confidential reports to Berne, 7 January 1942 – 29 December 1942.
[35] SBA B/58/31/11/Irl, Dr. Charles Benziger to Swiss Foreign Office, 8 March 1945.
[36] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/7, Walshe to Cremins, 18 November 1940.
[37] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/7, Cremins to Walshe, 13 December 1940.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 242.

Swiss efforts to adapt to war conditions, such as the fixing of a five-day week to reduce coal and electricity usage.[40] Through his efforts with the Swiss government, he was also able to supply governmental departments in Dublin with valuable information on the operation of Swiss neutrality, a neutrality policy, which, de Valera claimed in his St. Patrick's Day address of 1941, he wished to emulate in Ireland.[41] In September 1941, Cremins was informed by Dublin that the Departments of Supplies and Industry and Commerce were "highly appreciative" of his reports on rationing and supplies, and requested that he also examine the issue of unemployment in Switzerland;[42]

> Could you furnish similar reports on effect of war on employment in Switzerland including extent of unemployment cause, special measures taken to provide employment and relieve distress due to rising prices, extent to which unemployed find employment outside Switzerland and whether authorities do anything to prevent such emigration of workers.[43]

Unemployment was a source of some concern for the Irish government. Industry and Commerce had compiled a report in July 1940 examining the issue in preparation for a period of isolation.[44] One American media source even feared the effects of reduced supplies and unemployment in Ireland in 1941 would lead to one of the harshest winters since "the great famines of 1846 and 1847".[45] Cremins noted plenty of employment in industry and on a national plan to increase agricultural production. He also pointed out the differences in circumstances between the two countries vis-à-vis emigration:

> I listened on the wireless to the statement made a few days ago by the Minister for Industry and Commerce, regarding the emigration of workers from Ireland, and regarding the measures which are being taken to control emigration of labourers from

[40] NAI Department of Industry and Commerce – Emergency files (INDC EMR) 5/39, Dr. Nicholas G. Nolan (DEA) to John Leydon (Secretary, Department of Supplies), 5 December 1940.
[41] See Hachey, 'The Rhetoric and Reality of Irish Neutrality', p. 34.
[42] NAI DFA 241/276, Cremins, 30 September 1941.
[43] Ibid., 13 October 1941.
[44] NAI INDC EMR 19/17, Memorandum for Government on Methods of Dealing With Acute Unemployment Following on Breakdown of Means of External Communication, unspecified date in July 1940.
[45] League of Nations Archive Pp 274/2/839-841, Radiogram received by Seán Lester containing article of Helen Kirkpatrick of the New York Post and Chicago Daily News, 14 October 1941. http://biblio-archive.unog.ch/detail.aspx?ID=44488 [cited 04-02-14]

> the West. The same conditions could hardly apply here at the present time, as there is not the same temptation of high wages in neighbouring countries.[46]

Over the course of the war, Cremins regularly provided Dublin with information on the operation of Swiss neutrality and appraisals of the international situation from a Swiss perspective. These reports attained greater value due to the loss of diplomatic contact with neutral Belgium and Spain's shift to non-belligerency in 1940. Switzerland served as the neutral *par excellence* from where Irish policy-makers were able to glean many useful insights on the operation of a successful neutrality policy. For Dublin, the Swiss outpost was the most important centre for acquiring potential precedents to justify Irish neutrality practices during the war. As will be seen in later chapters, it was also a key communications hub, and it was a financial centre for Irish diplomats on the continent. In short, Cremins' appointment as Chargé d'Affaires in October 1940 expanded the Irish diplomatic network and gave External Affairs greater access to information from the Swiss government.

Switzerland and the League of Nations

During the war, Switzerland was home to the League of Nations, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). As established earlier, since May 1934 Francis Cremins was Éire's link to these institutions, but his reports largely exceeded his brief. Though his appointment as Irish Chargé in Berne took him away from the League in Geneva, he did not abdicate his responsibilities. He was expected to incorporate his role at the League into his new position. On 14 November, Cremins officially informed fellow compatriot and Acting Secretary-General of the League, Seán Lester, of his new appointment and that his intention was to "remain the

[46] NAI INDC EMR 19/17, Memorandum for Government on Methods of Dealing with Acute Unemployment Following on Breakdown of Means of External Communication, unspecified date in July 1940.

channel for communications between the Government of Ireland and all International Organisations in Switzerland".[47] Lester held a "lonely vigil" at the head of the League of Nations during the war.[48] He kept in weekly contact with Cremins by mail, but, Cremins only sparsely referenced the League in his reports to Dublin. As Kennedy has remarked, it was "a sad irony that at the moment when an Irish national was in charge of the organisation that Ireland had put so much into between the wars, Ireland had no need of the League".[49] However, Éire's continued membership of the League, though tokenistic and not universally popular within the government, is an indicator of the tilt of Irish foreign policy towards the avoidance of isolation after the summer of 1940. Michael Rynne thought withdrawal from the League "might be the best course to adopt", as the League was "progressively declining in value".[50] On 21 October, he composed a detailed memorandum which outlined the futility of membership:

> [T]here would appear to be a certain element of danger involved from the standpoint of Ireland's neutrality in remaining associated with a body which is clearly intended to be used by Britain to foster an Anglo-American alliance against Germany and other former League Members. Taking a still longer view, we may anticipate that a certain stigma will be regarded as attaching to League Membership in the event of a German victory. Such membership would in that event serve as a handicap rather than as an advantage. In other words, while leaving the League now would give offence to no other friendly State, remaining too long in the League might injure the good relations of Ireland with many of the principal European countries and perhaps debar her from participating in any new League which may evolve out of the present war.[51]

As Germany and Italy left the League in the 1930s, Joseph Walshe believed the institution had "become more and more an 'Allied' affair",[52] and he was concerned that by continuing to pay the full contribution to the League, it "would tend to put us [Ireland] rather too much in the 'Allied' camp".[53] He concluded, however, that not to pay would be problematic as it

[47] NAI DFA 217/39, Cremins to Lester, 14 November 1940.
[48] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 245.
[49] Ibid.
[50] NAI DFA 226/1, Memorandum of Rynne, 21 October 1940.
[51] Ibid.
[52] NAI DT S9888, Memorandum of Walshe for de Valera, 19 March 1941.
[53] Ibid.

could be used by the British and American press to present the country in a poor light. Therefore, he promoted the idea of paying half the contribution. The Department of Finance had no such desire for compromise, being of the view that the League itself had been a waste of time and finances. The Secretary of the Department, James J. McElligott, was rather explicit on this point:

> [I] had always been opposed to membership of the League of Nations and of the International Labour Office which, so far as we could see, never brought to us any advantages tangible or intangible and were a source of much expense in the way of maintaining a Minister and Offices at Geneva and sending out delegations from time to time. I felt that if there had been no League of Nations there would have been no war, as the democracies would separately have proceeded to rearm. Instead, they were lured by the twin myths of disarmament and collective security, both of which were sponsored by the League of Nations, into a vein of pacifism and non-combativeness that has nearly proved their ruin.[54]

However, following a Cabinet meeting on 21 March 1941, it was decided that the country would retain its membership of the League.[55] In July, de Valera presented his estimate of costs to the Committee on Finance in the Dáil,[56] and proposed a token contribution of £5, "as the exact amount of the contribution was not known".[57] The real contribution was deferred until 1942, when, after much internal wrangling,[58] it was agreed to pay the full sum.[59] De Valera felt that by using a token vote, the country could avoid criticisms of abandoning the League but that the "general attitude towards the League and its offshoots should be that of negative benevolence".[60] He informed the Dáil that while the League "cannot function", its technical activities, such as the International Health Organisation, the

[54] NAI DFIN S71/17/40, Minute of James J. McElligott, 20 March 1941.
[55] The choices were whittled down to either full payment or half payment, with the ultimate decision left to the Taoiseach, see NAI DT S9888, Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, 21 March 1941.
[56] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 84, No. 14, Col. 1917-1919, 17 July 1941. Michael Kennedy put Ireland's contribution at £10, see Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 245.
[57] NAI DFA 226/1B, Memorandum entitled 'Annual Contribution to the League of Nations', unsigned but probably Rynne, 5 February 1942.
[58] When the Secretary of the Department of Finance queried External Affairs on whether or not the country should terminate its membership of the League to avoid future fees, Boland replied that "on grounds of policy" de Valera was not willing to terminate League membership, see Ibid., Boland to J.E. Hanna, 31 July 1942.
[59] This amounted to £11,791.6.1 or CHF203,989.55 (Swiss Francs). See Ibid., Dr. Nolan to Cremins, 18 August 1942.
[60] NAI DFA 226/1A, Minute of Walshe, 30 November 1940.

Economic and Financial Organisation, and bodies designed to curb the illicit trade of harmful drugs, were likely to "play a useful role in the post-war world".[61] Despite strong arguments for terminating Éire's League membership, de Valera maintained contributions until the League's demise in 1946.[62]

The League payment issue is relevant to the general orientation of Irish foreign policy during this period. As Michael Kennedy has noted, "[n]eutrality had isolated the state, termination of League membership would [have] further increase[d] this isolation".[63] The avoidance of international isolation was not only secured by retaining membership of the League, but also through the establishment of formal relations with Switzerland. It should be noted that, in the summer of 1940, of the European states with which Éire had direct formal relations, only the Holy See remained officially neutral. But Cremins' appointment to Switzerland, like Dr. Benziger's in Dublin the previous year, granted him greater access to government officials who subsequently supplied him with highly detailed information on numerous topics from economics, defence, agriculture and politics. Throughout this thesis, it will be seen that Switzerland was Éire's most important source of learning about the conduct of neutrality.

[61] Ibid.
[62] The other European neutrals followed a different course of action. In 1941, League stamps in Switzerland were withdrawn, the Swiss press was officially ordered not to print anything about the League, and even heating oil for the building was, for a time, refused. Indicative of the respect then held for the institution, Switzerland failed to pay its contribution to the League from 1941 onwards. For more, see Gageby, *The Last Secretary General*, p. 218. Sweden and Turkey, meanwhile, had failed to even pay their contribution for 1940, and by 1941, those who had paid any amount were almost entirely either engaged in the war on the side of the Allies or at least sympathetic to their cause. See NAI DFA 226/1B, Union of South Africa, Australia, United Kingdom, India, Iraq, Mexico, Netherlands – See 'Countries which have paid contributions in whole or in part to the League of Nations (including the I.L.C.) in 1940 or 1941', undated, but late 1941. Lester also referred to Sweden and Switzerland's non-payment in a letter to his compatriot and Deputy Director of the ILO, Edward Phelan, see LON Pp 274/1/1553-554 Seán Lester's Diary Vol. I (1935 – 1941), Lester to Phelan, 20 August 1940.
[63] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 245.

The Vatican

Ireland's relations with the Holy See were of great importance in the 1930s, which was a period of strong ecclesiastical influence on Irish social, educational and political life. The Vatican took an interest in de Valera's work at the League of Nations and thanked him for seeking assurances of religious freedom in the Soviet Union after that country's acceptance into the League of Nations in 1934. This was an important step in normalising relations between de Valera's Fianna Fáil government and the Vatican who were initially distrustful of the Irish republican movement.[64] De Valera further ingratiated himself towards the Vatican by sending Walshe to Rome in 1937 to explain the religious aspects of the new constitution prior to its codification. The constitution did not grant primacy to any faith over another so as not to alienate Northern Irish Protestants. The Pope neither endorsed nor criticised the text. As Keogh has stated, this was, in effect, an outcome for de Valera that was "more than satisfactory".[65]

During the Second World War, the Irish legation at the Holy See assumed added importance. As was shown in the previous chapter, Walshe's Jesuit past, alleged Irish consultations with the Vatican Secretariat regarding their neutrality, and Walshe's instructions to Irish diplomats to keep in close contact with Papal Nuncios suggest a consideration of Vatican actions was important to the Secretary of the Department. The Holy See was also an "excellent listening post",[66] and a communications node. From September 1939 until June 1940, the Irish legation functioned as the conduit for communications between Dublin and Berlin.[67] The legation was also headed by a well-connected Minister, William Macaulay, who in Keogh's opinion, was "[u]rbane, a good

[64] See Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, pp. 123-124.
[65] Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 139.
[66] Ibid., p. 160.
[67] See Chapter 4.

linguist and a discerning judge of human nature […] He was an outstanding diplomat".[68] Appointed as head of mission at the posting in 1934, Macaulay married Irish-American Papal Duchess Genevieve Brady in New York, in 1937. Through his own position and his wife's connections, he gained significant access to the power centres of the Holy See. The couple were close friends of Cardinal Pacelli who later became Pope Pius XII. However, Genevieve Brady died suddenly in Rome in 1938.[69] Suffering from ill health and still grief-stricken by his wife's death, Macaulay left the Vatican on 1 June 1940 for treatment in the United States. This left Colman O'Donovan, the junior diplomat, in charge of the Irish legation to the Holy See. When Italy joined the war on the side of Germany on 10 June, the prospects of Macaulay's return to his post diminished. He remained in the United States until the end of the war and retired from the Irish diplomatic service later that year, leaving O'Donovan to assume his duties.[70]

Macaulay's departure was a significant loss to Ireland's diplomatic network. The legation at the Holy See was important to Dublin as a barometer of international opinion. For example, in March 1940 the US Ambassador to Ireland, David Gray, visited the Vatican and signalled to Macaulay and the Irish Minister to Italy, MacWhite, that he proposed to consult with the British and the Pope regarding the partition of Ireland. He suggested he would inform the British that it would be "increasingly difficult for America to give fuller support to the Allies" while partition remained in Ireland.[71] This would have been welcome news to de Valera, whose drive to remove partition and unify the country did not stop during the war. The availability of such diplomats calling at the Vatican, in addition to those based there, boosted the Irish legation's importance as a listening post. It was also a

[68] Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 113.
[69] See Michael Kennedy, 'Macaulay, William ('Bill') J. Babbington', *Dictionary of Irish Biography*. http://dib.cambridge.org/quicksearch.do# [accessed 09-05-16]
[70] Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 148.
[71] NAI DFA 218/55, Macauley to Walshe, 20 March 1940.

useful source of news for Rome in general, particularly due to the lack of reportage from MacWhite. In 1941, MacWhite explained the shallow nature of his reports:

> Towards the end of July 1939, just as the war clouds were breaking, enquiries began to pour in from Irish people scattered throughout Italy, the Secretary of Legation was suddenly transferred to the United States and he has not since been replaced. From then, up till now, I have been fully occupied with clerical and Consular work and am consequently unable to perform the normal duties of a Minister Plenipotentiary [...] For instance, I have not the time nor the leisure to establish close relations with the important officials of the Foreign Office, the leaders of Italian opinion, or even my diplomatic colleagues.[72]

The Holy See was also a paradigm of neutral diplomacy and praxis for Ireland. Walshe regularly instructed Irish diplomats to keep in close contact with the Papal Nuncios in their host countries. According to Ó Drisceoil, Irish neutrality was in tune with the Vatican's moral neutral tone and "great store was set by what the Vatican thought and did in the field of diplomacy".[73] Walshe's communication with the Controller of Censorship, Joseph Connolly, on 18 September 1939, provides an insight into the thoughts of the Secretary of External Affairs:

> As an eminently Christian State, we are obliged to maintain a position which will allow us to take the most efficient part in the establishment of peace. It is quite possible that the head of our Government may be able to take a very real part in bringing about a cessation of hostilities […] Unless we remain neutral, we cannot join with the small States of the world, and with the Vatican in particular, in attempts to bring about peace.[74]

However, difficulties in maintaining a similar moral tone arose in February 1940, due to the IRA bombing campaign in Britain. MacWhite reported from Rome that the "damage to our prestige is incalculable". He lamented that:

> In Vatican circles, too, these bombing activities have created considerable embarrassment. Ireland has, after Italy, the highest percentage of Catholics and according to Monsignor Tardini [aide to Pope Pius XII in the Vatican Secretariat], whom I met a few days ago, protestant Theologians and Divines cite Irish crime as an example of what may be expected in a country where the Catholic religion dominates.[75]

[72] NAI DFA 219/22B, MacWhite to Walshe, 12 February 1941.
[73] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, p. 225.
[74] UCDA P104/3433 Frank Aiken Papers, Walshe to Joseph Connolly, 18 September 1939.
[75] UCDA P194/540 Michael MacWhite Papers, MacWhite to Walshe, 27 February 1940.

The legation was also important for Irish ecclesiastical affairs. Through the Vatican the government pressed its desires regarding high level appointments. When the Archbishop of Dublin, Edward Byrne, died in February 1940, de Valera favoured the appointment of Fr. John Charles McQuaid,[76] with whom he was closely associated.[77] Keogh suggests that Walshe may have been even more enthusiastic than de Valera about the idea but he did not cite any evidence for this hypothesis.[78] Nonetheless, Walshe did instruct Macaulay to make representations to the Vatican seeking McQuaid's appointment.[79] Macaulay's efforts during the spring of 1940 were interrupted by war developments, but, on 28 May he requested an audience with the Pope to raise the matter with him. On 3 June, O'Donovan tried to temper Dublin's eagerness by informing them that "any further pressure would give offence".[80]

[76] McQuaid was an often controversial figure who attained significant political influence during his life, see John Cooney, *John Charles McQuaid: Ruler of Catholic Ireland* (The O'Brien Press Ltd., 1999), for a rather thorough biography. As chairman of the Catholic Headmasters' Association, he worked closely with de Valera who added the Education portfolio to his duties as Taoiseach and Minister of External Affairs in September 1939. Keogh has stated that McQuaid was one of the clerics who most influenced Irish educational policy and church-state relations in the 1930s, see Keogh, 'Towards a Biography of an Archbishop', p. 338. For more information on McQuaid, see Roland Burke Savage, 'The Church in Dublin: 1940 – 1965', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* (Vol. 54, No. 216, Winter, 1965), pp. 296-346, which contains a good account of McQuaid's work but does not benefit from access to the de Valera archives nor the McQuaid papers; Ferriter, *The Transformation of Ireland*, pp. 520-522, which counters arguments that seek to scapegoat McQuaid and de Valera for an overly authoritarian, repressive and censorious society, but which states that McQuaid had too much power; Dermot Keogh, 'Towards a Biography of an Archbishop', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* (Vol. 87, No. 348, Winter, 1998), pp. 337-343, assesses attempts by historians, politicians and commentators to address McQuaid's lengthy career; James Ardle McMahon, 'The Boss: Archbishop John Charles McQuaid', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* (Vol. 87, No. 348, Winter, 1998), pp. 388-391, presents a rather flattering account of the Archbishop, written by a former secretary.

[77] During the drafting of the Constitution in 1937, de Valera consulted McQuaid, who, at that time, was president of de Valera's former school — and that of his children — Blackrock College. McQuaid submitted a large volume of material to de Valera when drafting the Constitution, see Dermot Keogh and Andrew McCarthy, 'The Catholic Church and the Writing of the 1937 Constitution', *History Ireland* (Vol. 13, No. 3, May – June, 2005), pp. 36-41; McQuaid championed the Constitution's delineation of 'appropriate' work for men and women and advised de Valera to stand by it, see Coogan, *De Valera: Long Fellow, Long Shadow*, p. 497 and James Kavanagh, 'Social Activist', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* (Vol. 87, No. 348, Winter, 1998), pp. 372-377, though suggestions that McQuaid had a unique influence on the drafting of the provisions on women (which still states that her place in the home should be protected) are incorrect, see Finola Kennedy, 'Two Priests, the Family and the Irish Constitution', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* (Vol. 87, No. 348, Winter, 1998), pp. 353-364.

[78] See Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 150. Though Keogh cites Savage, 'The Church in Dublin: 1940 – 1965', at no point is Joseph Walshe mentioned in that work.

[79] Ibid., p. 145.

[80] NAI DFA 219/5, O'Donovan to Walshe, 3 June 1940.

Soon after, Maccauley became stuck in New York and O'Donovan assumed the role of furthering Irish ecclesiastical desires. In response to the loss of Macaulay, External Affairs elevated O'Donovan to the position of Chargé d'Affaires ad Interim,[81] but O'Donovan lacked the experience of his predecessor. On 17 June, O'Donovan met with the Vatican Under-Secretary of State, Giovanni Montini,[82] to press the matter of the Dublin appointment:

> Saw Under-Secretary of State June 17th regarding Dublin urged insistently immediate appointment. He agreed with my remarks on leaving See vacant so long in such a critical time and said that he would make immediately urgent representations to Congregation.[83]

However, O'Donovan's influence within Vatican circles was simply incomparable to Macaulay. Despite repeated representations by O'Donovan on the instruction of Walshe,[84] the appointment was not made until early November. On 7 November, O'Donovan reported that he heard from the Vatican Secretariat of State that John Charles McQuaid had been appointed,[85] though it was not officially communicated to him until 11 November.[86] This was a success for Walshe, who had pressed the issue consistently since February, but the fact de Valera's sons were educated under McQuaid did not escape the notice of the media.[87]

Though de Valera and Walshe ultimately achieved the appointment they sought, O'Donovan was not deemed a sufficient replacement for Macaulay. According to Keogh, O'Donovan was "inexperienced and of much less use to Dublin" compared to his former head of mission.[88] He had struggled to exert himself in attempting to fulfil another of

[81] See Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 148.
[82] Later ordained Pope Paul VI (1963 – 1978).
[83] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P15(i), O'Donovan to Walshe, 19 June 1940.
[84] See NAI DFA Secretary's Files P15(i), O'Donovan to Walshe, 25 September 1940; Walshe to O'Donovan, 26 September 1940; O'Donovan to Walshe, 30 September 1940; O'Donovan to Walshe, 4 October 1940.
[85] Ibid., O'Donovan to Walshe, 7 November 1940.
[86] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P15(i), 11 November 1940.
[87] Ibid., *Daily Telegraph* article, circa 15 November 1940.
[88] Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 144.

Walshe's wishes, to press for the elevation of Éire's first Papal Nuncio, Monsignor Paschal Robinson,[89] to the position of Cardinal.[90] Indicative of the importance of the Vatican posting to the Irish government, O'Donovan's temporary diplomatic aggrandisement at the Vatican only lasted until a more suitably qualified candidate was chosen. Thomas J. Kiernan, Director of Radió Éireann, was ultimately selected to fill the vacancy left by Macaulay. External Affairs originally considered Kiernan for the position of Minister Plenipotentiary in Berlin, where William Warnock, like O'Donovan, was acting as Chargé d'Affaires ad Interim. However, the requirement to obtain the King's signature for the accreditation of Ministers was an obstacle.[91] Proceeding without his signature or requesting his signature, were problematic options. As Walshe elucidated:

> The Government do not wish to use the King during the war as it associates us too closely with a belligerent and makes our neutral position still more delicate. We have legal power to accredit Minister without using King but do not wish to use it for fear of troubling our friendly relations with Britain.[92]

Such considerations could be circumvented to some degree at the Vatican, where Kiernan was sent in August 1941. Though, not officially approved for the appointment until October 1941,[93] Walshe pressed Kiernan on his arrival in August to quickly establish himself as Chargé d'Affaires with the personal title of Minister Plenipotentiary through meetings with the Cardinal Secretary of State Luigi Maglioni.[94] This suggestion was quickly accepted by the Vatican authorities, for whom Kiernan reported that, "[p]ersonal title does not concern Holy See with whom representative will rank as 'Chargé d'Affaires'".[95] Kiernan's

[89] Robinson was appointed Papal Nuncio to the Irish Free State on 14 January 1930, see Ibid., p. xvii.
[90] Ibid., p. 144.
[91] See Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 372n.
[92] NAI DFA 217/52, Walshe to Thomas J. Kiernan, 13 August 1941.
[93] NAI DT S5857A, Cabinet Minutes, 1 October 1941.
[94] NAI DFA 217/52, Walshe to Kiernan, 13 August 1941.
[95] Ibid., Kiernan to Walshe, 16 August 1941.

appointment provided more stability and experience to a posting that had been disrupted by Macaulay's departure, and in which Walshe had great interest.[96]

For the rest of the war, Kiernan translated Italian newspapers, handled communications for his own legation and that of MacWhite's, and reported on the daily circumstances of life in Rome. He did not trust the diplomatic bag as a means to convey confidential information to Dublin, and Keogh speculates that he may have availed of Irish clerics returning home through Lisbon as couriers.[97] Kiernan's reports illuminated life in Rome during a time of great uncertainty in the summer of 1943 due to Allied bombing raids on Rome. De Valera telegrammed his sympathies with the Pope to the Vatican and his newspaper, the *Irish Press*, called for the designation of Rome as an 'open city' to prevent more bombing.[98] A clear example of the Vatican's importance to Ireland was that Archbishop MacQuaid was also permitted to send a telegram of sympathy to the Vatican through External Affairs.[99] Walshe kept MacQuaid appraised of events in the Holy City, after the Germans occupied Rome in September 1943, based on Kiernan's reports.

The Vatican was clearly a good listening post for Dublin during the war. In replacing O'Donovan with the more senior Kiernan, the government highlighted the importance of the Irish legation at the Vatican. Walshe's instructions to Irish diplomats to keep in close contact with the Papal Nuncios was also illustrative of his desire to align Irish neutrality to the neutrality of the Vatican, at least in sentiment. However, as shown in the previous chapter, Walshe's trust in Papal representatives was not always appreciated.

[96] Walshe, was greatly interested in the focus of Vatican attention and wished to "make Ireland more influential at the centre of the Catholic Church", see Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 313. Walshe became Irish Minister to the Vatican after the war (1946 – 1954).
[97] Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 166.
[98] Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 172.
[99] Ibid.

Portugal

Indicative of the importance of the neutrals to External Affairs in general, in January 1940, the government also considered appointing the Irish Minister to Spain, Leopold Kerney, as joint Éire representative to Portugal. In proposing the initiative, Boland referred to how "Portuguese development in the sphere of social policy and organisation [had] aroused a great deal of interest in [the] country".[100] Boland prepared a memorandum for Walshe, based on discussions with the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Finance, Seán Moynihan, in which he highlighted that "Portugal, as a neutral state on the Atlantic seaboard, is confronted by many of the problems in relation to the war which we are facing ourselves".[101] Boland was not of the view that a separate legation was justified at the time, as trade and consular activity would be low, but he saw other reasons for establishing relations:

> [T]here are probably many people who would like to see closer relations established between this country and Portugal. Portuguese development in the sphere of social policy and organisation has aroused a great deal of interest in this country; Portugal is, I believe, part of the Irish province of at least one religious order (the Dominican), and Portugal, as a neutral state on the Atlantic seaboard, is confronted by many of the problems in relation to the war which we are facing ourselves. If therefore, we could, at little expense, utilise our existing Legation in Spain to establish direct contact with the Portuguese Government, it would be worth while [sic] doing so.[102]

Boland's memorandum is revealing in its explicit reference to the similar circumstances in which both neutrals found themselves. In proposing formal relations between Éire and Portugal, Boland thought Éire could learn from the operation of Portuguese domestic and neutrality policies. Walshe instructed the Irish High Commissioner in London, Dulanty, to meet with the Portuguese Ambassador, but he was given the caveat that: "as we have always

[100] NAI DFA 217/38, Boland to Walshe, 3 January 1940.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid., Memorandum of Boland for Walshe, 3 January 1940.

been opposed to the accredition [sic] to Ireland of representatives who are also accredited to Britain, the Government could not consistently fall in with such an arrangement in the case of Portugal".[103] This stance was in line with the Fianna Fáil government's concerns of sovereignty and independence that had seen the introduction of a new constitution and the External Relations Act only a couple of years previous. Irish-Portuguese relations were not put on a formal footing that January, but it is clear that interest in fostering closer contacts with the other neutrals was growing.

Though the proposal faltered over the joint accreditation issue, a legation was eventually established in November 1941. The workings of Salazar's *Estado Novo* elicited strong interest within conservative, ecclesiastical, and governmental circles. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, a number of Irish commentators lauded Salazar's leadership which they credited with providing stability, peace and economic prosperity.[104] Walshe himself was an admirer in the early war period.[105] On 19 January 1940, the Department of Finance produced a memorandum containing excerpts from articles and Salazar's speeches regarding economic and financial reforms.[106] Reflective of the high level of interest in Portuguese policies, the Department of the Taoiseach circulated the document which was put on the agenda of a government meeting on 23 January.[107] In March, Seán MacEntee, as Minister for Industry and Commerce, shared the text of a lecture delivered by Father Patrick J. Gannon with the Cabinet to contribute to discussions regarding the establishment of a Central Bank.[108] The lecture championed the successes of Salazar's economic vision

[103] NAI DFA 217/38, Walshe to Dulanty, 3 January 1940.
[104] See de Meneses, 'Investigating Portugal, Salazar and the New State', pp. 391-408.
[105] See Girvin, *The Emergency*, pp. 123-124.
[106] See NAI DT S11601A, Department of Finance memorandum entitled 'Economic and Financial Policy of Portugal', 19 January 1940.
[107] NAI DT S11601A, Circulation form for items to be included on the agenda of the meeting of government on 23 January, 19 January 1940.
[108] A Jesuit priest who contributed to debates on the role of Irish writers and artists who were deemed to be a danger to Catholic morals in the 1930s. See Susannah Riordan, 'The Unpopular Front: Catholic Revival and

of corporatism and his approach to governance.[109] Portuguese corporatism under the Salazar regime can be succinctly described as a system in which:

> [O]rder and stability at the social and political level were closely linked to order and stability at the monetary and financial level, with the aim of creating conditions that were favourable to a controlled process of investment and economic growth".[110]

In essence, the state maintained a tight control of both the economy and the society to create a nation that was "unitary rather than pluralist".[111] Fr. Gannon was a clear admirer of Salazar, whom he claimed had "much to teach not only us but all mankind", ending his lecture by expressing his hope that "Salazar's work and ideas will be closely examined and carefully pondered by those responsible for building up the New Ireland which is slowly emerging".[112]

Fr. Gannon was not alone in his positive view of Portugal's *New State*. Interest amongst these commentators also extended to the political system, where Salazar had become a *de facto* dictator at the head of an authoritarian government.[113] Though the Irish government did not wish to emulate the Portuguese political model, Salazar's regime was certainly of interest to them. General comparisons between the countries were also easy to make. Both were small European neutrals on the edge of Europe deeply infused by Catholic tradition and morality. Both also had relatively poor economies, primarily based on agriculture. Salazar's ability to maintain peace in a country which had experienced frequent political instability in the earlier part of the twentieth century, including a brief civil war, certainly made him a figure of interest in Ireland.

Irish Cultural Identity, 1932 – 48', in Mike Cronin and John M. Regan (eds.), *Ireland: The Politics of Independence, 1922 – 49* (MacMillan Press Ltd., 2000), pp. 110-113.

[109] NAI DT S11601A, 'Salazar and his work', text of lecture by Patrick J. Gannon, 2 March 1940. To whom this lecture was addressed is not mentioned.

[110] António Almodovar and José Luís Cardoso, *A History of Portuguese Economic Thought* (Routledge, 1998), p. 104.

[111] Hugh Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal* (Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1970), p. 51.

[112] NAI DT S11601A, 'Salazar and his work', 2 March 1940.

[113] Salazar came to prominence as an effective Finance Minister, having previously taught economic policy at the University of Coimbra.

When proposing the establishment of the legation to the Committee on Finance in December 1941, de Valera alluded to the similarities between the nations, and highlighted the successes of the country's leader, Dr. António de Oliveira Salazar:

> Portugal is a neighbouring country. In certain respects, her geographical situation and her attitude in relation to the present conflict are similar to our own and, no doubt, the problems which confront the two countries, particularly at the present time, have also many points of resemblance. We have all heard of the great advance which Portugal has made under the leadership of her present Premier, Dr. Salazar. The progressive and Christian manner in which the Portuguese Government is handling its economic and other domestic problems has attracted attention and admiration throughout the world and not least, I think, in this country. I think it right and proper that these two countries should have direct diplomatic relations and I have no doubt that the closer contact will prove useful and valuable to us.[114]

General similarities and Irish interest in the Portuguese political and economic situation were of significant importance, however, more practical considerations made an Irish legation in Portugal particularly attractive. Lisbon provided relatively safe and secure access to the European continent, through which trade, communications and the passage of persons could flow. The close relationship between Franco's Spanish regime and Nazi Germany made Lisbon a more desirable neutral port on the Iberian Peninsula; a conduit for "those trying to escape a Nazi dominated Europe, as well as for information and supplies vital for the preservation of Ireland's neutrality".[115] The creation of the Lisbon legation roughly coincided with the diminishment in military threats to Éire. Threats to Irish supplies from economic pressure, however, had begun to bite, and the legation at Lisbon would prove to be useful in Dublin's effort to protect the Irish economy. This will be expanded upon in Chapter 4. Portugal's position as an important gateway to Europe was highlighted by Life magazine in July 1940:

> This year, for the first time in centuries, Portugal is important to America. It is the funnel through which pour all exchanges — of people and messages and diplomacy — between America and Europe. The war, by cutting the lines of intercourse to

[114] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 85, No. 5, Col. 1225, 4 December 1941.
[115] De Meneses, 'Investigating Portugal, Salazar and the New State', p. 392.

> northern Europe, has made Portugal what geography intended — not a faraway corner of Europe but its front door.[116]

In December 1941, de Valera was explicit to the Dáil regarding the importance of establishing a legation in Lisbon:

> Lisbon is now a main junction on our communication with the outside world. It is the terminus of the air service from Foynes, some of our boats are calling there fairly frequently and even at the present moment we have a number of our nationals stranded there awaiting the making of arrangements for their return to this country. Lisbon is also important in connection with our supplies. Deputies are aware. I think, that some of our cargoes from overseas are shipped to Portugal in the first instance and are then loaded into those of our ships which are not in a position to face Atlantic crossings. All this makes it desirable and indeed necessary that we should have a representative in Portugal. Especially under present conditions, travel and shipping depend to a great extent on consular services, and whenever there is a large body of Irish interests requiring such services as there are in Portugal at the moment, it is fitting that we should provide a representative of our own to whom our nationals can turn for protection and assistance when they require it.[117]

Colman O'Donovan was selected to be Chargé d'Affaires in Lisbon.[118] This appointment took him away from his posting as Chargé d'Affaires ad Interim at the Vatican, leaving Thomas J. Kiernan to assume those responsibilities. Despite a degree of concern with O'Donovan, owing to a disciplinary issue in a previous posting as Legation Secretary in London,[119] his transfer was rushed through.[120] On 5 November 1941, O'Donovan was sanctioned to take up his new position in Lisbon and began providing the Irish government with first-hand information on Salazar's efforts to maintain neutrality. Such was the interest in Dublin, that Walshe read O'Donovan's report of his inaugural meeting with Salazar to de Valera over the phone, who requested a copy of the text.[121] Salazar expressed his "great interest and sympathy" with de Valera's work, and begged

[116] Unnamed author, 'Portugal: The War Has Made It Europe's Front Door', *Life Magazine*, 29 July 1940.
[117] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 85, No. 8, Col. 1225-1226, 4 December 1941.
[118] See NAI CAB 2/4, Cabinet Minutes approving appointment of O'Donovan signed by de Valera, 5 November 1941.
[119] O'Donovan had been overpaid rent allowances by not declaring refunds he had received from the British authorities owing to his diplomatic privilege. The Departments of Finance and External Affairs consulted on the matter, and they deemed this oversight to be due to negligence rather than fraud. See NAI DT S12 639A, DEA Memorandum, 21 November 1941.
[120] Ibid.
[121] NAI DFA P 12/18, Walshe to Kathleen O'Connell (de Valera's personal secretary), 3 March 1942.

O'Donovan to tell the Taoiseach that he was most welcome to visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima.[122]

In March 1942, Papal Nuncio to Portugal, Pietro Ciriaci, told O'Donovan that he "thought there were many points of resemblance between Salazar and the Taoiseach [de Valera]".[123] Soon after his appointment, however, O'Donovan found that Irish interest in Portuguese economic success was misplaced. The picture painted by him was at variance with the preconceived expectations of some in Dublin, who had trumpeted Salazar's economic management. O'Donovan found the political system within the country to be highly centralised, to the point of trivialisation.[124] He also noted from two ecclesiastical sources, one of whom was the Secretary of the Papal Nunciature in Lisbon, Monsignor Umberto Mozzoni, that the Irish had 'nothing to learn' in Portugal.[125] Mozzoni opined that "[i]deas and performance were two different things", when musing on the efficacy of Salazar's regime.[126] O'Donovan himself described the poverty he observed in Portugal as "appalling".[127] He later placed blame for much of the poverty, and subsequent civil unrest, on "the failure of the Government to introduce an effective system of rationing".[128] His report to Dublin on 20 September 1943, which Walshe retained, exposed the deep problems in the Portuguese state. Attached to his report was a document that called for the removal of Salazar, which had been circulated to homes in Portugal via the post:

> Salazar is no longer capable of coping with events. His bloody hands have no strength to control with firmness the helm of government. His exit is imperative, and quickly, to avoid a catastrophic solution which will perhaps bring a horrific civil war of the Spanish kind […] The Portuguese people cannot die of hunger and for this reason the

[122] Ibid., O'Donovan to Walshe, 26 February 1942.
[123] NAI DFA 219/81, O'Donovan to Walshe, 4 March 1942.
[124] "[D]ecisions on all matters, even of no special importance, are made at the top", See NAI DFA 219/81, O'Donovan to DEA, 4 March 1942.
[125] Views of an unnamed priest, in Ibid., O'Donovan to Walshe, 4 March 1942 and views of Monsignor Mozzoni, in NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/9, O'Donovan to Walshe, 8 May 1942.
[126] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/9, O'Donovan to Walshe, 8 May 1942.
[127] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/9, O'Donovan to Walshe, 8 May 1942.
[128] Ibid., O'Donovan to Walshe, 20 September 1943.

> furnishing of food and other articles to Germany directly or indirectly must cease at once.[129]

O'Donovan believed the document to be the work of Communists, and felt that it was not of too much importance, but he acknowledged that the situation in Portugal was bad, and that no serious attempts had been made to effectively deal with supply problems. Felipe de Meneses summarised O'Donovan's reflections on the failures of Salazar's state by remarking that, "[w]hat struck the Irish representative most was the New State's inability, through a mix of inefficiency and corruption, to cope with the most pressing problems affecting Portugal — notably poverty and its causes".[130] The *Estado Novo*, consequently, was not a model to be emulated, and any Irish interest in Salazar's economic policies, that did exist, disappeared.

Though Salazar's Portugal did not live up to Irish expectations, the Lisbon legation was much more important to Dublin from a practical point of view during the war. As will be shown in Chapter 4, O'Donovan spent a large volume of his time at the legation attempting to obtain shipping in Lisbon to provide for supplies in Éire. The legation was also a key link in Ireland's communications network as mailbags could be sent on Irish ships between Dublin and Lisbon. It is important to recognise that though the social, political and economic landscape in Portugal was of interest to Dublin, O'Donovan was tasked with other, albeit more mundane, functions which were of importance to Irish foreign policy.

[129] Ibid.
[130] De Meneses, 'Investigating Portugal, Salazar and the New State', p. 398.

Conclusion

Éire was defensively weak, economically poor, and was in danger of becoming increasingly politically isolated. It is within this context that the Irish government expanded its diplomatic reach. Two new postings were created in neutral European states; Switzerland and Portugal. The legation at Berne, founded in October 1940, involved the transfer of Francis Cremins to the position of Chargé d'Affaires from his previous role as Permanent Irish Representative to the League of Nations. Just over a year later, Colman O'Donovan transferred from the Holy See legation to Lisbon where he was also accredited as Chargé d'Affaires. In one sense, that these new postings were in neutral states is not particularly noteworthy — after all the Irish government could hardly open relations with a belligerent nation during a time of war and maintain a credible perception of neutrality. What is noteworthy is why the Irish government saw value in opening relations with these states during the war. Neither Switzerland nor Portugal promised sufficient trade opportunities on their own to justify the cost of the new legations at the time of their establishment. This chapter has shown, however, that there were other pragmatic reasons for justifying Ireland's diplomatic expansion with fellow neutrals whom the Irish government believed to be similarly situated. Through these new links, External Affairs sought to learn more about the implementation of neutrality in both states and to avail of the logistical benefits outposts there could provide for communications and transport. In a broader context, the establishment these legations also served the high-level goal of promoting Irish independence and sovereignty.

The establishment of Irish-Swiss relations has not received any specific scholarly attention and this chapter bridges that gap in the discourse. The Berne legation was the primary source of neutral information gathering for Dublin during the war. Switzerland was

an exemplar of neutrality for a novice neutral like Ireland and de Valera referenced his desire for Ireland to emulate Swiss neutrality. Having served in Switzerland at the League of Nations for a few years prior to his appointment as Chargé d'Affaires in Berne, Francis Cremins was already known within Swiss political circles and he was able to obtain important information on the practicalities of the implementation of Swiss neutrality. This chapter breaks new ground by uncovering the significant value Irish-Swiss relations brought the Irish government. Switzerland's geographical position made it a crucial communications nodal point, an information hub, and the most fertile ground for neutrality learning.

Though Filipe de Meneses has written about Ireland's relations with Portugal, the focus of his treatment differs from this thesis. De Meneses accurately ascribed the establishment of relations between Portugal and Ireland to the importance of maintaining a presence at Lisbon after the fall of France and due to the uncertainty of Spanish neutrality during the war. Lisbon was a vital entry point to Europe in 1941. However, this chapter adds more depth to Meneses' brief comment that Ireland had more to learn from Portugal than Spain. The creation of the legation in Lisbon furthered the Irish government's efforts to learn from another neutral state which Irish policy-makers believed was similarly situated to Ireland. In the context of External Affairs' efforts to obtain information about the implementation of neutrality in other European neutral states, this point needs to be highlighted more in Irish historiography as it was an important driver behind Ireland's diplomatic expansion during the war.

This expansion was complemented by the consolidation of the country's position in the Vatican through the appointment of Dr. Thomas J. Kiernan as a permanent replacement for William Macaulay. Kiernan's appointment was strongly indicative of the Vatican's importance to the Irish government, and Walshe paid close attention to the views of

representatives of the fellow small neutral state. De Valera's decision to retain membership of the League of Nations as a paid-up member meanwhile, underlines the tilt of Irish foreign policy towards the avoidance of isolation during 1941. Three discernible strains of the Irish government's diplomatic outlook were represented in the expansion of Éire's diplomatic representation: international recognition of Irish independence, the fostering of closer ties to small neutral states, and the avoidance of international isolation.

Section II

Maintaining Neutrality

Chapter 3:

Maintaining Neutrality and Defending Neutral Perceptions, 1939 – 1942

Introduction

This chapter assesses the threats and challenges to Irish neutrality and the government's attempts to mitigate them in the early to mid-war period. It also builds on the argument that the Irish government was learning from the other neutrals whilst trying to develop their own "special brand of neutrality".[1] Ireland's lack of a credible military deterrent against belligerent attack elevated the importance of maintaining a neutral image internationally. On the domestic front, censorship was used as a security mechanism to maintain national unity,[2] which was of particular concern in 1940 due to the activities of the IRA. Lee has remarked that, "[c]ensorship was justified in so far as it suppressed the potential internal divisiveness of partisan commentary".[3] Consequently, in the final months of the Phoney War the government's concerns mainly centred on formulating censorship policies. Examinations of the application of censorship in other neutral states were made and censorship was the first area of learning, vis-à-vis neutrality, that the Irish government specifically targeted. The government's attempts to neutralise opinion domestically and stifle international propaganda have been explored elsewhere, but only from the perspective

[1] NAI DFA Legal Adviser's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne to Walshe, 20 October 1939.
[2] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, p. 6.
[3] Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985*, p. 266.

of the belligerents.[4] This chapter will instead focus on the government's knowledge of censorship policies in the other neutral states and how the government incorporated these appraisals in defence of both Ireland's censorship policy and its neutrality. Ultimately, the censorship policies of the other neutrals were more lenient,[5] but in the early war period, the policies of the other neutrals informed Irish considerations of domestic censorship. External Affairs also requested and retained a large volume of reports regarding press censorship in the other neutral states throughout the war.[6] The Department forwarded numerous examples of restrictions from the neutrals to the Minister for the Co-ordination of Defensive Measures, Frank Aiken,[7] and the Controller of Censorship, Joseph Connolly, who imposed Éire's wartime censorship with a "draconian vigour".[8]

The chapter also traces developments in 1940 which brought Éire closer to the action. The multifarious threats the country faced from fifth-column activities, German invasion threats, and the possibility of a British invasion to re-take the Treaty Ports or pre-empt a German invasion, greatly altered the security landscape. After the German invasion of Norway and Denmark, Irish concerns switched to defensive matters. As revealed in the previous chapter, External Affairs looked to Cremins in Switzerland for more targeted defence related information. Meanwhile, the activities of the Irish Minister to Spain, Leopold Kerney, who had compromising connections to people close to the German intelligence agency, *Abwehr*, were a further source of anxiety for Dublin. It is important to

[4] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland* and Robert Cole, *Propaganda, Censorship and Irish Neutrality in the Second World War* (Edinburgh University Press, 2006); Paul McMahon, *British Spies and Irish Rebels: British Intelligence and Ireland, 1916 – 1945* (The Boydell Press, 2008), pp. 370-391.
[5] Ó Drisceoil has compared Irish censorship with the policies of the other neutral states, see Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, pp. 285-292.
[6] See NAI DFA 214/66 which relates to censorship in other neutral states and NAI DFA 2001/9/83 which contains a large volume of reports from Francis Cremins on Swiss censorship issues throughout the duration of the war.
[7] Aiken has recently been the subject of an edited volume on his life and career, see Bryce Evans and Stephen Kelly (eds.), *Frank Aiken: Nationalist and Internationalist* (Irish Academic Press, 2014).
[8] Girvin, *The Emergency*, p. 278.

assess the perceived level of threat to Irish neutrality during the period as it was a driver for Irish efforts to maintain perceptions of their neutral credibility. Irish efforts to obtain military equipment from Britain had failed, and Frank Aiken's attempts in 1941 to secure military supplies from the United States saw him return home "empty handed".[9] Due to military weaknesses, positive perceptions of Irish neutrality were essential to the protection of the country's independence.

The final section of this chapter will, therefore, examine Irish censorship concerns after the summer of 1940 and the value of press-related reports from Irish diplomats in other neutral states. The Irish government's appreciation of the censorship policies of the other neutrals may have assisted them in assessing the dangers to neutral perceptions from compromising press articles. Switzerland was again the main source for much of the information flowing to Dublin from the continent and, in 1943, External Affairs engaged in an examination of the comparative liberties afforded by the Swiss government to the press.

[9] Keogh, *Twentieth Century Ireland*, p. 122. Aiken's chances of success were slim. He was considered deeply anti-British amongst British and American foreign policy officials. En route to the United States via Lisbon, he was reported to have stated that there was no reason why he would not wish for a German victory in the war. Whether or not Aiken actually said this, Churchill informed Roosevelt of Aiken's alleged remarks through the US Ambassador to Britain (John G. Winant). Aiken's meeting with Roosevelt — which was delayed for two weeks because Roosevelt decided to go on a fishing trip — ended acrimoniously. The US President was reportedly infuriated by Aiken's request that his administration support Éire in the country's stand not just against German aggression, but also British aggression. Roosevelt is alleged to have shouted 'nonsense' and 'preposterous', and more dramatic accounts suggest the US President pulled away a table-cloth sending his lunch into the air. Aiken's mission also involved gathering support for Irish neutrality amongst Irish-American communities and their elected representatives, some of whom lobbied the President to grant Ireland military equipment and food supplies. Roosevelt initially made a proposal to de Valera (through David Gray) to sell or charter two cargo ships for Irish supplies if Éire aided the British government in its war effort. De Valera was informed that the offer was being made directly to him and not to Aiken. De Valera rejected the offer and characterised the move as an effort to split his government. Under pressure from Irish-Americans, Roosevelt conceded and made the offer unconditional (regarding collaboration with Britain) and also promised $500,000 in aid from the American Red Cross. Military supplies, however, would only be granted to countries fighting the Nazis. Though he failed to obtain needed military supplies, Aiken's mission brought about the American offer of ships and food supplies. See Bryce Evans, ''The Iron Man with the Wooden Head?' Frank Aiken and the Second World War', in Evans and Kelly (eds.), *Frank Aiken*, pp. 139-146; and, Joseph L. Rosenberg, 'The 1941 Mission of Frank Aiken to the United States: An American Perspective', *Irish Historical Studies* (Vol. 22, No. 86, September 1980), pp. 162-177.

Establishing Censorship

During the Phoney War, the government's main interest vis-à-vis the other neutrals centred on their censorship policies. Though ultimately Ireland's censorship policy was much more severe than those of the other neutrals, Dublin's strong interest further illustrates their desire to learn from comparable, small, neutral states. Michael Rynne was a strong advocate of the neutralisation of domestic opinion, and he weighed in on the issue of censorship as early as 5 September 1939.[10] He composed a memorandum for Walshe which strongly criticised the attitude of the press, who he said were using "unneutral sources".[11] He suggested that Irish press censorship should "take example from Belgium and other neutral countries", which he said were "obviously endeavouring to remain strictly objective regarding the present state of war in Europe".[12]

On 15 September, in response to an inter-departmental request for views on press censorship, Rynne produced a lengthier memorandum.[13] He recommended what he termed 'negative' and 'positive' approaches, by which he meant censorship and propaganda to build up "favourable [public opinion] to Irish neutrality at once".[14] He feared that "[u]nless the public are rendered 'neutral-minded', the Department is going to find a quite disproportionate share of its official time taken up by apologies and 'explanations' to the

[10] For the best account of censorship in Éire during the war, to date, see Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*; see also Cole, *Propaganda, Censorship and Irish Neutrality* and Donal Ó Drisceoil, ''Moral Neutrality': Censorship in Emergency Ireland', *History Ireland* (Vol. 4, No. 2, Summer, 1996), pp. 46-50.
[11] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Rynne to Walshe, 5 September 1939.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Joseph Connolly was Controller of Censorship in 1939, and his eventual successor, Thomas 'Tommy' Coyne, was his assistant. Michael Knightly, meanwhile, was the press censor. An error in Crowe et al., *DIFP: VI 1939 – 1941*, p. 28, states Coyne was the Controller, yet also states he assumed this role in 1941. See also NAI DFA Legal Adviser's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne to Walshe, 15 September 1939 and Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, p. 95. See Appendix for a copy of the Emergency Powers (No. 5) Order drafted on 16 September, reproduced from NAI DFA 214/55.
[14] NAI DFA Legal Adviser's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne to Walshe, 15 September 1939.

belligerent Governments".[15] In proposing highly restrictive measures to prohibit 'unhelpful' headlines and references in publications and posters, Rynne made special reference to the workings of Swiss censorship. He noted that, "[t]he Swiss papers, for instance, appear to avoid sensational headlines, and, during the present emergency, newspaper vendors are forbidden to shout the contents of their wares".[16] His recommendations for 'positive' actions included informing newspaper editors that "[n]eutrality is the only decent attitude for a Christian country", and that people from neutral states facing difficulties historically rally round neutrality.[17] He also advocated the active promotion, by editors, of "attempts to bring about peace, especially those emanating from the Vatican and neutral countries such as Catholic Belgium".[18]

On 18 September, Walshe sent a secret memorandum to the Controller of Censorship, Joseph Connolly, which largely appears to have been based on Rynne's recommendations. Walshe stressed the need to neutralise opinion and the moral superiority of neutrality:

> Public opinion must be built up on a neutral basis, a neutral-mindedness must be created. A list of the States which are neutral should be frequently and prominently displayed in the Press. The advantages of being neutral should be stressed. The losses and suffering of all kinds, including famine and poverty, which come upon countries at war should be stressed. For Ireland, neutrality is the only logical policy […] As an eminently Christian State, we are obliged to maintain a position which will allow us to take the most efficient part in the establishment of peace. It is quite possible that the head of our Government may be able to take a very real part in bringing about a cessation of hostilities […] Unless we remain neutral, we cannot join with the small States of the world, and with the Vatican in particular, in attempts to bring about peace […] The tendency to give as facts or as the opinions of personages of great influence, what are really reports from prejudiced sources, should be watched. (The attribution to the Holy Father of sentiments appearing in the Osservatore Romano [Vatican newspaper] in the course of a message from Poland is an example of this type of propaganda.) […] In general, it might be no harm to inform the editors of our papers that want of respect on their part for the principle of neutrality laid down by the Government and the Parliament might involve us at a later stage in an air-raid on Dublin, for consequences of which they would have to take responsibility. There is no question about the vital necessity of neutrality for the preservation of this State, and

[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.

> the cliques which run the anti-Government Press have no moral right whatever to oppose that policy.[19]

Connolly "agree[d] entirely with the views set out in Mr. Walshe's Memorandum",[20] which was sent to him a day before he, his assistant Thomas Coyne, and the Chief Press Censor, Michael Knightly, met with the editors of major Irish newspapers for an exchange of views on censorship.[21] The recommendations of Rynne and Walshe add weight to Keogh's argument that Irish neutrality was influenced by Vatican neutrality, at least in considerations of rhetoric and moral projection. Some evidence of interaction between Ireland and the Vatican in the realm of censorship exists from the pre-war period. In 1938, Walshe stated that "the Holy See regards our system of censorship as a model one, and the Cardinal Secretary of State is very eager to learn all about it".[22] Walshe was given material on the Irish system of 'moral censorship' of publications to relay to the Papal Nuncio in Dublin by the Department of Justice,[23] but whether the Vatican learned from Irish methods requires further research in the Vatican archives. What is clear, however, is that Ireland's expanded wartime censorship was often imposed over-zealously. On 27 September, the Irish legation in the Holy See was compelled to express "profound regret" that the Irish Censorship Office had opened a letter addressed to the Pope himself.[24] Blame was placed on insufficient organisation and "officials not yet trained to their work".[25] On 2 October, Colman O'Donovan, reported that:

> [C]omplaints have been made to me by the Rector of the Irish College and others of the severity of our Censorship. They allege that a very much higher proportion of

[19] UCDA P104/3433 Frank Aiken Papers, Walshe to Joseph Connolly, 18 September 1939.
[20] Ibid., Notes of Connolly on Walshe's Memorandum, 18 September 1939.
[21] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, pp. 95-96.
[22] The Papal Nuncio in Dublin (Paschal Robinson) approached Walshe to learn of Ireland's instructions to censors and he also asked for their names and qualifications. Walshe noted that he was requested to provide information regarding press censorship, which, in 1938, involved the censorship of books and periodicals by the Censorship Publications Board. There were no press censors at that time. See NAI DFA 90/102/137, Walshe to S. A. Roche (Secretary of the Department of Justice), 9 July 1938.
[23] Ibid., J. E. Duff (Department of Justice) to Walshe, 14 December 1938.
[24] NAI DFA Holy See Embassy 14/5/1, Translation of Note Verbale sent by Holy See Legation to Secretariat of State of His Holiness Vatican, 27 September 1939.
[25] Ibid.

> letters is opened by our authorities than by the British in spite of the fact that we are neutral whilst Britain is at war.[26]

On 4 October, Éire's censorship policy was portrayed in the Seanad as more restrictive than the policies of the other neutrals by Professor Michael Hayes, who challenged de Valera over the extent of the Irish policy.[27] In response to Hayes' contention that the Belgian Minister of Information had rejected the idea of censorship,[28] de Valera informed the Seanad that Irish censorship had to be practical for Ireland, and not based on considerations of other states' policies. For de Valera, censorship was "a problem for our own consideration, and it cannot be solved by reference to what they are doing in Switzerland or Belgium or somewhere else".[29] Two factors may explain de Valera's response. Firstly, it was in line with his government's attempts during this period to deflect criticisms of Irish preparations for the war through comparisons with the other neutrals (as mentioned in chapter 1). Secondly, unlike the other neutrals, Éire's censorship policy was designed to neutralise opinion, both "as an internal security mechanism in the traditional sense",[30] and to create what Ó Drisceoil called a 'moral neutrality' which sought to "protect the (narrowly defined) morals and culture of 'the nation'".[31] This made Irish censorship "more rigid and wide-ranging than that imposed in most other countries, particularly other neutrals".[32] These factors did not, however, preclude the government from learning from their fellow neutrals vis-à-vis censorship.

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[26] NAI DFA Holy See Embassy 14/5/1, O'Donovan to Walshe, 2 October 1939.
[27] Professor Hayes was a Fine Gael Senator on the Seanad Administrative Panel.
[28] *Seanad Debates,* Vol. 23, No. 11, Col. 1143, 4 October 1939.
[29] Ibid., Col. 1244.
[30] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland,* p. 6
[31] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, p. 1. Irish neutrality developed "an emotional dimension, self-righteousness and moral superiority", see Donal Ó Drisceoil, 'Censorship as Propaganda: the neutralisation of Irish public opinion during the Second World War', in Girvin and Roberts (eds.), *Ireland and the Second World War*, p. 153.
[32] Ibid.

The government wished to avoid overt expressions of sympathy with either belligerent to keep in line with neutral obligations, as set out by Rynne in September.[33] This problem was not uniquely Irish. Cremins reported on 7 October, that in Switzerland, "while all steps had been taken by the authorities to carry out and maintain their policy of the strictest neutrality, the sympathy of the population was manifestly with the country which was resisting aggression".[34] The Swiss solution was to place the press "under military surveillance in regard to the publication of information and expressions of opinion".[35] The key distinction here with Ireland is that Swiss controls were retrospective as the neutralisation of domestic opinion was not deemed "necessary or desirable".[36] Con Cremin observed similar concerns in Belgium to those in Switzerland, where a section of opinion there had failed to comprehend that:

> [T]he observance of this neutrality involves sacrifices and restrictions which must be accepted loyally by all. The Department of Information intends to promote a civic spirit, to strengthen the sense of national unity, to encourage the collaboration of all citizens with the Government, to make it clear to everyone that the measures taken are taken in the common interest.[37]

Nonetheless, the Belgian Ministry of National Information informed members of the press that it sought to "free it [the press] of false rumours and guide it without in any way encroaching on the freedom of opinion", and the Department excluded "all idea [sic] of censorship".[38] The situation in Switzerland and Belgium was obviously at variance with the Irish desire to neutralise opinion, but this did not halt or hinder the Irish government's collection of information pertaining to censorship in the other neutral states.

[33] "[A] neutral State must not allow any preference for one belligerent rather than for another to appear officially and must endeavour to keep the expression of any such preferences among the public within the bounds of international courtesy", see NAI DFA Legal Adviser's Papers, Rynne to Walshe, 1 September 1939.
[34] NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Walshe, 7 October 1939.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, p. 6.
[37] NAI DFA 219/21, Con Cremin to Walshe, 16 September 1939.
[38] NAI DFA 219/21, Con Cremin to Walshe, 16 September 1939.

On 26 October, Rynne sent a memorandum to Connolly regarding foreign periodicals and illustrated news media. In it he indicated that the main difference between Ireland and Switzerland, was Éire's reliance on British media for international news. The Swiss were able to ban the importation of belligerent media because they had sufficient home-grown media outlets with international correspondents.[39] Rynne believed the possibility of creating a similar home-grown media outlet was problematical as the Irish would have to "start at scratch".[40] He also set out his interpretation of Ireland's neutral duties regarding censorship of publications from belligerent states:

> Switzerland found it essential during the last war to censor the foreign press and especially the pictorial press […] From the general standpoint of neutrality law, a neutral country has no duty toward the belligerents to censor news or views which do not go beyond the limits usually adopted by that country during normal peace-time. It has, however, a particular duty to prevent provocative matter likely to cause internal demonstrations against one belligerent or the other and it is bound to prevent the circulation of periodicals which contain matter such as would constitute "a breach of international courtesy" […] a completely new category of violently "discourteous" English illustrateds [sic] have come into being. In so far as we are permitting the circulation of the foreign picture-press, our status quo ante belli has been radically altered. Harmless illustrated papers which only a minority read have now given place to a bevy of very popular but very virulent propaganda journals in which the printed matter is relatively unimportant. We are, therefore, not immune from possible charges of partiality or discourtesy in the domain of the international law and practice of neutrality. Unlike the Swiss (Dutch, Belgians, Spanish and Italians) we are not in the habit of importing papers from all the belligerent countries and so lack the "antidotal" excuse on which to base a claim to be strictly impartial.[41]

Both Rynne and Walshe acknowledged, in their September memorandums to Connolly, that, many of their concerns regarding censorship were outside their brief. However, as Ó Drisceoil has stated "[p]olicy with regard to specific matters was usually formed on the basis of requests from the various government departments. Thus, the Department of External Affairs was closely involved in devising censorship policy in relation to news and

[39] See Ó Drisceoil, 'Moral Neutrality', p. 47.
[40] UCDA P104/3433 Frank Aiken Papers, Rynne to Connolly, 26 October 1939.
[41] UCDA P104/3433 Frank Aiken Papers, Rynne to Connolly, 26 October 1939.

views with an international dimension".[42] Clearly, knowledge of the censorship policies and experiences of the other neutrals informed, at least, External Affairs' views.

In January 1940, interest in censorship matters led External Affairs to instruct the legations in Geneva, Paris, Madrid and Rome, to provide "any facts and figures ascertainable regarding enforcement of Belgian/local press censorship laws by means of suppression of journals or otherwise since outbreak of war".[43] That month, Rynne also wrote to Dulanty, the Irish High Commissioner in London, asking for him to ascertain press censorship laws in neutral countries. Rynne informed him that de Valera thought details of their practices could be used as a defence against criticisms of Ireland's "comparatively benevolent press control".[44] Dulanty promptly replied that in Norway and the Netherlands there appeared to be no press censorship, Denmark was similar except newspapers were asked to refrain from publishing comment on the belligerents, and in Sweden two publications were punished for 'unneutral conduct'.[45] Rynne produced an interim report for Aiken, on 20 January, based on the information he had obtained. Rynne's interpretation of press censorship in Switzerland was that it was strict.[46] Towards the end of the month the Vatican broadcast accusations of German atrocities and religious persecution in Poland. The German legation in Dublin pressed the government to force Irish newspaper editors to print Germany's denial of these accusations prominently in their publications. However, Boland informed the German Minister, Hempel, that Irish censorship was "negative rather

[42] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, p. 98.
[43] NAI DFA 219/7, Walshe to Irish Legations in Geneva, Paris, Madrid and Rome, 16 January 1940.
[44] NAI DFA 214/66, Rynne to Dulanty, 17 January 1940.
[45] Ibid., Dulanty to Rynne, 19 January 1940. What Dulanty did not inform Rynne, however, was that there was no formal pre-emptive press censorship in Sweden during the war. Warnings and advice were given to publications wishing to print material injurious to foreign states and punishments were meted out retrospectively. See Klas Åmark, 'Sweden: Negotiated Neutrality', in Richard J. B. Bosworth and Joseph A. Maiolo (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Second World War: Volume II Politics and Ideology* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 363-367.
[46] NAI DFA 214/66, Rynne to H.C. Brady (Aiken's Private Secretary), 20 January 1940.

than positive", that it "could tell the papers what they must not print but [he] doubted whether it could tell the papers what to print".[47]

Over the following weeks the government received more replies to their requests for information on censorship practices from their diplomats on the continent. Seán Murphy provided a number of reports in relation to Belgian censorship, such as a prohibition on the sale, transport and distribution of three publications and a ban on five books, which Rynne forwarded to Frank Aiken in January and February.[48] Towards the end of January, Aiken asked Rynne to obtain information about a new Dutch press law he had learned of through the news indicating his keen desire to learn from the other neutrals.[49] Rynne also received reports from Cremins informing him that the Swiss issued advice to newspapers and periodicals regarding "the line they should or should not take" on events in other countries.[50] Cremins further informed him that publications were suppressed for material offensive to other states retro-actively or at the frontier if coming from abroad. In preparation for the Dáil sessions at the end of February, Connolly composed a note for Aiken which argued that the "prime object of the policy of a neutral country must always be so to act that the countries at war will have no excuse for questioning its neutrality".[51] In expectation of Opposition criticisms in the Dáil, Connolly suggested Aiken's defence:

> If somebody objects that while all of this is very true, and indeed elementary, there is at least one of the neutral countries, the United States of America, which seems to be able to get along very well without a censorship, I shall make him a present of the point, remarking merely that our own country, unfortunately, is not so favourably situated, so far as the present European conflict is concerned, either geographically or in other respects. To such a one I should say that a realistic view requires that he should look nearer to home where he will find that most of all the small states of Europe, particularly those in which the democratic tradition is strongest, have been forced by the stress of circumstances to accept censorship, in some form or other, as an inevitable if an unwelcome condition of neutrality. The case for censorship here, however, does

[47] NAI DFA 205/70, Boland to Walshe, 29 January 1940.
[48] NAI DFA 214/66, Seán Murphy to Rynne, 18 January 1940. Also UCDA P104/3433 Frank Aiken Papers, Rynne to Brady, 19 February 1940.
[49] NAI DFA 214/66, Rynne to Dulanty, 24 January 1940.
[50] Ibid., Rynne to Brady, 30 January 1940.
[51] UCDA P104/3433 Frank Aiken Papers, Connolly to Aiken, undated but late February 1940.

> not rest on what has been or is being done in other neutral countries who find themselves in a situation not unlike our own. We have had to take an independent decision and we have done so because it seemed to us self evident [sic] that if this country was not to become a centre of international espionage, as happened to certain countries in the war of 1914 – 18, there must be a strict control of our means of communication.[52]

On 1 March, Rynne again forwarded material to Aiken, this time from Francis Cremins who sent copies of decrees made in Switzerland in relation to press and film censorship.[53] Soon after, Rynne forwarded a list of countries and whether or not they had press censorship laws, which he obtained from Dulanty.[54] The list showed that in Norway, Denmark, Japan, Brazil, the Argentine Republic, and Turkey, there were no press laws in force.

External Affairs had also obtained a draft of a press control bill, to be discussed in the Swedish parliament, from the Swedish Consul in Dublin.[55] Cremins, meanwhile, elaborated on his previous reports and detailed discussions he held with Lieutenant Colonel Chapuisat regarding Swiss controls; which included confiscations by the state of material "injurious to Swiss neutrality".[56] The vague categorisation of material was no doubt intended to provide broad power to the state. Two days later, Aiken presented a memorandum to the government seeking, in effect, the same power of confiscation as the Swiss government enjoyed.[57] Based on the reports from across Europe, Rynne deduced that Sweden and Switzerland had "very strict" censorship policies and he relayed this information to Aiken and Coyne.[58] External Affairs was effectively the eyes and ears for the Minister for the Co-ordination of Defensive Measures and the timing of Rynne's reports was very important. During this period, the government identified gaps in the powers granted to them in

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., Rynne to Brady, 1 March 1940.
[54] Ibid., Dulanty to Rynne, 2 March 1940.
[55] NAI DFA 214/66, Boland to Aiken, 7 February 1940.
[56] NAI DFA 214/66, Cremins to Walshe, 21 January 1940.
[57] See Maurice Walsh, *G2 In Defence of Ireland: Irish Military Intelligence 1918 – 45* (The Collins Press, 2010), pp. 151-152.
[58] NAI DFA 214/66, Rynne to Thomas Coyne, 19 February 1940.

September 1939 under the Emergency Powers (No. 5) Order (see Appendix A). In July 1940, additional powers were added under the Emergency Powers (No. 36) Order, which granted censors the power to direct the Gardaí to seize any document which could be harmful to public safety or order.[59] It is possible these new powers were influenced by Cremins' reports which mentioned the confiscation of material harmful to Swiss neutrality. The discovery of documents in the house of an IRA member in May 1940, detailing a proposal for IRA-German cooperation, may also have been a crucial factor.[60] What is certain, however, because Rynne stated as much, is that, in advance of the budget estimate for the Censor, External Affairs was tasked with obtaining as much information as possible regarding censorship policies in other neutral countries to use as justifications for the need to censor the press in Ireland.[61]

The Irish government's strong interest in censorship policies during the Phoney War reflected Aiken's belief that propaganda was "one of the most important weapons of war".[62] Irish military frailties enhanced the importance of maintaining unity within the country and denying the belligerents any cause to strip the country of its sovereignty. Ó Drisceoil emphasised this point when he stated that censorship "became a central measure in the defence of Irish neutrality".[63]

[59] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, pp. 20-21.
[60] The home of Stephen Caroll Held was raided by the Gardaí in May 1940 and the details of a plan for cooperation between the IRA and Germany were discovered. This is dealt with in more detail in the following pages.
[61] NAI DFA 214/66, Rynne to Dulanty, 19 February 1940.
[62] Quote of Frank Aiken, see Ó Drisceoil, 'Moral Neutrality, p. 47.
[63] Ibid.

Balancing Threats – Summer 1940

German advances in 1940 radically altered the international security landscape and brought the war closer to Irish shores. As these developments significantly increased the dangers to the maintenance of Irish neutrality, it is important to provide some context of the threats the Irish government had to balance.

Fifth-column activities in Ireland were a serious concern from the start of the war. During the first few months, the Minister for Justice, Gerald Boland, issued warrants for the "internment of some seventy people who were believed to be active in the IRA".[64] A number of inmates subsequently began a hunger strike and they mounted a successful legal challenge in the High Court against their detention. In response to this set-back, the government began to intern suspects under the Emergency Powers Orders, which circumvented judicial scrutiny. The wording of the Orders was amended to permit the internment of natural born Irish citizens.[65] The government's use of emergency powers boosted the state's capabilities to tackle the IRA "on the streets, in the courts and in [the] prisons".[66] On 23 December 1939, however, the IRA made a bold raid on Magazine Fort;[67] a store for the Irish Army's arms and ammunition. During the raid, the IRA took possession of "thirteen lorries of ammunition, [and] 1,084,000 rounds, the bulk of the Irish Army's reserve supply".[68] The raid provoked "the greatest combined search operation in the history of the Irish army",[69] and subsequent searches and seizures eventually netted more

[64] T. Ryle Dwyer, *De Valera: The Man and the Myths* (Poolbeg Press Ltd., 1991), p. 231.
[65] Ó Longaigh, 'Emergency Law In Action', p. 66.
[66] Cronin, *Washington's Irish Policy*, p. 77.
[67] Magazine Fort, located in Dublin's Phoenix Park, was built in 1735.
[68] Bell, *The Secret Army*, p. 208 and Hull, *Irish Secrets*, p. 65.
[69] Bell, *The Secret Army*, p. 208.

ammunition than had been lost, though this "by no means calmed the fears of the government".[70] The international publicity the raid received had also given the Germans "the false impression that the IRA was a military force to be reckoned with".[71]

Links between the IRA and Germany were also a serious concern. IRA Chief-of-Staff, Seán Russell, travelled to Berlin from the United States in May 1940 to promote these links, but, "[t]he I.R.A. never did succeed in setting up a supply route, nor did it respond to German requests to cease operations against de Valera and concentrate instead on military installations in Britain and the North".[72] Russell ultimately died from perforated ulcers while on his way back home on board a U-boat in August 1940.[73] The IRA did, however, propose to the Germans that they should engage in a joint invasion of Northern Ireland. Stephen Carroll Held, a member of the IRA, travelled to Berlin in April 1940 to deliver a proposal for a joint operation called 'Plan Kathleen',[74] which called for German landings to signal an uprising against the British in Northern Ireland. However, the plan "was 'so amateurish' that some Germans suspected a British plot".[75] On 23 May 1940, Held's home was raided by the Gardaí who discovered the plan along with a parachute and a transmitter, indicating that a spy was on the loose. On 5 May, Hermann Görtz had landed close to Dublin and had met with people sympathetic to the cause.[76] His mission was to seek help from the IRA in the event of a German invasion of Britain and to gain their assistance in "cutting off Eire's connections with the United Kingdom".[77] Görtz's opinion of Plan Kathleen, however, was that "it [was] 'childish' and 'completely useless'".[78] Though the

[70] Ibid., p. 209.
[71] Hull, *Irish Secrets*, p. 65.
[72] Tim Pat Coogan, *The I.R.A.* (Fontana Books, 1971), p. 272.
[73] "He was buried at sea with full military honours, wrapped in a German flag." See Ibid.
[74] For more information on 'Plan Kathleen' see Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 348-349.
[75] John Bowman, *De Valera and the Ulster Question: 1917 – 1973* (Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 21.
[76] See O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, p. 91. Görtz, who was at Held's home when it was raided on 23 May 1940, evaded capture by hiding behind a garden wall, see Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 350-351.
[77] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 350. For more on Görtz, see Hull, *Irish Secrets*, pp. 75-96.
[78] Ibid.

Irish intelligence agency, G2,[79] were actively searching for him, Görtz remained at large until November 1941. Nonetheless, by the mid-1940s, the government clamp-down of the IRA reduced it to a "small and ineffective group, defeated by state coercion, superior strategy and intelligence, internal dissension and futile wartime intrigue".[80]

The international situation was the greatest cause for concern. Despite the fall of Denmark and Norway, Irish responses, both public and defensive, were muted. By May, the number of men available for defence force mobilisation was permitted to reach a low of 13,346; a reduction of 4,744 from the September 1939 level of 18,090.[81] The Irish Army continued to be constricted by the Department of Finance.[82] Walshe's pessimism increased and is clearly evidenced in his communication to de Valera on 1 May:

> There is a feeling amounting to conviction that Hitler will take over the whole Balkans and perhaps Holland and Belgium within the next few months, and the Allies have little or no hope of being able to stop him...I have formed the impression that the Government [of Britain] are too soft, too class-prejudiced (they are almost all of the wealthy Tory family type) to be able to win in a war against men of steel like Hitler, Stalin and their followers.[83]

After the German invasion of neutral Belgium and the Netherlands, Seán Murphy reported from Paris that the "general feeling [was] that the war proper [had] now begun".[84] External Affairs provided Irish diplomats with instructions which detailed the rules for abandoning

[79] For a history of G2, see Walsh, *G2 In Defence of Ireland*.
[80] Murphy, *Ireland in the Twentieth Century*, p. 98. Abwehr, German intelligence, also "failed to establish sufficient trust [with the IRA], a common strategy or a reliable means of communication", see Mervyn O'Driscoll, 'West Germany', in Mervyn O'Driscoll, Dermot Keogh and Jérôme aan de Wiel (eds.), *Ireland through European Eyes: Western Europe, the EEC and Ireland, 1945 – 1973* (Cork University Press, 2013), p. 22.
[81] Figure quoted by Major General Domhnall MacCionnaith (Army Chief of Staff) to Oscar Traynor (Minister for Defence), 24 October 1940, 'General Report on the Expansion, Organisation, Training, Equipment and Defensive Preparations of the Army during the period commencing 1st May, 1940 and ended 30th September, 1940', in Kennedy and Laing (eds.), *The Irish Defence Forces 1940 – 1949*, p. 2. Duggan quotes the figure for 10 May as 13,335, see John P. Duggan, *A History of the Irish Army* (Gill & Macmillan, 1991), p. 181.
[82] At the end of April, External Affairs even forwarded a helpful press report from Switzerland detailing further cost cutting measures in the realm of defence: "It appears that in order to avoid waste, the army authorities have created supervisory organs consisting of officers called 'Economy Officers', to supervise national defence expenditure and to make proposals regarding economies", see NAI DFIN S4/72/39, Dr. Nicholas G. Nolan (DEA) to Seán T. O'Kelly (Minister for Finance), 24 April 1940.
[83] UCDA P150/2571 Éamon de Valera Papers, Walshe to de Valera, 1 May 1940.
[84] NAI DFA Paris Embassy 19/34A, Murphy to Walshe, 11 May 1940.

their missions and the destruction of confidential papers and codes.[85] Though de Valera had "held his tongue" after the invasion of Denmark and Norway,[86] he issued a strong condemnation on this occasion. On 12 May, he addressed a Fianna Fáil convention in Galway and stated:

> I was at Geneva on many occasions. When I was there, I used to particularly seek out the representatives of small nations because their problems, I thought, were in many respects like our problems […] the representatives of Belgium and the representatives of The Netherlands were people that I met frequently, because we cooperated not a little with the northern group of nations. Today these two small nations are fighting for their lives, and I think it would be unworthy of this small nation if, on an occasion like this, I did not utter our protest against the cruel wrong that has been done to them.[87]

Unsurprisingly, his statement met with German disapproval, though it was broadly in line with the sentiments of fellow neutral leaders US President Franklin Roosevelt and Pope Pius XII.[88] To assuage German irritation, External Affairs instructed Warnock to tell the German Foreign Office "that [the] statement was intended not as gratuitous judgment on rights and wrongs of German action but as [an] assertion of a principle on which [Éire's] national security depends".[89] Though the statement was not commented upon in the

[85] NAI DFA Holy See Embassy 14/9/1, Instructions from the Department of External Affairs to the Heads of Diplomatic Missions and other Offices abroad in the event of an emergency, 11 May 1940.
[86] Duggan, *Neutral Ireland and the Third Reich*, p. 89.
[87] Maurice Moynihan (ed.), *Éamon de Valera Speeches and Statements, 1917 – 1973* (Gill & Macmillan, Dublin, 1980), p. 435. Fisk ascribes de Valera's statement to a sense of kinship he had with small neutral powers at the League, see Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 173. A sense of kinship with Belgium and The Netherlands as fellow majority Catholic nations may also have been a factor, as may the fact that Belgium was the first state to be conquered in the war with which Éire had direct diplomatic relations. All these rationales are speculative however, and de Valera's true reasoning is not known. David Gray, writing in his memoirs of the speech, speculated that de Valera's condemnation of German actions was a *ruse de guerre* designed to ensure the continuance of British supplies of vital goods while implementing a neutrality injurious to the Allies and to the benefit of the Germans. Gray wrote that the speech was an attempt to deceive London about the existence of "the 'Dublin-Berlin Axis'", see Paul Bew (ed.), *A yankee in de Valera's Ireland: the memoir of David Gray* (Royal Irish Academy, 2012), p. 136. In the view of Paul Bew, however, "[i]t is possible to doubt significant aspects of Gray's analysis. Gray nowhere makes full allowance for a weak country desperately dodging and weaving in order to preserve its neutrality. De Valera not only had to play off the Germans against the British, but the Germans, as Gray knows, had two strategies against him: one, the threat of outright German victory — the other lay in their alliance with the IRA, which might topple his government. Some of the more embarrassing Irish messages to the Nazi regime — those which exude a tone of complicity — may be explained, in part, in this light", see Bew, *A yankee in de Valera's Ireland*, p. xxvi.
[88] See Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 121.
[89] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P3, Department of External Affairs to William Warnock, 15 May 1940.

German press, Warnock gathered that it was "not too well received" at the Foreign Office in Berlin.[90]

On 10 May, Winston Churchill replaced Chamberlain as British Prime Minister. Two weeks later the Irish government held secret talks with the British Dominions Office regarding mutual assistance in the event of an invasion of Ireland.[91] The result of these talks was an agreement that Britain would come to Éire's aid once a German attack on the country was made, but not before then. Direct wireless communication between the states' military staffs was also established and the Irish detailed their defensive plans to the British.[92] The "unprecedented" level of co-operation between the countries was not in accordance with strict neutrality,[93] though co-operation in this sphere was not unprecedented internationally.[94] On 14 May, John Dulanty paid a courtesy call to Neville Chamberlain when he was leaving office. Chamberlain advised Dulanty that de Valera would do well to monitor Ireland's ports, communications and wireless, lest the country follow the fate of Norway which had suffered in part due to infiltration. He further warned

[90] NAI DFA 219/4, Warnock to Walshe, 18 May 1940. After Warnock met German Under Secretary of State Ernst Woermann on 21 May, Woermann noted that Warnock "expressed himself in a similar apologetic manner as the Deputy of the Eireann Foreign Minister (Walshe) had to our Minister [Hempel]". He also noted that Warnock had added a personal remark that "Eire in the last war against Britain, had started the attack too early [referencing the Easter Rising of 1916]. This mistake would not be repeated. In view of the German successes, (Woermann observed) the question, however, was whether Eire would not come in too late". See Maurice Beaumont, James Stuart Beddie, George Bonnin, K. H. M. Duke, M. H. Fisher, George O. Kent, Arthur G. Kogan, Margaret Lambert, K. Ronau, André Scherer, Howard M. Smyth, F. G. Stambrook, Paul R. Sweet (eds.), *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918 – 1945: Series D 1937 – 1945, Volume IX, The War Years, March 18 – June 22, 1940* (United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1956), p. 401. Also reproduced in Bew, *A yankee in de Valera's Ireland*, p. 134.

[91] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A3, Minutes of meeting between representatives of the Government of Éire and representatives of the Dominions Office and Service Departments of the United Kingdom, 23 and 24 May 1940.

[92] These discussions have been examined in length elsewhere. See, for example, Keogh, Ireland and Europe, pp. 122-127; O'Halpin, *Defending Ireland*, pp. 174-175 and Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, p. 65.

[93] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 127. Also see Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 178.

[94] Prior to the war, the Swiss concluded a defence agreement with France, which was the culmination of three years of discussion. The plan, the existence of which was known to the British, stipulated that the military forces of both countries would work together in the event of a German attack on Switzerland. See Neville Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland, and the Second World War* (Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 167 and ICE, Switzerland: *Final Report*, p. 86.
http://www.uek.ch/en/index.htm [cited 12-06-13]

Dulanty that "after what he had seen abroad he was afraid almost anything might happen now in a neutral country".[95] Chamberlain's warning regarding infiltration was taken seriously, and Warnock was instructed by External Affairs on 28 May to inform Berlin that the political parties were united in their determination to defend and protect the security of the country.[96]

Developments in June were fast-paced, and "it was a time of great uncertainty for Irish policy-makers".[97] The capitulation of France and the retreat of the British Expeditionary Force back to Britain, made an invasion of the British Isles a distinct possibility.[98] On 10 June, Italy, having shifted from non-aligned to non-belligerent, joined the war on the side of the Axis.[99] On 13 June, Franco declared that the Spanish were abandoning strict neutrality in favour of non-belligerency, in a move that shared similarities with Italy.[100] The next day German forces entered Paris unopposed. On 16 June, de Valera met with the British Minister for Health, Malcolm MacDonald, who highlighted IRA-Nazi collusion in a conversation designed to convince the Irish to join the war on the side of the Allies.[101] MacDonald also informed him that the British government believed an early

[95] NAI DFA 2006/39, Dulanty to Walshe, 14 May 1940.
[96] Warnock was also told to repeat a speech de Valera had made in Galway, in which he said "there is a small group who appear to be meditating treason it does not matter what reason they may advance instead of following the footsteps of Pearse they will be execrated in Irish history forever like Dermot McMurrough". McMurrough is regularly described as a traitor who invited the Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169 to re-claim his throne as King of Leinster. See NAI DFA Holy See Embassy 20/34, Walshe to Warnock, 28 May 1940.
[97] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 129.
[98] Though a plan for an attack on Ireland was drawn up in Germany, it was not acted upon. Code-named Operation 'Green', the plan indicated that the invasion would only be a diversionary attack for the more important invasion of Britain. The plan called for an initial force of 3,900 troops to create a bridgehead along the south-east coast of Éire. This relatively small force, which was to be lightly armed, was not expected to encounter any substantial resistance. Their mission was to secure an area for the subsequent landing of reserve divisions, while poking and prodding at Irish military defences. The lack of decisiveness regarding these plans "only confirms that the Irish expedition was to have been a diversionary one while the mass of German troops on the Channel coast crossed to England". See Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 220-223.
[99] See Brian R. Sullivan, ''Where one man, and only one man, led.' Italy's path from non-alignment to non-belligerency to war, 1937 – 1940', in Wylie (ed.), *European Neutrals and Non-Belligerents*, pp. 119-149.
[100] See Elena Hernández-Sandoica and Enrique Moradiellos, 'Spain and the Second World War, 1939 – 1945', in Wylie (ed.), *European Neutrals and Non-Belligerents*, p. 250.
[101] TNA PREM 3/131/1, Notes of conversation between de Valera and Malcolm MacDonald, 17 June 1940.

invasion of Ireland by Germany was a "strong possibility".[102] On 17 June, the German Minister Eduard Hempel, called on Joseph Walshe to inform him that Germany's fight was with Britain, but that "there may be a possibility of her touching Irish interests".[103] Hempel mentioned the seemingly anti-German attitudes of some Irish politicians, noting "a certain deterioration in our [Ireland's] neutrality attitude".[104] Walshe assured him of Irish neutrality and of de Valera's desire to protect the country from the horrors of war. Hempel told Walshe that he was sure an invasion of Ireland was not the intention of Germany, but, despite Walshe's request that Berlin issue a statement to that effect, Hempel declined, stating that it "would be tantamount to a partial revealing of their plans to the enemy".[105]

Michael Rynne believed an invasion of Britain and Ireland to be unlikely in the short term, and that a blockade and aerial bombardment of Britain was the most probable course of action for Germany.[106] Between 23 - 26 June, MacDonald set forward proposals that called for the declaration of a united Ireland in principle, with the details to be worked out in due course. In return, Éire was to enter the war on the side of the Allies, allow British ships use Irish ports and to allow troops and aircraft to be stationed at agreed points in the country. Following consultation on 27 June, the Irish Cabinet agreed that the proposals were unacceptable.[107] Fears that British troops would be attacked by hostile sections of the Irish public,[108] the fact Unionists in Northern Ireland had not been consulted,[109] feelings within the government that it was unrealistic, and that Britain was losing the war were

[102] Ibid.
[103] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P3, Walshe to de Valera, 17 June 1940.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.
[106] He also suggested that it would be advisable to have internment camps ready for any British forces in Northern Ireland who might cross the border. See NAI DFA Legal Adviser's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne, 17 June 1940.
[107] NAI CAB 2/3, Cabinet Minutes, 27 June 1940.
[108] TNA PREM 3/131/1, Note of conversations between de Valera and MacDonald, 23 June 1940. The strength of anti-British sentiment amongst nationalists in Ireland was regularly underestimated by Churchill during the war, see Paul Bew, *Churchill and Ireland* (Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 156.
[109] It was felt that because the Unionists had not been consulted that the offer was "purely tentative", see UCDA P150/2548 Éamon de Valera Papers, de Valera to Chamberlain, 4 July 1940.

contributory factors in the decision.[110] Joseph Walshe, in particular, thought a German victory was likely. On 21 June, he drafted a memorandum entitled 'Britain's Inevitable Defeat':

> Britain's defeat has been placed beyond all doubt. France has capitulated. The entire coast-line of Europe from the Arctic to the Pyrenees is in the hands of the strongest power in the world which can call upon the industry and resources of all Europe and Asia in an unbroken geographical continuity as far as the Pacific Ocean. Neither time nor gold can beat Germany.[111]

To quell media reports of secret Anglo-Irish discussions and to counter the possibility that Britain might pre-emptively invade Ireland to re-take the Treaty Ports, de Valera and Aiken gave interviews to American media outlets emphasising Irish neutrality.[112] By stoking isolationist Irish-American opinion during an election year in the United States, the government increased pressure on the Roosevelt administration at a time when its efforts to supply Britain with military aid were divisive.[113] Churchill, not wishing to jeopardise American assistance, resolved not to attack Ireland unless absolutely necessary.[114] A day after de Valera and Aiken gave their interviews, External Affairs instructed its missions abroad to widely publicise that "neutrality is the fixed policy of the Government and the unanimous desire of the people and that the Government is resolved to maintain [the] country's neutrality in all circumstances".[115]

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[110] Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985*, p. 249. American Ambassador to Britain, Joseph P. Kennedy, also "believed that England would lose in a war with Germany", see Laurence Leamer, *The Kennedy Men: 1901 – 1963* (Perennial HarperCollins, 2002), p. 136.

[111] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A2, Memorandum of Walshe to de Valera entitled: 'Britain's Inevitable Defeat', 11 July 1940.

[112] See Dwyer, *Irish Neutrality and the USA*, pp. 29-33.

[113] See Ibid., and Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, pp. 102-109. Irish-Americans were not uniform in their desire to keep the United States out of European affairs. The Irish Minister in Washington, Robert Brennan, recalled in his memoirs how he had to actively intervene to prevent some Irish-American groups from joining a campaign in support of Roosevelt's foreign policy. Brennan feared an Irish-American split on the issue as he "would be denied of the only weapon [he] had to save Ireland in the course of the administration's headlong race to save Britain". See Robert Brennan, *Ireland Standing Firm and Eamon de Valera: A Memoir* (University College Dublin Press, 2002), p. 24.

[114] Churchill discussed the possibility of taking the ports with his War Cabinet in mid-June. The Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, Jan Smuts, had sent a note urging seizure of the ports, but Churchill did not want to risk endangering American support. See Dwyer, *Irish Neutrality and the USA*, p. 73.

[115] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P14, Walshe to all Missions abroad, 5 July 1940. Hempel believed that British propaganda at this time was designed to provoke Germany into "striking the first blow", and he suggested to

Soon after, the Battle of Britain began, involving massive aerial bombardment and a naval blockade. During this period, Irish press censors "became increasingly restrictive", and "censorship played a central role in maintaining Éire [sic] security".[116] On 11 July 1940, Cremins reported that an article written in the *Journal de Genève*, by their London correspondent, claimed that Irish neutrality was being "used by the Germans" in their preparations for an invasion of Britain.[117] On 18 July, Hempel gave strong assurances to Walshe that Germany had no desire to invade Éire, but that they expected strict neutrality to be maintained.[118] Ireland needed to maintain a delicate balance between the belligerents that would give neither side cause for complaint. However, the activities of the Irish Minister in Spain, Leopold Kerney, during the summer of 1940 could have seriously damaged Anglo-Irish relations had they been known to London.

Reports from Kerney were sparse over the summer of 1940, though he was far from idle. He was tasked with negotiating with the Franco government for the release of a former Irish Republican, Frank Ryan,[119] who was held captive for his alleged actions while fighting on the side of the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War.[120] Ryan was a senior officer, and his capture in 1938 provided the Nationalists with an opportunity to "destroy the reputation of the International Brigades, especially in the English-speaking world",[121]

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the German Foreign Office that a counter-propaganda campaign be launched against propagandist stories emanating from Switzerland. See, Duggan, *Herr Hempel*, p. 102.

[116] Cole, *Propaganda, Censorship and Irish Neutrality*, p. 56.

[117] NAI DFA 205/8, Cremins to DEA, 11 July 1940.

[118] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P31, Memorandum by Walshe, 18 July 1940.

[119] A number of historical accounts of Ryan exist, see Fearghal McGarry, *Frank Ryan* (University College Dublin Press, Revised Edition, 2010); Seán Cronin, *Frank Ryan: The Search for The Republic* (Repsol Publishing/Skellig Press, 1980); Adrian Hoar, *In Green and Red: The Lives of Frank Ryan* (Brandon, 2004); Enda Staunton, 'Frank Ryan and Collaboration: A Reassesment', *History Ireland* (Vol. 5, No. 3, Autumn 1997), pp. 49-51.

[120] Ryan joined the International Brigades in response to the propaganda and recruitment drives of Irish right-wing groups, principally led by Eoin O'Duffy, who sought to protect Catholic Nationalism in Spain. The International Brigades were composed mainly of volunteers organised by Communist Parties of various countries to fight against the Spanish Nationalist Forces. See McGarry, *Frank Ryan*, pp. 51-53.

[121] Robert A. Stradling, *The Irish and the Spanish Civil War 1936 – 1939* (Mandolin, 1999), p. 199.

by linking him to alleged war crimes.[122] Ryan spent the next two years in Burgos Prison with a death sentence over his head. External Affairs was anxious that Ryan would be treated leniently as they feared that public opinion "would be greatly incensed if punishment involved Ryan's life".[123] Thanks to the efforts of Kerney and appeals from de Valera, the Papal Nuncio in Spain, and "a popular campaign for Ryan's release",[124] his life was spared.[125]

Securing Ryan's release was one of the government's chief concerns regarding Spanish relations during the Phoney War period and frequent representations were made by External Affairs and Kerney to try to achieve this aim.[126] Walshe wrote to Kerney in April 1940, citing his concerns that the issue was damaging relations with Spain:

> Do you think that our insistence on the release of Frank Ryan has in any way lessened your influence in Government circles? I find that the Spanish Minister here bristles up each time I mention the matter to him.[127]

Walshe had praise for Kerney's efforts but rejected an earlier suggestion made by him that a trade agreement with Spain be somehow linked to Ryan's release.[128] Kerney's response that there must be "occult influences working against Ryan",[129] highlighted his disillusionment with diplomatic efforts. He also re-buffed Walshe's opinion regarding trade concessions claiming that "forceful arguments are necessary at times, at least in Spain".[130]

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[122] NAI DFA Madrid Embassy 10/11, As reported by Kerney to Walshe, 13 April 1938. Ryan was accused of executing prisoners in his custody.
[123] NAI DFA Madrid Embassy 10/11, Walshe to Kerney, 14 April 1938.
[124] Stradling, *The Irish and the Spanish Civil War*, p. 200.
[125] See Stradling, *The Irish and the Spanish Civil War*; Cronin, *Frank Ryan: The Search for The Republic*, pp. 147-149; McGarry, *Frank Ryan*, pp. 69-70.
[126] When Kerney enquired about the delay in granted Ryan a release, Spanish Foreign Minister, Ramón Serrano Súñer, informed him that "Franco had received a great many letters from Ireland saying that Ryan was a dangerous man and begging Franco not to release him". See NAI DFA 219/2, Kerney to Walshe, 21 November 1939.
[127] NAI DFA Madrid Embassy 5/4, Walshe to Kerney, 12 April 1940.
[128] Walshe: "[Y]our suggestion about bartering trade concessions for Frank Ryan's release or giving the slightest hint to the Spanish Government that you have such an idea in your mind would be thoroughly bad, and you should carefully avoid giving any such impression. You can imagine the attitude of our Government towards any foreign representative who would offer a trade concession in similar circumstances", see NAI DFA Madrid Embassy 5/4, Walshe to Kerney, 12 April 1940.
[129] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A20/3, Kerney to Walshe, 23 April 1940.
[130] Ibid.

At this point Kerney fixed upon a rather dangerous solution that could have compromised perceptions of Irish neutrality. Using the services of Spanish lawyer Baron Jaime de Champourcin, Kerney sought to profit from the Baron's "certain friendships" in German and Spanish intelligence circles in a bid to free Ryan.[131] This was not the only link Kerney had to German intelligence. He and Ryan also shared a mutual friendship with Elizabeth 'Budge' Mulcahy,[132] who was married to *Abwehr* agent Helmut Clissmann.[133] The Clissmanns approached *Abwehr* and suggested Ryan could be useful to them.[134] On 30 April, Kerney noted:

> Champourcin says Spanish secret service has agreed to put forward request of G. [German] colleagues; latter instructed to suggest visit by R. [Ryan] to G. [Germany] or USA; told him G. [Germany] inadvisable and out of question, but USA, perhaps. C. wants visit Burgos with friend after Tues. 7/5, using my car.[135]

Kerney did not keep Dublin well informed of his actions during this period; however, in a report after the fact in August 1940, he detailed his efforts to free Ryan. Through the workings of de Champourcin and subsequent German influence, the Spanish authorities finally agreed to a release. Franco, however, preferred not to pardon him, but rather "gave orders for Ryan's 'escape'".[136] Kerney informed External Affairs on 29 July that his last meeting with Ryan had occurred on the 12th of that month, and "[k]nowing what was in the wind", he spoke with him at length regarding his conduct should he return home, warning

[131] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A20/4, Kerney to Walshe, 26 August 1940.
[132] Cronin, *Frank Ryan: The Search for The Republic*, p. 148.
[133] Elizabeth Clissmann was a close friend of Kerney since before her marriage to Helmut and she had spent almost a year in his Paris apartment, see McGarry, *Frank Ryan*, p. 75. Kerney also kept in contact with her during the war and even used the Madrid legation to facilitate the transmission of mail from Elizabeth's father to her via Denmark. See Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, pp. 72-73.
[134] Kerney, Ryan and the Clissmanns maintained that their efforts to free Ryan were wholly independent to those of the Irish Minister. However, Fearghal McGarry highlights suspicious aspects of Kerney's story. Kerney denied knowing Ryan prior to his incarceration, but, Elizabeth Clissmann recalled inviting both men to her Dublin flat in 1937 and that they had got along well. McGarry believes it is unlikely that there was not some form of cooperation between Kerney and the Clissmanns. Kerney later informed G2 — while being interviewed by the intelligence body in Dublin in 1943 — that he believed Ryan went willingly to Germany and that he was anxious to collaborate on some basis, see McGarry, *Frank Ryan*, p. 75-76. Whether Kerney was aware of the Clissmanns efforts to free Ryan through *Abwehr* is contentious, but Kerney's interactions with Abwehr agents and staff during the war (see footnote 125) cast a shadow over his career.
[135] NAI DFA Madrid Embassy CON 4/7/22 No. 3, Handwritten notes by Kerney.
[136] Ibid.

him that "certain precautions" would be taken to "observe his future movements and associations".[137] Two days later Ryan had 'escaped' into the arms of *Abwehr* at the French border. In his reports to Dublin, Kerney denied that he knew Ryan would be released into the hands of German intelligence, though it has been suggested that, in light of his connections, "it seems implausible that there was not some degree of co-operation".[138] In 1941, Kerney informed the Director of G2 (Irish military intelligence), Colonel Dan Bryan,[139] that de Champourcin had suggested the Germans could get Ryan to Ireland by submarine and that he gave the Spanish lawyer the green light to contact them.[140] Kerney's actions at a very sensitive time for Irish sovereignty were potentially very dangerous. In Ireland, External Affairs had grave concerns regarding collaboration between Republicans and Germany, and Kerney's methods in this context appear to have been at variance with the desires of the government.[141]

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[137] NAI DFA Madrid Embassy CON 4/7/22 No. 4, Kerney to Walshe, 29 July 1940.
[138] McGarry, *Frank Ryan*, p. 75.
[139] Bryan was Deputy Director of G2 until July 1941 when he became Director. He had an excellent working relationship with the head of MI5's Irish desk, Cecil Liddel and his brother Guy Liddel who later became Deputy Director of MI5. See Pauric J. Dempsey and Eunan O'Halpin, Bryan, Daniel ('Dan'), in James McGuire and James Quinn (eds.), *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge University Press, 2010). http://dib.cambridge.org/ [accessed 08-09-16]
[140] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A20/4, Memorandum by Colonel Dan Bryan, 20 October 1941.
[141] This was not the only occasion in which Kerney's activities came under suspicion. Kerney facilitated the passage of an Irish national living in Spain, Mary P. Mains, to Ireland and back to Spain. Ms. Mains worked for *Abwehr* and acted as a courier for messages between Hermann Görtz and German Intelligence. Kerney used his ministerial privilege to ensure her safe passage and ignored similar requests from other Irish nationals, including an Irish Army officer, see Hull, *Irish Secrets*, pp. 142-144. On 24 August 1942, Kerney informed Dublin that he had received a visit from Edmund Veesenmayer — a sub-ordinate of German Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop — during which they discussed the war generally. Kerney maintained that he emphasised Irish neutrality and acted properly throughout. Nonetheless, Kerney came under suspicion in Dublin and G2 monitored his personal correspondence and that of his family, see NAI DFA 10/P/71 and NAI DFA 10/P/71/pt/II. Kerney met Helmut Clissmann five times between November 1941 and July 1943, and Veesenmayer accompanied him on two of those occasions, see Hull, *Irish Secrets*, pp. 190-194. After the war, Professor Desmond Williams, having reviewed German Foreign Office documents, published a series of articles which alleged that Kerney made comments to Helmut Clissmann and Veesenmayer to suggest support existed for the Germans in Ireland; including on the part of de Valera as a means to end partition. It was Professor Williams' belief that such talk encouraged the Germans to re-examine their interest in Ireland. Kerney fought a libel action against the publication of these allegations, which resulted in apologies from two papers and a settlement in his favour. An internal investigation into the allegations was made by the Department of External Affairs between 1953 and 1954, during which they collated much documentation on Kerney's known activities during the war. Nothing on record indicated that Kerney had breached his obligations as a neutral diplomat, though External Affairs remained aloof from the libel action. What information actually passed between Kerney, Clissmann and Veesenmayer remains debatable, however, if

Germany's blockade of Britain in 1940 also proved problematic for the Irish government's efforts to remain outside the war. On 2 August, the S.S. Kerry Head was attacked by a German aircraft off the coast of Cork, causing damage to its steering gear.[142] Warnock was instructed to pass on a note of formal protest from the Irish government and to verbally state that "this incident which was witnessed by civilians from the shore [was] rather too flagrant to be passed over".[143] On 17 August, Walshe received a note from Hempel outlining the effect of Germany's "total blockade" of Britain and the dangers it would pose to Irish shipping between the islands.[144] Hempel offered assurances that they would protect ships flying the Irish flag, but that they would only do so if the government guaranteed that no cargoes would be carried to England and that no merchandise of English manufacture would be shipped outside Éire. Additionally, the government was to "give due notice to the German Government of the times of sailing of these ships and the route to be followed".[145] Walshe discussed the matter with the departments of Supplies, Agriculture and Industry and Commerce, after which it was decided that "[n]o matter what agreement with the Germans, they could not guarantee [the government] safety against the mines with which the Irish Sea [was] now apparently infested".[146] The German proposals were also

one takes Kerney at his word, then perhaps Boland's post-war assessment explains lingering doubts: "For some time prior to his return [he was called back to Dublin for meetings in January 1943], there had been uneasiness about Kerney on security grounds. He appeared to be in touch with Frank Ryan and others considered dangerous to the State, but there was a feeling that the information he furnished to the Department about these contacts lacked amplitude and candour", see NAI DFA 10/A/47. Mark Hull supports Williams' contentions and believes Kerney's lack of candour was because he had something to hide from his own government. Hull stated that "[r]egardles of Kerney's intent [regarding his meetings with Clissmann and Veesenmayer], the effect was to give German Intelligence a green light in Irish affairs", see Hull, *Irish Secrets*, p. 193.

[142] The Germans admitted the attack and apologised on 23 August, see NAI DFA Secretary's Files P3, Warnock to Walshe, 23 August 1940.

[143] Ibid., Walshe to Warnock, 2 August 1940.

[144] UCDA P150/2571 Éamon de Valera Papers, Memorandum by Walshe, 19 August 1940.

[145] Ibid.

[146] UCDA P150/2571 Éamon de Valera Papers, Walshe to de Valera, 19 August 1940.

deemed to be injurious to the trade relationship with Britain. It was concluded therefore, that to do nothing was the safest course of action.[147]

On 26 August, a German plane dropped bombs near Waterford Harbour and Bannow Bay. Warnock was informed of the tragedy by Dublin: "[t]hree girls were killed several persons suffered minor injuries creamery at Campile was destroyed and other private property was damaged".[148] Warnock was also informed that the Irish public viewed the incident as an "unfortunate mistake",[149] but that the British and American press suggested the bombing was of a more sinister nature. Not wishing to give cause to the voices calling for Ireland to join the Allies, the government was anxious for the German government to admit responsibility, apologise, and offer compensation. When no response had been received by early September, External Affairs sent a telegram to Warnock to press the matter:

> Essential [you] urge [the] German Government to complete investigations re Campile. All arguments are in favour of liquidating [the] incident with all possible speed. Apology for Kerry Head produced excellent effect. You should emphasize again absence of any reasonable doubt of plane's nationality.[150]

On 14 September, Warnock notified Dublin that the Germans believed it possible one of their planes got lost due to poor visibility and therefore they expressed their regret to the government and the families of the victims.[151]

In detailing the developments over the summer of 1940, it is clear that threats to the maintenance of Irish neutrality, and the independence of the state, were very serious. The Irish government had to balance threats from within and without in the absence of an effective military to deter attacks. Dublin did not wish to offer any *casus belli* to either

[147] Ibid.
[148] UCDA P150/2571 Éamon de Valera Papers, Walshe to Warnock, 26 and 28 August 1940.
[149] Ibid., 28 August 1940.
[150] NAI DFA 221/147, Walshe to Warnock, 5 September 1940.
[151] Ibid., Warnock to Walshe, 14 September 1940.

belligerent who may have sought strategic gain in occupying the country. Maintaining positive perceptions of the integrity of Irish neutrality were, consequently, a vital facet of Ireland's defensive strategy.

Giving No Cause for Complaint

As shown in the first chapter, de Valera informed the Dáil on 2 September 1939 that declaring neutrality was one thing, maintaining it was another:

> It is not, as some people appear to think, sufficient for us to indicate our attitude, or to express the desire of our people. It is necessary at every step to protect our own interests in that regard, to avoid giving to any of the belligerents any due cause, and proper cause, of complaint.[152]

The altered security landscape after the summer of 1940 put Éire's ability to remain outside the conflict to the test. In November, the greatest threat to Irish independence appeared to come from across the Irish Sea. After Roosevelt's re-election, and due to the continued threat posed to British supplies through the actions of German U-boats, Churchill declared in the House of Commons that:

> The fact that we cannot use the South and West coasts of Ireland to refuel our flotillas and aircraft, and thus protect the trade by which Ireland as well as Great Britain lives, that fact is a most grevious [sic] burden and one which should never have been placed on our shoulders, broad though they be[.][153]

This prompted a robust reply from de Valera, sparking a propaganda war between the countries:

> I now come to the question of the handing over of these ports so long as this State remains neutral. There can be no question of leasing these ports. They are ours. They are within our sovereignty, and there can be no question, as long as we remain neutral, of handing them over on any condition whatsoever. Any attempt to bring pressure to bear on us by any side — by any of the belligerents — by Britain — could only lead to bloodshed.[154]

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[152] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 77, No. 1, Col. 3, 2 September 1939.
[153] Winston Churchill on the Irish ports, *Irish Press*, 6 November 1940, in Mitchell and Ó Snodaigh (eds.), *Irish Political Documents 1916 – 1949*, p. 222.
[154] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 81, No. 4, Col. 585, 7 November 1940.

Increased tensions made it imperative for the Irish government to control perceptions of its neutrality. Censorship in Éire remained highly restrictive, and was characterised by the *Irish Times* as the most restrictive in the civilised world.[155] On 4 December, Independent Senator Sir John Keane tabled a motion in the Seanad against the press censorship. During the debate, Professor Michael Hayes highlighted the relative conservatism of Ireland's censorship policy:

> I think that anybody who has access to any other papers except ours will realise that more freedom is allowed in other neutral countries than is allowed here. As far as I can make out, for example, in Switzerland considerably more liberty is allowed.[156]

From Cremins' reports and newspaper clippings, the government was aware that Swiss press controls were primarily retrospective and opinion was not as stifled as in Ireland. Aiken responded that censorship was not as restrictive in countries that did not face the same peril:

> No matter what the law of nations, the Hague Convention, may say, and even though it allows neutrals to be belligerent in their words, provided they are not belligerent in their acts, nowadays if nations want to keep out of war they have got to be neutral in their words as well as in their deeds. That is the reason I say to Senator Hayes that it may be true, and I will not deny, that there is more freedom and less censorship in other countries than here but, if that is so, I am sure, if the governments are wise, it is because they are less dangerously situated than we are.[157]

Aiken had previously mentioned Switzerland's investment in its military, therefore, he may not have been disingenuous when suggesting Ireland's position was more precarious than the other neutrals. The Irish Army provided no credible deterrent to the belligerents, no essential war materials were being produced within the country for the benefit of Britain, and the Irish Pound was not a major freely convertible currency like the Swiss Franc. Ireland was, militarily, an easy target for a belligerent seeking strategic gain.

[155] Cole, *Propaganda, Censorship and Irish Neutrality*, p. 58.
[156] *Seanad Debates*, Vol. 24, No. 28, Col. 2580, 4 December 1940.
[157] Ibid., Col. 2615.

In December, Churchill wrote to Roosevelt seeking American support in convincing the Irish to cede use of the ports;[158] meanwhile Britain reduced petrol supplies to Ireland. De Valera sensed this was an effort to coerce his government via economic pressure and he used his Christmas address to appeal to friendly American publications and Irish-American organisations to defend Irish neutrality by lobbying the US government to supply arms and wheat.[159] This was met with hostility from Roosevelt and Gray.[160] During the same period, the Germans offered to supply Ireland with arms and requested that their diplomatic presence in Dublin be expanded by sending more personnel to the German legation.[161] Shortly after the Irish government refused this request German bombs landed at the Curragh, close to the Defence Force's Eastern Command, Terenure and Borris Co. Carlow. Walshe notified Warnock that three people had died in Borris, while seven were injured in Terenure.[162] The government called on Hempel to express their anger over the bombing and instructed him to relay to his government that "all flights over Ireland should be strictly forbidden".[163] When more bombs were dropped the next day, this time on the South Circular Road in Dublin, Hempel called on Walshe to issue a protest at articles in the Irish press suggesting the bombings were deliberate.[164] Though Walshe had Warnock push the German government for an apology, the Germans initially suggested the British may have been to blame.[165] A number of Irish Army officers believed the bombs were retribution for

[158] Churchill to Roosevelt, 8 December 1940, in Sir Llewellyn Woodward (ed.), *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War: Volume I* (Her Majesty's Stationary Office, London, 1970), pp. 392-393.
[159] FRUS Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), Vol. III (1941), Ireland, Gray to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, 7 January 1941.
[160] See Dwyer, *Irish Neutrality and the USA*, pp. 99-100.
[161] See Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 363-368.
[162] NAI DFA 221/147A, Walshe to Warnock, 2 January 1941.
[163] Ibid., Memorandum of Walshe, 3 January 1941.
[164] Ibid., 4 January 1941.
[165] Ibid., Warnock to Walshe, 7 January 1941.

Ireland's refusal to permit the German legation to increase its staff.[166] Meanwhile, German propaganda was broadcast nightly to Ireland from Berlin in both Irish and English.[167]

Conversely, doubts about British intentions caused difficulties for Anglo-Irish defence co-operation. During discussions in February 1941, the Chief-of-Staff of the Irish Army, Major General Daniel McKenna, informed Britain's Chief Liaison Officer, Major General James Harrison, that barriers on the border with Northern Ireland would only be removed if "any prominent member of the British Government was prepared to make a public statement to the effect that there was no intention on the part of England to invade this country".[168] He explained that, due to "the propaganda carried on in England against this country and for the possession of the Ports",[169] he had to consider the military threat, not just from Germany, but Britain also.[170] John P. Duggan has detailed that, during this period, Major-General Hugo McNeill was in secret communication with Hermann Görtz and Hempel's "second-in-command",[171] Henning Thomsen. McNeill allegedly wished to sound out the Germans for any assistance they could provide in the event of a British invasion.[172] However, considerations of the effect British action against Éire would have produced on Irish communities throughout the Commonwealth, and in the United States, moderated British actions. In March 1941, Colonel William J. Donovan — future head of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and widely known as the 'father' of the CIA — met with Churchill and the Australian Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, in Chequers. There they

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[166] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 368.
[167] David O'Donoghue, *Hitler's Irish Voices: The Story of German Radio's Wartime Irish Service* (Somerville Press, 2014), p. 61.
[168] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A3, Notes of discussion concerning British-Irish defence co-operation between Walshe, General Harrison, Major General Daniel McKenna, Colonel Liam Archer and Major M.H. Pryce, 17 February 1941.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Even from Berlin, Warnock expressed the opinion that the "German Press has been more correct in its attitude towards us than British and American", see NAI DFA 205/4, Warnock to Walshe, 12 February 1941.
[171] Michael Kennedy, *Guarding Neutral Ireland: The Coast Watching Service and Military Intelligence, 1939 – 1945* (Four Courts Press, 2008), p. 181.
[172] See Duggan, *Herr Hempel*, pp. 145-152.

discussed the possibilities of British action to re-take the ports. Donovan's report to the American Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, states that:

> I told them this was not a job of fighting but rather one of statesmanship; that the fear of the Irish that the proper arming would not be permitted by the British as they intended to seize the ports; that if force were used, it would be necessary in order to hold the bases for the occupation of Ireland; that this would be worse than non-use of the bases as it would play into the German hands, and it would mean diversion of British troops needed badly at home. In addition the situation in the United States would be endangered. Menzies agreed with all of this and said Irish origin of his people are [sic] 23 percent and force would effect [sic] the opinion of the Australians.[173]

Perceptual matters were, therefore, a contributor to preventing British military actions in Éire. Indelicate comment or blatant propaganda was harmful to Irish neutrality.

Reports from Irish diplomats in the other neutral states regarding press issues were informative in this regard. Most clearly, they highlighted objectionable articles permitting External Affairs to formulate protests and issue clarifications.[174] However, the press reports also provided Dublin with valuable lessons regarding what constituted inflammatory comment in the opinion of the belligerents. Press clippings were retained for reference, which suggests that External Affairs may have believed the material could be used to mount a comparative defence of Ireland's commitment to neutrality. Throughout the war, Francis Cremins supplied Dublin with a great volume of clippings from a wide variety of Swiss publications. External Affairs was made regularly aware of the attendant problems associated with more relaxed censorship protocols. Swiss newspapers were permitted to present a broader range of opinion and provide more detail to their readers than their Irish counterparts.[175] Through "a process of reciprocal control and self-censorship", the publishing houses of the Swiss media moderated their own output.[176] This did not extend

[173] FDR PL Index Box 3, Donovan to Knox, 11 March 1941. This communication was forwarded to Roosevelt by the US Ambassador to Britain, John Gilbert Winant.
http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/_resources/images/psf/psfa0035.pdf [cited 11-09-16]
[174] As early as September 1939, Kerney brought a Spanish news article to the attention of External Affairs, which stated that "the British Minister for Information [had] announced the creation of a British Naval base on the south coast of Ireland", see NAI DFA Madrid Embassy IP/1/2/1, Kerney to Walshe, 9 September 1939.
[175] Leitz, 'Swiss and Irish Neutrality in the Second World War', p. 68.
[176] ICE, Switzerland: *Final Report*, p. 77.
http://www.uek.ch/en/index.htm [cited 10-01-14]

to areas of national sensitivity such as foreign trade, however, which "was subject to extremely severe press censorship".[177] During the summer of 1941, Cremins reported that the Italian and German media took a dim view of the attitude of the Swiss press:

> The German, and important organs of the Italian Press, as well as the Italian radio, from time to time display great irritation in regard to the attitude of the Swiss Press, which they accuse of hostility towards Italy and of making common cause with the enemies of the axis [sic] [...] The matter is important, and the violent and repeated attacks which appear in the German and Italian press, cause much uneasiness amongst the people, who fear that they may be a prelude to the inclusion of this country in any scheme for the "reorganisation of Europe". At the moment an armed attack of this country by any Power is not anticipated, but the development of the war, and its gradual extension to other countries, with consequent increased blockade pressure, may lead to economic pressure being brought on Switzerland, with results that no one can foresee. That is why many of the newspapers urge prudence on those who speak their minds too freely, and point out that it is the Government which directs the policy of the country, and that the people should follow the Government.[178]

Cremins subsequently reported that many Swiss newspapers urged prudence in reportage from press outlets which "demonstrate[d] their feelings too clearly".[179] Colman O'Donovan also informed External Affairs of the ill will caused by the Vatican's anti-Axis attitude in April 1941:

> During the past month there has been a great increase in number and severity if denunciations of Nazi Paganism through Press, radio and other channels at the disposal of Vatican. It would be very costly to cable even summaries of these, and summarising also would be difficult and unsatisfactory. Perhaps Department received Vatican radio repetition of "The Pope is not Neutral" article in 'Osservatore' on the occasion of the anniversary of his coronation, which I am reliably informed was almost entirely written by the Pope himself. You may also have received from other sources text of a strong pastoral letter of Archbishop of Freiburg calling on Germans to resist.[180]

Vatican criticisms of Nazi Germany were met with "great German pressure", and O'Donovan informed the Department that "[t]he familiar method of war of nerves is being used, apparently with considerable success".[181] In the face of German threats, Pope Pius XII prohibited comment on Germany over the Vatican radio.[182]

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[177] Ibid., p. 78.
[178] Ibid.
[179] NAI DFA Berne Embassy Box 3 10.A.1, Cremins to DEA, 14 May 1941.
[180] NAI DFA P/12/2, Colman O'Donovan to DEA, 1 April 1941.
[181] NAI DFA P/12/2, Colman O'Donovan to DEA, 15 May 1941.
[182] See Ibid., and José M. Sánchez, *Pius XII and the Holocaust: Understanding the Controversy* (The Catholic University of America Press, 2002), p. 62. O'Donovan advised External Affairs that this was not an entirely

Examples such as these kept Dublin aware of the pit-falls associated with free comment and opinion and could possibly have re-enforced the stringency of Irish censors. The overwhelming majority of examples came from Cremins in Berne, who also highlighted the frequently objectionable nature of the coverage Ireland received in Switzerland:

> The long articles from "Liberté" Fribourg[183] referring to Irish neutrality and to the question of the possible invasion of Ireland are, to my mind, in parts somewhat objectionable, especially coming from a newspaper in a small friendly country whose policy of strict neutrality is something analogous to our own. Many of the statements applied in it to the Irish attitude would read very different to Swiss eyes if they were applied to the relations between Switzerland and a belligerent neighbour. And the "Paddies" reference is to say the least of it, unworthy. If such argumentation were used regarding Switzerland, in an Irish newspaper, the Swiss press would, I have no doubt, have something to say about it […] A particularly objectionable feature of some of the "Liberté" comments is that they sometimes present our neutrality as being almost hostile to one of the belligerents [Britain].[184]

In response, Dublin instructed Cremins to "make immediate representations to [the Swiss] Foreign Office" when he found an article to be objectionable, with the intention of achieving a favourable outcome through Swiss federal press controls.[185] Cremins would find many more instances of objectionable material in Swiss newspapers during the war,[186] particularly from Swiss correspondents in London. Consequently, External Affairs requested Cremins in 1943:

> [To] inform any Swiss newspapers which had correspondents in London that if at any time their correspondents desired to go to Ireland for the purpose of obtaining information at first hand in regard to Irish conditions, the Department would be happy to afford them all the facilities necessary to obtain such information.[187]

The Swiss press contrasted strongly with the relatively "colourless press" of neutral Éire.[188] The degree to which Irish censorship exceeded the other neutrals was commented

popular decision; "[i]n certain clerical circles, I find much criticism of weakness of character of Holy Father", see NAI DFA P/12/2, O'Donovan to DEA, 15 May 1941.

[183] A Swiss journal published in French since 1871.

[184] NAI DFA 205/8, Cremins to Walshe, 28 February 1941.

[185] Ibid., DEA to Cremins, 25 June 1941.

[186] A section of the Annual Reports for Irish legations was dedicated to press comments about Ireland. Cremins also frequently relayed individual press clippings pertaining to objectionable articles. For the Annual Reports see NAI DFA 359/2, Annual Reports of Swiss Legation, Berne; for reports on press comments in Switzerland about Irish affairs see NAI DFA 205/8.

[187] NAI DFA 359/2, Annual Reports of Swiss Legation, Berne, Cremins to DEA, 8 January 1944.

[188] League of Nations Archive Pp 274/2/756-758; (cf. p. 835), Undelivered letter of Seán Lester to James Dillon TD (Francis Cremins politely "refused" to send it), 5 August 1941.

upon regularly throughout the war. In February 1943, External Affairs compiled a report on the operation of Swiss censorship, and the differences they found were stark.[189] Opinions about the war expressed in Swiss papers were "of a character and to an extent which was never tolerated in Ireland".[190] Acting Secretary General of the League of Nations, Seán Lester, was adamant in his view regarding which course was best:

> [T]he impression made upon me by the way it [Irish censorship] has been operated is that it is mad and bad, timid and unwise, undignified and unworthy of a people with any degree of political responsibility, dangerous for the present and dangerous for the future [...] One hears criticisms of the operation of censorship in Switzerland, but in comparison the newspapers of all kinds in Switzerland make reading for men and not for ill-developed infants in an elementary school. Goodness knows the duties of censorship are at the best full of terrific difficulties and is a thankless work, but I believe ours is worked to some extent on very unsound principles and I am afraid we shall pay for it.[191]

Irish censorship policies did not match those of the other neutrals and were, in effect, far more stringent, but it should be recognised that censorship played a significant role in Irish defence calculations.[192] Military weaknesses enhanced the importance of projecting Ireland's neutrality internationally, particularly after the summer of 1940 until the tide of the war began to turn in the Allies favour in late 1942.

Conclusion

During the Phoney War Irish concerns were more inwardly focused towards domestic protections of Irish neutrality. Censorship was used as a key security mechanism to ensure unity within the country and its importance was elevated by the weakness of Éire's defence forces. Ireland's wartime censorship has already received scholarly attention, but this

http://biblio-archive.unog.ch/detail.aspx?ID=44064 [cited 12-02-14]
[189] NAI DFA 214/66, Rynne to Walshe, 8 February 1943.
[190] Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, p. 289.
[191] League of Nations Archive Pp 274/2/834-836, Letter from Lester to Cremins, 30 September 1941. http://biblio-archive.unog.ch/detail.aspx?ID=44267 [cited 15-02-14]
[192] Ó Drisceoil has succinctly compared the censorship policies of Ireland across a wide spectrum with those of the Swiss, Portuguese and Swedish, see Ó Drisceoil, *Censorship in Ireland*, pp. 288-290.

chapter contributes new knowledge by highlighting the large volume of research the Irish government undertook into the censorship policies of the other neutrals. The extent of Dublin's interest is instructive and speaks to the main argument of this thesis, that the Irish government sought to learn about the practical implementation of neutrality through information exchanges with the other neutrals. Censorship in Ireland was ultimately much more restrictive in comparison to the other neutrals and this has already been highlighted by Ó Drisceoil.[193] But, when Irish policy-makers crafted the country's domestic censorship, they did so armed with examples of measures taken by the other neutrals. The wealth of information received by Irish diplomats *en poste* in neutral states on censorship informed the process of formulating Ireland's bespoke censorship policy.

The fall of Norway, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands and France, subsequently altered the government's priorities. Éire was brought unexpectedly closer to the war in a short space of time. Consequent invasion fears, accidental bombings, attacks on ships, and belligerent propaganda ensured that defensive concerns pre-occupied the minds of the Irish government. The Irish legation in Madrid was a further source of anxiety and the wartime record of Leopold Kerney has inspired much speculation and debate.[194] Kerney walked a tightrope between upholding his duties as a diplomat representing a neutral country and engaging in activities which brought him into close contact with German intelligence. Had his activities been known to the Allies they had the potential to be very damaging to Irish neutrality. The absence of a credible military deterrent against belligerent aggression enhanced the need to maintain positive domestic and international perceptions of Irish neutrality. The government was anxious to mitigate threats to the neutrality policy by

[193] Ibid.
[194] A website aimed at vindicating the career of Kerney was created by his son, Éamon. http://www.leopoldhkerney.com/index.html [cited 18-08-16]

neutralising opinion within the country. This contrasted with the relatively liberal attitudes of the other neutrals towards their domestic press organs.

In the opinion of Robert Fisk, "the suppression of political opinion in Éire was such that it called into question the very nature of neutrality".[195] The sentiment expressed by the *Irish Times* in 1945, following the lifting of censorship, accurately portrayed the feeling amongst news editors throughout the country; Irish censorship was: "'as Draconian [sic] and irrational as anything that was ever devised in the fertile brain of the late Josef Goebbels'".[196] Thus, although the government and Frank Aiken took the censorship policies of the other neutrals into consideration generally, they transposed neutrality into practice in a unique way that fitted with their reading of Ireland's circumstances.

[195] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 162.
[196] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 195.

Chapter 4:

Neutrals of Practical Importance, 1939 – 1944

Introduction

The other European neutrals were of significant practical importance to Éire. In this chapter, three key aspects of their importance will be explored. First, their contribution to Éire's communications capacity on the continent; second, the Berne legation's usefulness as a financial hub for other Irish diplomatic posts; and finally, the importance of the other neutrals' experiences to Dublin when tackling supply issues. The first two issues have received scant attention from historians. The functionality of Ireland's communications network is typically only referred to when normal communications with Irish diplomats on the continent were disrupted or cut.[1] Meanwhile, reference to Francis Cremins' role as financier of last resort to other Irish legations in Europe seems to be wholly absent. A number of sources do detail Éire's supply difficulties and shipping concerns,[2] but they do not make the critical connection between the Irish government's knowledge of the practices of the other neutrals and the eventual alignment of Irish policy with them. This chapter will

[1] Keogh highlights communication difficulties when referring to Dublin's efforts to locate the Irish Minister to Vichy, Seán Murphy, in 1944, see Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, pp. 183-184. This point resurfaced in Crowe et al., *DIFP: VII 1941 – 1945*, p. 447n. Similarly communication difficulties were referenced in the previous volume of that publication when referring to the 1939 – 1941 period, see Crowe et al., *DIFP VI: 1939 – 1941*, p. xiii. Although Kennedy has acknowledged Berne as the channel of communications between Dublin and Irish diplomats in Vichy and Berlin, he did so in one sentence, see Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 246.

[2] See, for example, Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, pp. 20-24; Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 294-296 and 312-316; Frank Forde, *The Long Watch: World War Two and the Irish Mercantile Marine* (New Island, 2000) and Trevor Allen, *The Storm Passed By: Ireland and the Battle of the Atlantic, 1940 – 1941* (Irish Academic Press, 1996).

show that, in these practical concerns, Irish diplomats in neutral states were vital cogs in External Affairs' wheel during the war.

The chapter begins by tracing the development, and evaluating the effectiveness, of the Irish communications network on the European continent. No attempt to map out the Irish communications network has been made previously. Unfortunately, the communications network was not elaborated upon by Irish civil servants at the time. Therefore, the findings presented here are the result of correlating large numbers of files across multiple archival folders. What these findings show, is that the Irish communications network, despite unavoidable delays due to war developments, operated relatively well. The establishment of legations in Berne and Lisbon also provided new routes for the flow of information between Dublin and their diplomatic missions in Europe. Irish neutral legations were the back-bone of the network and were vital conduits connecting Berlin, Rome, Paris, Madrid, Berne and Lisbon to Dublin. As historians typically highlight the disruptions in communications, two examples will be explored to show that the neutral legations still provided valuable access to the communications network for Irish diplomats in times of crisis.

The next short section will highlight the usefulness of the Berne legation as a financial intermediary for Irish legations in Europe. Financing Ireland's wartime legations was complicated by Germany's conquest of France and Italy's entrance into the war. The government could finance the legations on the Iberian Peninsula using U.S. dollars, but the Swiss Franc was the preferred currency to support the Irish legations at Berlin, Vichy, Rome and the Vatican. Francis Cremins was External Affairs' financial intermediary for these legations, and he also retained emergency funds in case communications between Dublin and Irish legations on the continent were cut. The Berne legation's position as a

nodal point for communications and finance show its critical importance to the Irish government during the war.

The final section under examination in this chapter relates to Irish shipping and supply concerns. Ireland was poorly prepared for the rigours of war on supplies. Fisk points to de Valera's lack of foresight for not establishing an Irish merchant fleet prior to the war, despite warnings of economic isolation.[3] Consequently, the acquisition of neutral shipping tonnage to carry supplies to Ireland was a constant source of concern for the government. As stated previously, Irish shipping and supply concerns have been examined in detail elsewhere. What these historical accounts do not explore, however, is the influence knowledge of the other neutrals' policies had on Irish thinking. Though the government initially stuck to their own policy of protecting shipping by having them sail in Allied convoys, information regarding the comparative success of the other neutrals' practices became apparent. In time, the government, in conjunction with Irish ship masters, adopted the successful policies of the other neutrals, which resulted in a significant drop in the number of attacks on Irish ships.

Irish Communications Network

This section will trace the development of the Irish communications network during the war. In doing so, it will highlight the importance of Irish legations in neutral countries to Dublin's communications capacity with Irish diplomats in Axis territory and the European

[3] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 312. The Secretary of the Department of Industry and Commerce, John Leydon, had warned of the dangers of Ireland's over-reliance on British shipping in February 1939, see Evans, *Ireland in the Second World War*, p. 21. Little was also done to stockpile essential imports in advance of the war due, in part, to a lack of funding from the Department of Finance, see Richard Dunphy, *The Making of Fianna Fáil Power in Ireland, 1923 – 1948* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1995), pp. 218-219.

continent generally. The new Irish legations in Switzerland and Portugal became key hubs on the communications network complementing the Madrid legation. Without them the flow of communications to and from Irish diplomats on the continent could have been seriously compromised by a greater reliance on foreign couriers. The security of diplomatic mail was of great concern due to the sensitive nature of the correspondence and External Affairs had cause to restate the procedures to their foreign missions in relation to their handling:

> Where a consignment of mail is being sent by diplomatic mail-bag, the lock of the bag in which the sealed envelope is placed should be tested, when locked, with a view to ensuring that the shackle of the lock has, in fact, been pressed home. A piece of cord should then be tied round the outside of the bag, as far down from the neck of the bag as its contents will permit; the cord should be fastened securely by knotting it not less than three times, and a lead seal should be placed on the cord and impressed with the lead-sealing press of the Office concerned; the cord should then be knotted again not less than three times.[4]

The mailbags contained confidential reports, newspapers, code-books and sundry items for legations. Mail for Irish citizens at home or abroad was sometimes included in diplomatic mailbags, but this practice was technically prohibited. Communications between External Affairs and Irish legations in Europe via coded telegrams and locked and sealed diplomatic bags were regular;[5] however, communication lines were occasionally disrupted by war developments. Delays in shipping, temporary closures of borders and postal services on the continent, accidents, and foreign espionage, all hampered the smooth flow of communications at times.[6] Consequently, departmental staff and Irish diplomats on the continent had to be flexible and adaptable to unforeseen events in order to keep the communication lines open. When necessary, contact was maintained through officials of

[4] NAI DFA 2009/22/1, Circular 3/41, Dr. Nicholas G. Nolan (DEA) to all Missions, 24 October 1941.
[5] Diplomatic mail-bags were sent within larger mail-bags. Mail-bags often contained more than one diplomatic bag, and mail-bags to Madrid regularly contained diplomatic bags for Berne, Berlin, Rome (Quirinal) and the Holy See.
[6] Delays were not confined to Irish communications. In January 1943, Dr. Kiernan informed Walshe that the Spanish Ambassador to the Holy See was required to send his mail for Madrid via Berne, Berlin and Paris, which took between 8 and 10 days. See NAI 2009/22/1, Kiernan to Walshe, 7 January 1943.

other states, though Ireland's diplomats in the neutral states typically played a supporting role during such times. Despite occasional set-backs, the neutral communications network was a vital, if not always stable, link between the Irish diplomatic corps in Europe and External Affairs.

The first communications difficulty for External Affairs arose at the outset of the conflict, when contact between Dublin and Berlin became problematical. Direct communications with Germany were not possible as the postal service, telephone and cable systems, to and from Éire, were controlled by the British.[7] The legation in Berlin was without a Minister since the dismissal of Charles Bewley in August 1939,[8] and was run in the interim by the First Secretary, William Warnock. Frederick Boland, wrote to Warnock on 8 September 1939 and informed him "[w]e haven't come to any definite conclusion here as to how we are going to communicate with you in the future", but instructed him to send his reports and official correspondence for Dublin via the Irish Minister in the Holy See, William Macauley.[9] The Germans faced a similar difficulty in communicating with their Minister in Dublin, Eduard Hempel. Communications between the German Foreign Office and their legation in Dublin had previously passed through Britain, but this option was no longer available. Warnock wrote to Walshe in September with a request from the German Under-Secretary of State, Ernst Woermann, to include communications for Hempel in

[7] See O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, p. 79.

[8] Bewley, appointed Head of Mission in August 1933, was "anti-Semitic by nature and not popular with his External Affairs colleagues". He regularly clashed with Walshe over the direction of Irish foreign policy, and believed that Walshe and de Valera were "too pro-British to the detriment of Ireland's international independence". Bewley was essentially a rogue diplomat who wished to define Irish-German relations in opposition to the wishes of External Affairs. He admired Hitler's regime and had "gone on record in the German press to describe the great support the Nazi administration had in Ireland". External Affairs finally took the decision to recall him to Dublin, effective of August 1939, see Kennedy, 'Our men in Berlin', pp. 53-70. Also see John P. Duggan, 'An Undiplomatic Diplomat: C.H. Bewley (1888 – 1969)', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* (Vol. 90, No. 358, Summer 2001), pp. 207-214.

[9] NAI DFA 217/33, Boland to Warnock, 8 September 1939. The British were aware of this arrangement within a few days. The British Ambassador to Italy had heard from an "unimpeachable source" that Irish communications to and from Berlin were passing through Macauley, see TNA DO 130/3, British Ambassador Percy Loraine to Sir Alexander Cadogan (Foreign Office), 18 September 1939. See also O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, pp. 81-82.

Warnock's diplomatic bag for Dublin. However, Boland replied that such an arrangement elicited too many concerns to be acceptable,[10] presumably for fears that Irish mail-bags could be clandestinely examined by the British who controlled post coming into and going out of Ireland. When Warnock queried Woermann on how they overcame the communications difficulty, in late September, he was informed that they were possibly effected through the, then neutral, United States of America.[11] The British were anxious to discover how Hempel intended to contact Berlin,[12] and Sir John Maffey spoke with Walshe on the matter. Walshe informed him that that Hempel was using an American cable station in Waterville, County Kerry. He also told Maffey, that, from the Irish point of view it was important the German Minister should have contact with Berlin so the Irish government could bring pressure to bear over the use or misuse of the Irish coast by German submarines.[13] A secret radio transmitter in the German legation in Dublin was also used by Hempel on occasion, but its existence was not known to the Irish or British at that time.[14]

Warnock's Vatican mail route changed following German advances in the summer of 1940, and Italy's expected entrance into the war. Anxieties of the Vatican's ability to remain independent prompted the Portuguese to offer asylum to the Pope and Allied diplomats posted at the Holy See burned their archives.[15] In response, External Affairs sent

[10] See Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, pp. 125-126.
[11] See Duggan, *Herr Hempel*, p. 78.
[12] Dominions Office documents show that the British explored a number of possible routes Hempel's communications may have taken, and the British government's desire to intercept them. See TNA DO 130/3.
[13] TNA DO 130/3, Sir John Maffey to Sir Eric Machtig (Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs), 9 October 1939.
[14] The signals from Hempel's transmitter were eventually detected in February 1940, but Irish military intelligence (G2) were unable to decipher the code. The British, however, were able to after 1943 and they passed on the contents of the messages to Dublin, see Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 369-370 and O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, pp. 31-32 and p. 79. Hempel used the transmitter to relay weather reports, but he also informed Berlin, in September 1939, of the whereabouts of the American ship *Iroquois*, which was subsequently sunk by the German navy. He also detailed the strength of the Irish military and air force in 1940. In April 1941, Walshe intimated to Hempel that the Irish government knew of his secret transmitter, and in December of that year, de Valera asked him to restrict his use of it. See Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 157-158 and Duggan, *Herr Hempel*, pp. 78-79, 179 and 204.
[15] See Keogh, *Ireland and the Vatican*, p. 147.

a telegram to their Permanent Delegate to the League of Nations in Geneva, Francis Cremins, to assume the responsibility of transmitting communications for Warnock:

> Ask Warnock to address his mail and telegrams for us to you for transmission here if German authorities decline to accept them addressed direct STOP Please tell Warnock not to forward secret dispatches to you unless he can use bag STOP The Personal Code Telegrams received by you for transmission should of course be transmitted in personal code.[16]

The likelihood of Francoist Spain joining the war on the side of the Axis also became a strong possibility in June and July 1940,[17] which threatened direct communications with the Irish legation in Madrid. Consequently, Cremins received another telegram from Dublin instructing him to enquire with the Swiss postal service as to whether or not they would accept diplomatic mail from Dublin through him for Kerney in Spain.[18] Cremins also found that he was able to send and receive mailbags directly via Lisbon in July 1940 and asked Dublin if they wished to send mailbags to Warnock.[19] Maintaining a presence in permanently neutral Switzerland at the heart of Europe was, therefore, vital to the Irish communications network. As we saw in chapter 2, External Affairs referenced the "great continental systems of communication [that] traverse her [Switzerland's] territory" when setting out their rationale for the establishment of a legation in Berne in October 1940.[20] Though Cremins was ultimately not required to facilitate the transmission of communications to Madrid, throughout 1941 the Berne legation transmitted 126 telegrams from Warnock, in Berlin, to Dublin.[21]

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[16] NAI DFA Berne and Geneva Letterbooks, DEA to Cremins, 13 June 1940.
[17] On 19 June 1940, Franco intimated to Hitler, through his Ambassador in Berlin, that Spain would enter the war on Germany's side, however the conditions he attached to this suggestion were not meet with warm enthusiasm in Berlin, see Donald S. Detwiler, 'Spain and the Axis during World War II', *The Review of Politics* (Vol. 33, No. 1, January 1971), pp. 41-42; Christian Leitz has also remarked that none of the other neutrals came as close to becoming a belligerent as Spain did during the summer of 1940, see Leitz, *Sympathy for the Devil: Neutral Europe and Nazi Germany in World War II* (New York University Press, 2001), p. 114.
[18] NAI DFA 2013/51/88, DEA to Cremins, 3 July 1940.
[19] NAI DFA 233/43, Cremins to DEA, 12 July 1940.
[20] NAI DFA 217/39, DEA Memorandum for de Valera, (undated) October 1940.
[21] NAI DFA Berne Embassy Box 4 Be 3/11, Annual Report of the Berne Legation for 1941, Cremins to DEA, 10 January 1942.

The Irish communications network was further bolstered in December 1941 by the establishment of an Irish legation in Lisbon. This new link in the communications chain was of significant logistical importance as it provided External Affairs with a friendly neutral port through which they could send and receive communications directly on Irish ships. Portugal's position as an important gateway to Europe was highlighted by *Life* magazine in July 1940:

> This year, for the first time in centuries, Portugal is important to America. It is the funnel through which pour all exchanges — of people and messages and diplomacy — between America and Europe. The war, by cutting the lines of intercourse to northern Europe, has made Portugal what geography intended — not a faraway corner of Europe but its front door.[22]

As Spain remained outside the conflict, communications were able to traverse the neutral Iberian Peninsula to and from Irish diplomats across the continent. Colman O'Donovan, as Chargé d'Affaires in Lisbon, assumed the responsibility of co-ordinating these communications and he was also able to send urgent material by seaplane to Foynes, Co. Limerick in cases of emergency.[23] In January 1942, Kerney acknowledged receipt of a mailbag from Dublin, which had passed through Lisbon.[24] Two other bags sent by Dublin in November and December 1941, however, were delayed significantly en route to Madrid.[25] In February, a mail-bag for O'Donovan was taken off an Irish ship en route to the Iberian Peninsula by British police in Cardiff and later returned with the seals broken and tampered.[26] Despite these initial difficulties, Irish diplomatic bags continued to be sent on the Lisbon route. In April 1942, External Affairs instructed its continental missions to

[22] Unnamed author, 'Portugal: The War Has Made It Europe's Front Door', *LIFE Magazine*, 29 July 1940.
[23] NAI DFA 359/4, Annual Report of Irish Legation, Lisbon, Patrick J. O'Byrne (Assistant to Colman O'Donovan) to DEA, 14 May 1943. Kerney was criticised by the Department in the Autumn of 1942 for using the sea-plane on two occasions for purposes not considered to be emergencies, see NAI DFA 233/16A, Kerney to Walshe, 5 October 1942.
[24] NAI DFA 233/16A, Kerney to Walshe, 21 January 1942.
[25] On a correspondence between External Affairs and the Department of Posts and Telegraphs, Dr. Nicholas Nolan noted with an exclamation mark, that the two bags took 27 days to travel from Lisbon to Madrid, see Ibid., Communication from Department of Posts and Telegraphs to Walshe, 12 March 1942.
[26] Forde, *The Long Watch*, p. 105. Also referenced in Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 320n.

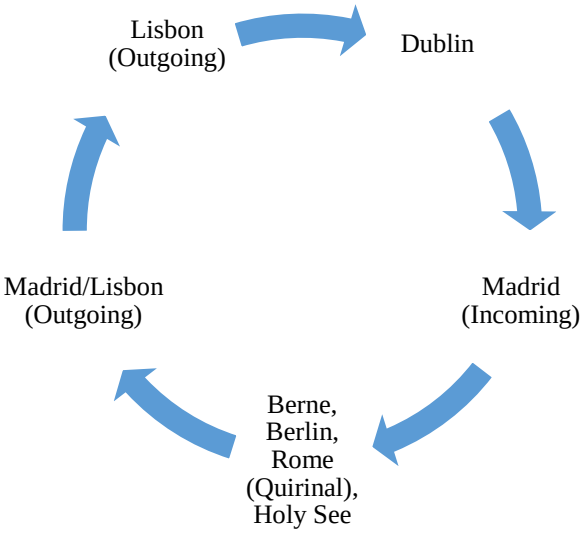
liaise with O'Donovan to ensure locked diplomatic mail-bags could be sent between Portugal and their legations.[27]

Problems soon emerged, however, as Dublin learned that mail from Lisbon to Spain and the Holy See required pre-payment of postage on the net contents of bags. While O'Donovan negotiated with the Portuguese authorities to have this fee waived,[28] External Affairs decided to send mail for the legations at Madrid and the Vatican directly to Spain in the interim. As Kerney was entitled to free postage, he was informed by Walshe to send his mail, not from Spain, but via Lisbon to Dublin.[29] This two stream operation, where mail-bags for the continent were sent via Madrid, and mail-bags for Dublin were sent via Lisbon, was the preferred system for External Affairs.[30] Though O'Donovan could correspond directly with Kerney, postage rates for large packages between Portugal and Spain were too cost prohibitive and on at least one occasion a heavy packet was sent from Lisbon to Madrid via Dublin.[31] In September 1942, Dr. Nicholas G. Nolan, who oversaw the flow of communications to and from External Affairs, set out the structure of the communications network with the continent.[32] The structure divided mail into three parts: mail for Lisbon was to be sent directly by ship; mail for Vichy was to be sent independently via the Post Office; and mail for Madrid, Rome, the Holy See, Berne and Berlin were to be sent together to Madrid via the Post Office. Part 3 is illustrated below with the typical route

[27] NAI DFA 233/16A, DEA to Kerney, undated but April 1942.
[28] O'Donovan was pressed to receive an answer from the Portuguese authorities at the earliest opportunity and informed that the French, Italian and Spanish authorities had already agreed to free postage, see NAI DFA Lisbon B 7/42, DEA to O'Donovan, 27 May 1942.
[29] NAI DFA 233/16A, Walshe to Kerney, 12 June 1942.
[30] Mail-bags for Berne and Berlin were sent via Lisbon for a short time in the summer of 1942, but this was changed to Madrid in September.
[31] This farcical situation arose in May 1943 when a packet of publications from the Stationary Office was sent to the Irish Minister in Vichy, Seán Murphy, in error. Due to the high cost of postage between Vichy and Spain he sent the packet to O'Donovan in Lisbon. O'Donovan advised Dublin that the cost of postage for the packet between Portugal and Spain was also quite high and he returned it to Ireland for re-forwarding directly to Spain by ship, see NAI DFA 233/16A, O'Donovan to Walshe, 18 May 1943.
[32] Ibid., Minute of Nicholas G. Nolan (DEA), 3 September 1942.

of return mail-bags. Mail from the Holy See and Rome was frequently sent on ships traveling either to Spanish or Portuguese ports.

Fig. 1. Usual organisation of the Irish communications network during the war. Based on a minute of Dr. Nicholas G. Nolan (External Affairs), who was responsible for co-ordinating the Irish communications network, and usual practice. See NAI DFA 233/16A, Minute of Nolan, 3 September 1942.



Walshe informed the Irish legations in Europe that "the new service is at last working smoothly" for outgoing mail, and that the incoming service from Lisbon had been running well from the beginning.[33] In August, Kerney acknowledged a minute from Walshe instructing him to accept mail-bags from the Holy See also for re-forwarding through Lisbon.[34] Diplomatic bags were sent fortnightly by the Department, though a larger volume was sent in September — due to a backlog — which caused Kerney some minor annoyance.[35] His annual report, which detailed the legation's activities, stated that, in 1942, Madrid was "a clearing centre for the transmission of official correspondence to the Legations in Rome, Berlin and Berne, and from the Legations in Rome".[36] This was certainly true for mail from Dublin, however, at the end of June, Kerney informed External

[33] NAI DFA 233/16A, Walshe to All Legations in Europe, 10 July 1942.
[34] NAI DFA 233/16A, Kerney to Walshe, 2 September 1942.
[35] Ibid., 5 October 1942 and Nolan to Kerney, 27 October 1942.
[36] NAI DFA 359/6, Annual Report of the Irish Legation in Spain, composed by Kerney, 15 January 1943.

Affairs that he was sending four spare diplomatic bags as Lisbon was taking over the responsibility of sending them from the continent to Dublin.[37]

Though the number of diplomatic mailbags that passed through the Lisbon legation were only noted in the annual report for 1943, the figures are instructive.

Fig. 2. Diplomatic bags to/from Lisbon legation in 1943. Based on figures from NAI DFA 359/4, Annual Report of Irish Legation, Lisbon, O'Donovan to DEA, 13 May 1944.

Year	To Dept.	From Dept.	To Other Legations	From Other Legations
1943	68	36	71	141

Two reasons might explain discrepancies in the number of bags flowing to and from Dublin: the practice of combining bags and parcels from other legations, and bags carried over from one year to the next. Kerney had instructions to combine mail from the Vatican with his own,[38] and Dublin sent mail for Madrid, Berne, Berlin, the Holy See and Rome together. They were subsequently separated in Madrid and re-forwarded.[39] O'Donovan undoubtedly did likewise. The Lisbon legation's annual report for 1942 stated that, for "a considerable time",[40] all diplomatic bags to and from External Affairs and their diplomatic missions on the continent passed through them. It is clear, therefore, that the legation was structurally important to the communications network and its staff were ready to assume the Madrid legation's postal functions when required. After the summer of 1943 the annual report of the Lisbon legation mentions that only homeward bags from the continent were

[37] NAI DFA 233/16A, Kerney to Walshe, 30 June 1942.
[38] NAI 2009/22/1, Kerney to Kiernan, 17 May 1943.
[39] NAI DFA 233/16A, Minute of Nolan, 3 September 1942.
[40] NAI DFA 359/4, Annual Report of Irish Legation, Lisbon, Patrick J. O'Byrne (Assistant to O'Donovan) to DEA, 14 May 1943.

sent via this route, at least until the end of the year.[41] Whether or not the two-way system of exchange was once again utilised over the following years is not mentioned in subsequent reports from Lisbon, nor did the legation staff itemise the volume of communications from other legations on the continent individually. However, Kerney's reports and communications indicate that the Lisbon legation also received and forwarded mailbags from Dublin when needed later in the war.

In October 1943, a note from External Affairs confirmed that diplomatic bags from Dublin for the Holy See were forwarded from Lisbon to Madrid.[42] Kerney noted in his annual report for that year that the service to the Vatican legation was interrupted in September, due to the Allied invasion of Italy,[43] but the communications network continued to function despite delays. Records of despatched and received mailbags through Madrid for 1942, 1943 and 1944 provide proof of the communications network's efficacy (see Appendix C). They explicitly show that despite delays and difficulties, the flow of communications was reasonably stable and regular. The marked drop-off in mailbags flowing from Madrid to Dublin in 1944 was the result of the closure of shipping routes to the Iberian Peninsula in the run up to the D-Day landings. Mailbags from External Affairs to Madrid slightly increased in comparison to previous years, which suggests that either an alternate route from Dublin was sourced or Irish bags were carried on British ships.[44]

In August 1944, Kerney indicated that diplomatic bags were flowing from Dublin to Lisbon to Madrid and on to Berne and Vichy;[45] though subsequent bags were refused at the

[41] Ibid.
[42] NAI DFA 233/16A, Nolan to Kerney, 26 October 1943.
[43] NAI DFA 359/6, Annual Report of the Irish Legation in Spain, composed by Kerney, 7 January 1944.
[44] The latter may, perhaps, be correct. In February 1945, the Irish legation to the Holy See was granted permission to forward mail from them and the Irish legation in Rome via the British legation to the Holy See and the British Foreign Office, see NAI 2009/22/1, DEA to Kiernan, 12 February 1945.
[45] NAI DFA 233/16A, Kerney to Cremins, 7 August 1944.

French frontier,[46] again due to war developments. His report also highlighted security dangers for communications traveling through areas engulfed in the war. A diplomatic bag for Seán Murphy in Vichy ended up in Berne in August, from where Francis Cremins re-forwarded it to Murphy's address. The bag was in a poor condition and was contained within a bag for Cremins himself. Kerney believed it had been secretly tampered with and opened by either the Germans in France, the Vichy authorities, or the French Maquis (French Resistance).[47] Mail-bags were typically sent via postal authorities in the states through which they traversed, but diplomats from other states were also used as couriers during times of communications difficulties. Despite these delays and security fears, the Irish communications network was still operational.

Berne's importance to the network continued throughout the war. Cremins remained the intermediary for communications between the Berlin legation and Dublin, and, in 1942, he also regularly passed communications between the Irish Minister in Vichy, Seán Murphy, and Warnock.[48] Unlike the annual reports from Lisbon and Madrid, the Berne legation listed the number of telegrams sent through the legation including their origin and destination. Telegrams were sent from Berlin to Berne and the messages re-sent by Cremins to Dublin. The paucity of telegrams flowing in the opposite directions suggests that Dublin could telegram Berlin directly, but the Germans did not permit Warnock to communicate through British controlled channels. The tables compiled from these reports, by this author, display the volume of telegrams exchanged along the Swiss route.[49]

[46] NAI DFA 359/6, Annual Report of the Irish Legation in Spain, composed by Kerney, 16 January 1945.
[47] NAI DFA 233/16A, Kerney to Cremins, 7 August 1944.
[48] NAI DFA Berne Embassy Box 4 Be 3/11, Annual Report of the Berne Legation for 1942, Cremins to DEA, 6 January 1943.
[49] NAI DFA 359/2, Annual Reports of Swiss Legation, Berne, Cremins to DEA, 6 January 1943; 8 January 1944; 10 January 1945; 28 February 1946.

Fig. 3. Telegrams from Berlin/Germany via Berne to Dublin.

Origin	1942	1943	1944	1945
Berlin/Germany	121	109	105[50]	15

Fig. 4. Telegrams from Dublin via Berne to Irish legations.

Destination	1942	1943	1944	1945
Berlin	0	2	0	6
Vichy	0	1	0	0

Fig. 5. Telegrams from Berne to Irish legations.

Destination	1942	1943	1944	1945
Berlin	5	14	22	14
Rome	4	1	6	1
Vatican	1	3	7	4
Vichy/Paris	8	12	5	4
Lisbon	0	0	3	0
Madrid	0	0	1	0

[50] Telegrams from the Dublin legation via Berne to Dublin ceased in July 1944. See Ibid., 10 January 1945.

Fig. 6. Telegrams from Irish legations to Berne.

Origin	1942	1943	1944	1945
Berlin	2	11[51]	9	7
Rome	4	1	6[52]	0
Vatican	2	3	4	3
Vichy/Paris	8	18	16[53]	2
Lisbon	2	6[54]	6	0
Madrid	0	0	1	0

Fig. 7. Telegrams from Berne to Dublin/Dublin to Berne

Origin – Destination	1942	1943	1944	1945
Berne – Dublin	100	95	169	118
Dublin – Berne	99	82	144	105

Fig. 8. Approximate Ingoing/Outgoing correspondence (Including minutes sent/received by diplomatic bag, and letters sent by surface mail and possibly, though rarely, airmail – not including telegrams)

	1942	1943	1944	1945
Incoming	750	800	300	2,000
Outgoing	950	1,100	900	2,115

From them, it is clear that Berne was a key link between the Berlin legation and External Affairs during the war. Through the Swiss route Dublin was regularly appraised of events

[51] Includes 1 telegram from Berlin to Vichy via Berne.
[52] Includes 4 telegrams from Rome to Vichy via Berne.
[53] Includes 5 telegrams from Vichy to Rome via Berne.
[54] Includes 1 telegram from Lisbon to Vichy via Berne.

and views from the German capital by William Warnock and, later, Con Cremin. Diplomatic bags were forwarded through Lisbon and Berne to Berlin in 1943 for a time, but this form of communication became increasingly difficult as the war entered its final phases. Cremins noted in his annual report for 1944 (completed in January 1945), that, due to communication difficulties, the last diplomatic bag he had received from External Affairs was in July, and the last he had sent to Dublin was in October of that year.[55] Warnock was critical of the time delays inherent in this mode of communication. In August 1943, he complained to Walshe:

> As you know, I have not been at home for nearly five years, and, at the time of my last visit, the world was at peace. The Irish newspapers arrive too late to be of interest, and devote so much of the small space at their disposal to the war and other foreign news, that anyone abroad seeking home news is left rather short. Nor does the Department supply me with much information, save that which is incidental to particular cases. Reception of the Athlone transmission is uncertain.[56] In other words, I have only got a vague idea of what life is like in Ireland, and of what Irish people think. When Foreign Office officials ask me the attitude of the Irish people or the Irish Government to this and that, I must improvise or draw on my imagination.[57]

Warnock further elaborated to Walshe, that the German Foreign Office was "always puzzled" by the incongruity of the Irish legation in Berlin's staffing levels to the importance of the post,[58] and that they occasionally referred to the Irish legation as '*Die billige Gesandtschaft*' (The cheap legation). The sharp decline in reports from Germany in 1945 was, naturally, a direct result of military developments.

Dublin's capacity to contact its diplomats on the continent was put under serious strain in the final months of the war. In August 1944, as the Allied advance progressed through France, the safety of Seán Murphy, Irish Minister to Vichy, became an issue of grave concern. Direct communications had been cut off and his whereabouts, and those of his

[55] NAI DFA 359/2, Annual Reports of Swiss Legation, Berne, Cremins to DEA, 10 January 1945.
[56] Warnock was able to listen in to news bulletin broadcasts from a station in Athlone, Co. Westmeath (See NAI DFA 219/4, Warnock to Walshe, 26 October 1939). However, he was unable to receive them in the summer months (See NAI DFA Berlin Embassy 48/1, Warnock to Walshe, 2 July 1943).
[57] NAI DFA Berlin Embassy 17/1, Warnock to Walshe, 12 August 1943.
[58] In August 1943, the Irish legation in Berlin consisted of one diplomatic officer and one typist. See NAI DFA Berlin Embassy 17/1, Warnock to Walshe, 12 August 1943.

family, were unknown. External Affairs was unable to call upon Vichy representative in Dublin, Benjamin Cauvet-Duhamel, as, by then, Vichy had ceased to exist. The only other French diplomat of note in Dublin was François-Xavier de Laforcade, who acted merely as a *de facto* delegate on behalf of General Charles de Gaulle's French Committee for the purposes of representing trade interests in phosphates.[5960] The Irish legations in Switzerland and the Vatican were subsequently instructed to act as communication conduits for External Affairs. Vatican-Vichy contact was not possible however,[61] and delays in transmissions to and from Vichy via Berne diminished the effectiveness of that route.[62] Nonetheless, from Berne, Cremins was able to make contact with Murphy, albeit protractedly, through the Swiss representatives in Vichy and learned that he was "safe and well".[63] Cremins also informed Dublin that he had ascertained that the Swiss Consulates in Paris, Lyon and Grenoble were to safeguard the interests of their citizens with the *de facto* authorities in France, but that the re-establishment of a Swiss legation in Paris was not yet considered.[64]

Shortly after 26 August, when de Gaulle marched down the Champs-Élysées, the Irish government fully recognised Laforcade as the French Minister to Ireland. However, diplomats who had previously served as their country's head representatives in Vichy were no longer recognised by the new French polity. This confused Joseph Walshe, whose understanding of recognition policy was predicated on international norms, where

[59] NAI DFA 2001/9/1, Note in French of Cremins from dictation of Monsignor Sensio of original Italian text received from the Vatican, 24/25 August 1944. Also see Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 184.
[60] Though the French Committee of National Liberation (the provisional government of Free France under the eventual sole leadership of General Charles de Gaulle) was founded in Algiers in June 1943, the Irish government did not re-establish formal diplomatic relations with France until after the liberation of Paris at the end of August 1944. This "was not a particularly timely gesture". See Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, pp. 182-183.
[61] See Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, fn. 43, p. 309.
[62] Murphy "had not received instructions from Walshe and only learned of the Irish position through his French counterparts". See Ibid., p. 185.
[63] NAI DFA 2001/9/1, Seán Murphy to Cremins, 28 August 1944.
[64] Ibid., DEA to Cremins, 25 August 1944.

representatives are accredited to states and not governments.[65] Therefore, he was adamant that Murphy continue to represent Ireland in France irrespective of which government maintained political control. Communication difficulties led Murphy and Walshe to liaise through various French Foreign Offices in addition to Berne during this chaotic time. Walshe asked High Commissioner Dulanty to approach René Massigli — the new French Minister in London who was highly regarded by de Gaulle — who agreed to forward messages for Murphy and to communicate with the French Foreign Office.[66] Despite a positive recommendation from Massigli that Murphy should be accepted as Minister on the grounds that he had been Minister to France prior to Vichy, Murphy initially struggled to gain recognition from the new French government.[67] Murphy was "very coldly received and rudely received by the Secretary General [at the French Foreign Office on Quai d'Orsay] who stated they wanted no heads of missions who served in Vichy".[68] Walshe responded by issuing a "very strongly-worded" protest to Paris via London, and threatened to remove recognition of Laforcade were Murphy not granted reciprocity.[69] Murphy was informed of Walshe's actions through Berne.[70]

However, External Affairs learned that the new French authorities were rigid in their determination not to recognise former representatives accredited to Vichy. Massigli again facilitated Irish desires by writing to the French Foreign Office arguing the case for the retention of Murphy on the condition that his time as representative to Vichy was not

[65] See Mervyn O'Driscoll, 'A Revision of "the Irish Exception": Seán Murphy, Irish Recognition Policy and the Republic of France, 1944', *Études Irlandaises* (Vol. 41, No. 1, 2016), pp. 73-94.
[66] Massigli's influence during this episode has been highlighted in detail by Mervyn O'Driscoll, see Ibid.
[67] The Irish delayed recognition for de Gaulle's Free French government for almost a year, and this no doubt contributed to the negative view taken by the French of former representatives for Vichy, see Edward Arnold, 'Irish Neutrality between Vichy France and de Gaulle, 1940 – 1945', in Gerald Morgan and Gavin Hughes (eds.), *Southern Ireland and the Liberation of France: New Perspectives* (Peter Lang, 2011), p. 26; O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, p. 270 which gives a brief account of the diplomatic difficulties Murphy found in achieving recognition from the new French authorities.
[68] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P97, Murphy to Walshe, 4 October 1944.
[69] Ibid., Walshe to Murphy, 9 October 1944.
[70] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 186.

deemed unfavourable. A notation from an official at the Foreign Office read 'Oui', which may indicate acceptance of the Irish position.[71] De Gaulle subsequently intervened, and the matter was brought to a resolution, with the acceptance of Murphy as Irish Minister to France.[72] Such accommodation was unique, however, as the French maintained their demand that the other neutrals replace their representatives who had served in Vichy. Ireland was made an exception and Massigli's intervention may have been key in swaying the French position. Contributory factors may also have been French generosity owing to a lack of concessions made by Ireland to Germany, unlike their neutral colleagues,[73] and an acceptance of difficulties in the Irish case, as any new Irish Minister to France would have required accreditation from King George VI.[74] Walshe informed Murphy in this regard, that, "[q]uestion of new credentials may ultimately arise but French Government know we do not want new credentials and say that they will not press matter".[75] As Murphy had been Minister to France since 1938, pre-war and hence pre-Vichy, he was considered to have simply maintained his status as per Walshe's original expectation.

Though Berne's effectiveness as a communications route throughout this episode was affected by the transmission delays, it would be wrong to dismiss its importance. Dermot Keogh imprecisely ties the failure of the Vatican route to Berne, and presents them as equally unsuccessful.[76] Francis Cremins' representations to the Swiss Foreign Ministry to assist in locating Murphy in August 1944 were successful. Murphy's telegram regarding his frosty reception in Paris, which precipitated Walshe's strong protest, was also sent

[71] O'Driscoll, 'A Revision of "the Irish Exception"', p. 91.
[72] "Ambassador London has informed us misunderstanding ended. You are fully recognised as Minister by new Government". See NAI DFA Secretary's Files P97, Walshe to Murphy, 10 October 1944.
[73] Dermot Keogh suggests that French generosity in this matter gave implicit recognition that Irish neutrality had not been "inclined to a pro-German line". See Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 191.
[74] This latter point was made by Laforcade in his communications with the Foreign Office, see O'Driscoll, 'A Revision of "the Irish Exception"', pp. 86-87.
[75] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P97, Walshe to Murphy, 10 October 1944.
[76] Crowe et al., *DIFP: VII, 1941 – 1945*, p. 447n.

through Switzerland. Five days later Walshe informed Murphy via Berne of the protest, and the next day Walshe sent a telegram through Berne, once again, to inform him that he was now recognised as Minister. It would seem, on balance, that though delays existed, and Massigli ultimately appears to have been used by Walshe to resolve the diplomatic quagmire, the Berne communication route was instrumental in the negotiations that led to a solution.

Cremins was called upon again in the final months of the war to act as an intermediary between Dublin, William Warnock, and later, Con Cremin. Cremin, who had served as First Secretary in the legation in Vichy, replaced Warnock as Chargé d'Affaires ad Interim, who subsequently returned to Dublin on 28 February 1944 through Lisbon.[77] Warnock's return home was his first since the war began, and came soon after the destruction of the Irish legation in Berlin due to an Allied bombing raid on 22 November 1943. Francis Cremins informed Dublin of the bombing on request of the Irish legation in Berlin, and provided them with the legation's new address, about 40 miles away from the city, at Gestuet Staffelde Osthavelland.[78] Con Cremin was en route to Berlin with his wife when the legation was destroyed, and "they were surprised at the confusion which they found".[79] Warnock, had unsuccessfully fought the flames caused by incendiary bombs within the legation building, and suffered inflammation of the eyes due to the smoke.[80] He lost most of his personal belongings and much of the legation's stationary. He requested assistance from Francis Cremins,[81] who provided him with a shaving kit and rubber stamps to discharge his duties.[82]

[77] See Niall Keogh, *Con Cremin: Ireland's Wartime Diplomat* (Mercier Press, 2006), p. 65.
[78] NAI DFA 353/21, Cremins to Walshe, 27 November 1943.
[79] Ibid., Warnock to Walshe, 16 December 1943.
[80] Ibid.
[81] NAI DFA Berlin Embassy 46/14, Warnock to Walshe, 1 December 1943.
[82] Keogh, *Con Cremin*, p. 65.

Con Cremin provided Warnock with relief from the trauma he had endured, and throughout 1944 he reported on the transportation of Jews from German camps to camps in Poland, the German reaction to the D-Day landings, and the attempt on Hitler's life at his 'Wolf's Lair' on 20 July 1944. In August, Cremin consulted with his neutral diplomatic colleagues, most of whom regarded "Russian penetration [of Germany] as practically certain".[83] Swedish, Swiss and Portuguese diplomats had begun to consider their response in such an eventuality, and Cremin sought the views of External Affairs.[84] Walshe's reply was to associate his position with that of the Vatican. Irish policy was once again to follow that of a fellow neutral:

> Keep in close touch with Nuncio and generally while using your own discretion you could follow his line. Perhaps you could ascertain what his instructions are. You can tell him our policy is to keep as closely as possible to lines of Vatican policy. It may be that circumstances will endanger safety of yourself and your family. If that happens you are of course entirely free to do what you think best at once even without referring home.[85]

In October, Walshe, who had become fearful for the safety of Cremin, told him that he should not hesitate in relocating to Switzerland whenever he felt necessary due to an increased danger of bombings. He reassured him that it was de Valera's wish that he make the safety of himself and his family his "primary consideration", and that leaving Berlin "would not be regarded as [a] break with neutral policy".[86] He was also asked to inform Dublin of the Nuncio's position. Cremin, however, chose to remain as long as possible. In January, he learned that the Nuncio had no instructions, and that the Nuncio was of the opinion that individual missions should make their own representations to leave Berlin, and not expect him to do so, on their behalf.[87] Not wishing to be stuck behind Soviet lines, Cremin made his decision to leave in February, after he informed the German Foreign

[83] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/3, Con Cremin to Walshe, 11 August 1944.
[84] Ibid.
[85] NAI DFA Berlin Embassy 17/8, Walshe to Cremin, 19 August 1944.
[86] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/3, Walshe to Cremin, 28 October 1944.
[87] NAI DFA Berlin Embassy 2/12, Cremin to Walshe, 24 January 1945.

Office that his decision would not impact Irish-German relations.[88] Cremin moved to Salzburg where the Swiss and Portuguese representatives were based, however, there, he found that the city was under aerial bombardment and that the Swiss had left; they were followed shortly after by the Portuguese.[89] He subsequently moved to Bregenz, from where he reported to Dublin via Berne,[90] and then to Lake Constance. Walshe, anxious of Cremin's safety, asked Francis Cremins in Berne for any information he had of the Irish diplomat's whereabouts. Cremins informed them that he had been in Bregenz and offered to bring him to Switzerland if External Affairs wished.[91] Cremin moved to Babenhausen in April, and Walshe asked Francis Cremins to relay a message to him:

> Please tell Cremin he should leave German territory as soon as he thinks no further advantage to be gained by remaining. He should in any case leave before occupation of his area. Since that appears imminent he may think it proper to leave immediately.[92]

Cremin, however had difficulty obtaining an exit visa from Germany to go to Switzerland as communications with Berlin had deteriorated.[93] On 30 April, David Gray informed de Valera that Cremin was found by American troops at a castle (in Babenhausen), and was put under their protection.[94] Seán Murphy had similarly messaged External Affairs two days previous to inform them of the situation, which he had learned from the American forces, though his telegram arrived on the morning of 30 April.[95]

Cremin's decision to stay in Berlin until so late in the war was in part dictated by the Vatican's position, as per Walshe's suggestion. In January, when the situation became pressing, Cremin insinuated that the other Catholic neutral representatives in Berlin (Spain and Portugal) would similarly ally their positions with that of the Vatican. Though the

[88] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/3, Cremin to Walshe, 1 February 1945.
[89] See Keogh, *Con Cremin*, p. 89.
[90] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/3, Cremin to Walshe, 30 March 1945.
[91] See Keogh, *Con Cremin*, p. 89.
[92] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/3, Walshe to Cremins, 17 April 1945.
[93] Ibid., Cremin to Walshe, 21 April 1945.
[94] UCDA P150/2687 Éamon de Valera Papers, Memorandum of de Valera, 30 April 1945.
[95] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/3, Murphy to Walshe, 28 April 1945 [arrived 30 April 1945].

Nuncio pushed back at the idea of taking on responsibility for speaking to the German Foreign Office on their behalf when requesting to leave the capital, Cremin informed Dublin that "[i]f the Nuncio were to move from here I would follow him".[96] It would seem, therefore, that Cremin's actions were tied to those of the Vatican representative, while the Irish legation in Berne provided logistical support. Due to the frequent difficulties and turmoil experienced by the Irish legation in Germany, since the destruction of their official Berlin premises in 1943, the Berne hub became an even more vital resource for communications. External Affairs' ability to directly contact Irish representatives in Germany diminished and the Berne legation assumed the role of intermediary for Dublin.

Switzerland as Financial Intermediary

Clear lines of communication with Warnock, and Ireland's other overseas diplomats in Axis-controlled territory, were essential to ensure they were maintaining perceptions of Ireland's strict impartiality in the war. However, Switzerland's importance as a nodal point for Irish diplomacy on the continent was further cemented due to the break-down of normal banking relations. Though Irish legations in Allied and neutral territory faced little to no financial difficulty, legations in Axis occupied territory, which no longer accepted Sterling, required an acceptable currency to finance their operations. Indirect payments were thus required, and though US dollars were initially used, the government "soon found that Swiss francs were generally more acceptable on the continent".[97] Swiss francs proved more useful in Axis territory, as the Germans required the currency to purchase materials in other countries; this consideration formed a crucial aspect of Switzerland's defensive capacity

[96] NAI DFA Berlin Embassy 2/12, Cremin to Walshe, 24 January 1945.
[97] NAI DFA 421/10/4, Unsigned Confidential Memorandum entitled 'The Financing of Irish Diplomatic Missions During the Second World War', 2 April 1947.

against attack.[98] In fact, by 1945 Switzerland was the "only European country (and the only country worldwide other than the USA) to possess a freely convertible currency".[99]

During the war, the Department of External Affairs used Swiss francs to fund its legations in Germany, Italy, the Vatican, Vichy, and of course Switzerland itself. The Spanish and Portuguese legations on the other hand were able to use US dollars. The Berlin legation was the first to enter into this indirect payment method in March 1940, though it often did not require the transfer of funds from Cremins. More frequently, Warnock was able to use funds accumulated through debts owed by the Germans to Irish nationals.[100] Italy's entry into the war in June 1940, however, caused greater complications for the legations in Rome and the Holy See. For a year, the government engaged in a process of clearing agreements with the Vatican, where the Irish authorities paid for the Nuncio Apostolic in Dublin, while the equivalent amount in Lire was made available by the Vatican to the Irish legation there. After the winter of 1940 however, a combination of Swiss francs and US dollars were used. The Italians were not as keen to form clearing agreements, and so from the summer of 1940 the legation in Rome was funded through banking channels in US dollars and Swiss francs.[101]

In September 1941, the Italians approached the Department of External Affairs to propose a clearing agreement, but the needs of the Italian legation in Dublin were deemed to be far greater than those of the Irish legation in Rome. On the suggestion of Denis McDonald, Secretary to the Irish legation in Rome, the government instead adopted a policy of transferring funds to Crédit Suisse in Zürich, "to be discharged though the Vatican

[98] Philippe Marguerat, 'German Gold – Allied Gold', in Kreis (ed.), *Switzerland and the Second World War*, p. 70.
[99] Goetschel et al., *Swiss Foreign Policy*, p. 114.
[100] NAI DFA 421/10/4, 'The Financing of Irish Diplomatic Missions During the Second World War', 2 April 1947.
[101] Ibid., Mr. B. O'Gallagher to Warnock, 2 April 1947.

Bank", where they could obtain a more favourable exchange rate.[102] The first of these payments was made in July 1942, and through this process, the government was able to fund the legations at the Holy See and Rome. Michael MacWhite was not impressed with the arrangement which stipulated that he was to be paid in cash by Kiernan at the Vatican, and in May of that year, he strongly protested to the Department.[103] In his view, such a procedure was likely to bring suspicion from the Italian government that the legation in Rome was being financed through the black market. Despite his concerns, the Department instructed him to accept the payments in cash, and this procedure remained in place until April 1945, when it became more practical for both legations to convert Swiss francs from the account in Berne through Italian banks in Rome.

The Irish legation in Berne again operated as intermediary for payments to the Irish legation in Vichy. However, these payments were made through reciprocity at first, where on the first of each month, the Department paid £650 to the French Minister in Dublin, and the French Finance Ministry paid the Irish legation to Vichy the equivalent in French francs. In 1941, however, just as with the legations at the Holy See and Rome, External Affairs became aware that a better exchange rate for French francs was available through Switzerland. Irish pounds were thenceforth converted to Swiss francs and subsequently into French francs until March 1945, when the Minister to France, Seán Murphy, informed the Department that the cost of living had risen considerably and the exchange rate was no longer favourable, which made the continuance of the duties of the legation impossible. A solution proposed by Murphy, and accepted by the Department, was to convert Swiss francs to gold. The gold was then sent to Murphy and exchanged for French francs.[104]

[102] Ibid.
[103] NAI DFA 421/10/4, Mr. B. O'Gallagher to Warnock, 2 April 1947.
[104] Ibid., 'The Financing of Irish Diplomatic Missions During the Second World War', 2 April 1947.

Provision of funds for overseas missions was secured through this channel from Dublin to Berne. However, External Affairs also made contingency plans in the event that this channel would be disrupted by war operations. Should communications between Dublin and the continental legations be cut, a reserve fund was created to maintain payments. In October 1940, CHF 5,500 Swiss francs were sent to Cremins in Berne to convert into dollars for Murphy in Vichy, who later returned the amount in 1944 to the Department of Finance. In March 1941, Kerney in Spain, was given $1,400, which he had to cash in Lisbon, and also later returned to Finance in 1943. That same month, the Department furnished Cremins with CHF 33,650 Swiss francs (roughly £1,950), to hold in reserve for the legations in Germany (£600), Switzerland (£550), Holy See (£350), and Italy (£450).[105] Irish missions on the Iberian Peninsula were able to avail of US dollars, and their diplomats avoided the financial uncertainties faced by their continental colleagues due to their relative distance from the front lines. Without the use of neutral Swiss banks, however, it is difficult to see where funds for Irish legations in Axis territory could have been obtained.

Supplies

Here it will be shown that, in response to shipping and supply difficulties, the Irish government examined the actions of their neutral colleagues to determine effective methods to acquire necessary shipping tonnage and to protect Irish ships from attack. The government was not well prepared for British naval blockade policies and naïvely accepted informal assurances that Irish needs would be treated on par with British needs. Problems in Éire's shipping capacity were tackled belatedly in 1941 when an Irish shipping company

[105] NAI DFA 421/10/4, 'The Financing of Irish Diplomatic Missions During the Second World War', 2 April 1947.

was established to purchase tonnage to obtain supplies for the country. Irish diplomats in neutral states were subsequently requested to inform Dublin of opportunities to purchase ships and to relay measures adopted by the neutrals to protect existing shipping from attack. The government was slow to implement shipping policies utilised by the other neutrals, but, when they eventually did, attacks on Irish ships reduced significantly.

Acquiring Tonnage

As early as November 1936, the British Board of Trade compiled a detailed report on the control of neutral shipping tonnage in a future war.[106] Restrictions on neutral ships were a feature of British military planning since the 18th century, and were used to prevent their enemies from using neutral shipping to circumvent British naval blockades.[107] In 1938, British planners engaged in discussions regarding wartime measures to exert economic pressure on neutral states.[108] Re-examinations of Britain's experience in the First World War indicated the benefits of a 'Navicert' system to deny supplies to the enemy and the acquisition of neutral tonnage either by paying high rates or seizure.[109] Navicerts (Naval Certificates) were part of a contraband control system which involved British representatives examining shipping cargoes for material which could aid the Axis, directly or indirectly, prior to their departure. If no such material was found, ships were given a

[106] TNA MT 40/18, Report entitled 'Control of Neutral Tonnage' (unknown author), 10 November 1936.
[107] British jurists refined international law to prevent neutrals relieving belligerents from the pressures of naval blockade by carrying belligerent goods on neutral ships. The Rule of War of 1756 restricted neutrals from trading with a belligerent's colonies to relieve it from pressure, and the Doctrine of Continuous Voyage restricted the practice of belligerents bringing cargoes to neutral ports, then transferring them onto neutral ships for an onwards journey to European markets. See Tor Egil Førland, 'The History of Economic Warfare: International Law, Effectiveness, Strategies', *Journal of Peace Research* (Vol. 30, No. 2, May 1993), p. 151-162.
[108] TNA MT 40/18, Report containing the headline 'A note on the control of Neutral Shipping during the 1914 – 1918 war […] a note on measures proposed for the future' (author unknown), 12 February 1938.
[109] The seizure of shipping was justified under the Law of Angary; a principle of international law traceable to early Roman times which granted the seizure of vessels for public use, see J. Eugene Harley, 'The Law of Angary', *The American Journal of International Law* (Vol. 13, No. 2, April 1919), pp. 267-301. Conscious of the possibility that seizures might push the neutrals to trade more with each other or their enemies, seizures were expected to be an emergency measure. A 'ship for ship' policy was also put forward, which would entail the detention of a neutral ship at a UK port until another ship from the neutral state brought supplies for Britain. See TNA MT 40/18.

Navicert which granted them immunity from being stopped at sea or being forced into a British port for further inspection.[110] Between 1938 and 1939, a Ministry of Economic Warfare (MEW) was also planned and organised in detail. When the war broke out, this new Ministry was immediately put into operation.[111]

Irish preparations, by contrast, were wholly insufficient. The country had 56 ships, compared to 152 in 1926, "none of which were ocean-going standard", and only 5% of ships in Irish ports were Irish owned.[112] British ships brought bulk cargoes of wheat, maize, fertilisers and coal to Éire. Consequently, the government was dependent on Britain for most of her shipping and supply needs.[113] In September 1938, the British gave assurances to the Secretary of the Department of Industry and Commerce, John Leydon, that Irish needs would be met:

> He [Leydon] asked for a square deal in the matter of shipping. He was assured that there would be no difficulty on this score; so long as we co-operated the British would put us on the same footing as the United Kingdom in the allocation of tonnage.[114]

The lack of formal agreement, however, left the Irish government apprehensive. Leydon had a memorandum compiled, in February 1939, which outlined the dangers to Éire due to overwhelming dependence on British shipping.[115] On 1 September, Leydon went to London at the urgent request of British officials. He was informed that certain items, such as silk, would be put under immediate export control to ensure British supplies. Leydon argued that these controls should not extend to Éire due to the country's "special position

[110] Robert W. Matson, *Neutrality and Navicerts: Britain, the United States, and Economic Warfare, 1939 – 1940* (Garland Publishing Inc., 1994), p. 7.
[111] See Ibid., pp. 19-21.
[112] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 20; O'Halpin, 'Irish Neutrality in the Second World War', p. 298. and Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 294.
[113] See Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, pp. 20-21.
[114] NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Report entitled 'Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944' p. 7, composed July 1944. Leydon met with British representatives in London on 30 September 1938.
[115] See Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 21.

vis-à-vis Britain", but he was unable to secure a modification of the proposed restrictions.[116] To address difficulties in maintaining adequate supplies during wartime, the government established a Department of Supplies on 18 September 1939 and Seán Lemass was appointed as Minister in a Cabinet reshuffle.[117]

The start of the war precipitated panic buying and "[b]y mid-October, there was widespread concern over shortages".[118] Prices for goods increased and animal feed, sugar, tea, flour, soap and candles were more difficult to obtain, petrol was strictly rationed, and supplies of cement ran out.[119] The availability of fertilisers also decreased in 1940, but the 74,000 tons imported that year was still sufficient to meet demand.[120] In September 1939, Francis Cremins highlighted that petrol was also subject to a system of rationing in Switzerland.[121] By December, sugar, rice, pasta, products derived from barley and oats, and alimentary grease and oils, were on the Swiss ration list.[122] In December 1940, he also informed Dublin that Spain was suffering economically due to the after effects of the Civil War and the imposition of the British naval blockade.[123] Nonetheless, restrictions on neutral trade were light during the Phoney War, and Irish supplies were not greatly affected as joint Anglo-Irish trade co-operation ran relatively smoothly.[124]

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[116] NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Report entitled 'Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944' p. 9, composed July 1944.

[117] For a biography of Lemass which highlights his strong work ethic, and gambling habit, during the war period see John Horgan, *Seán Lemass: The Enigmatic Patriot* (Gill & Macmillan Ltd., 1999). A thorough account of Lemass' record during the war as Minister of Supplies, and of the Fianna Fáil government's commitment to economic self-sufficiency can be seen in Brian Girvin, *Between Two Worlds: Politics and Economy in Independent Ireland* (Gill and MacMillan, 1989), pp. 131-160.

[118] Wills, *That Neutral Island*, p. 57.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 6.

[121] NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Walshe, 11 September 1939.

[122] Ibid., 2 December 1939.

[123] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P12/7, Cremins to Walshe, 13 December 1940.

[124] Restrictions on British exports to Ireland were not imposed "too stringently", and the supply position "was comparatively easy", see NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944, composed July 1944, p. 25. Economic pressure against the neutrals was not applied with great force in the early period of the war. In November 1939, the concerns of the British Board of Trade supplanted those of the MEW during the War Trade Agreement negotiations with Switzerland. The MEW's desire for a blockade on Swiss trade to disrupt exports to Germany conflicted with

This relatively comfortable position changed after the fall of France and Britain's loss of military equipment following the retreat of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk. While attempting to secure Swiss exports indirectly through Lisbon, Madrid, and North and South America,[125] Churchill sought to extract concessions from Éire for the use of the Treaty Ports by exerting economic pressure.[126] A more strident line towards Ireland can be seen in a memorandum composed by Maffey based on the views of an unnamed Irish source which was sent to Churchill:

> No small power with any self-respect can afford to give way before a threat of physical force, and this particularly applies to Ireland. But no country in the world will re-act more readily to economic pressure. If at the time payment of the [land] annuities was refused, England had taken a firm line and banned all Irish cattle, de Valera would have been out of power in a month and his political reputation ruined for good. Another and even better opportunity has now arisen over the ports, and the mistake of the past must not be repeated.
>
> The British Government should officially inform the Irish Government that owing to the difficulties of protecting shipping, they require all the available cargo space in the convoys for their own use and that of their allies, and that in future no goods whatever which are destined for Ireland either directly or indirectly can be carried in convoys.
>
> Ships sailing out of convoy direct to Ireland should be put through all the delays and troubles of contraband control at a British Port well out of their normal route.[127]

Churchill forwarded the memorandum to the Minister of Food with a question regarding the effects on Éire should they cut the country's food supply for 6 months.[128] Consequently, the second year was not so comfortable for the Irish:

> The general supply situation began to deteriorate fairly rapidly during the second year of the war. All trade had ceased with the European Continent. Normal sources of supply from Britain were seriously curtailed and, in many instances, were cut off completely. Goods which could be bought in the American Continent, particularly the United States, could not be imported through lack of shipping...The tonnage being provided by the British under the chartering arrangement began to dwindle seriously during the second half of 1940. Repeated representations were made to the Ministry of Shipping. They claimed to be doing their best for us in very difficult circumstances. In December, 1940, it became clear that the British were not going to provide any more

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the British government's desire to increase its share of Swiss exports of weaponry and precision equipment. In June 1940, before many of the contracts could be advanced, the Germans cut off the supply route through France. See Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland and the Second World War*, pp. 121-126.

[125] Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland and the Second World War*, p. 127.

[126] Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, p. 124; Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, pp. 22-23; Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 293-300.

[127] TNA PREM 3/128, Memorandum of Maffey sent by Lord Cranborne (Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs) to Churchill, 22 November 1940.

[128] TNA PREM 3/128, Churchill to Lord Woolton, 23 November 1940.

> charters for our requirements...They [British] contended that the informal chartering arrangement did not imply or impose any obligation on them to provide shipping for us and that the exigencies of the war compelled them to obtain for their own purposes any shipping that might be available.[129]

The acquisition of neutral tonnage to increase supplies was consequently a constant concern throughout the war. Cremins informed Walshe early in the war, that Switzerland concluded agreements with ship-owners in neutral countries to charter necessary tonnage for their needs.[130] By February 1941, however, he reported that the effects of the naval blockade, difficulties in obtaining Navicerts, and the shortage of shipping had rendered the "economic situation of [Switzerland] more and more precarious".[131] He also learned "on high authority", that "reserves which had been accumulated with such foresight by the Government [were] being eaten into".[132] The Irish response to the shipping crisis was to create a shipping company in March 1941. Named Irish Shipping Limited, its task was to purchase tonnage on the open market. The company was successful in organising bulk transports of wheat from North America, and smaller consignments of essential commodities, which the Department of Supplies stated had "enabled the country to avoid economic collapse".[133] Nonetheless, between September 1942 and September and June 1944, the Department noted that supply difficulties were both "widespread" and "critical".[134]

The effects of economic pressure were felt strongly in 1941 after the British halted the supply of food to the country and made Irish shipping subject to the Navicert system. Representatives of the Dominions Office and the Ministry of Economic Warfare met with

[129] NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944, composed July 1944, pp. 26-28. A similar outline of these shipping difficulties can be seen in NAI INDC/EMR/7/19 EHR 3/16, Undated report entitled 'Shipping'.
[130] NAI DFA 219/7, Cremins to Walshe, 21 November 1939.
[131] Ibid., 24 February 1941.
[132] Ibid.
[133] NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944, composed July 1944, p. 31.
[134] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

Irish High Commissioner Dulanty and a representative of Industry and Commerce to discuss the imposition of Navicerts. They informed the Irish representatives that the measures were necessary to prevent Germany from obtaining goods from Ireland via a neutral third party. The Irish delegates expressed the view that "all this represented a very elaborate and unnecessary piece of machinery to cover what was really a very trifling risk",[135] due to the "limited quantity and kind of Irish exports to adjacent neutrals".[136] Irish protestations fell on deaf ears however, and due to these restrictive measures, they had no choice but to impose a system of rationing which lasted to the end of the war.[137] The United States' entrance into the war brought additional restrictions on trade from that quarter.[138] Economic pressure was applied through increased restrictions on the granting of Navicerts, which the Department of Supplies termed an "economic weapon".[139]

Rationing was introduced for soap in October 1942 owing to a lack of fats and oils and in November the Irish government learned that Navicerts for these commodities were to be refused. Dulanty protested these restrictions in January 1943 on the grounds that the British were using "the navicert as a weapon of sea power for the purpose of restricting the freedom of Irish trade".[140] He further expressed the Irish position that the country:

> [W]as in an entirely different situation by reason of geography and of our trade interests from that of the Continental neutrals and that the absolute and indiscriminate application of the Navicert system, apart from its non-legal and amoral character, amounted to a blockade in detail.[141]

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[135] NAI INDC/EMR/19/11, Unsigned document entitled 'The Application of Navicerts to Irish Imports', undated, but February/March 1941.
[136] Ibid., 'Navicerts and Irish Trade', 28 February 1941.
[137] For an overview of the introduction of rationing, see – NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944, composed July 1944, p. 27.
[138] Ibid., p. 30.
[139] Ibid., pp. 65-66. Use of British naval power as an economic weapon was proclaimed by Royal Proclamation from the outset of the war when a list of items deemed contraband was published in the *London Gazette* on 4 September 1939. See M.B. (author's name is initialled), 'Neutrals and Naval Economic Warfare', *Bulletin of International News* (Royal Institute of International Affairs, Vol. 16, No. 20, 7 October 1939), p. 3.
[140] NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944, composed July 1944, p. 66.
[141]Ibid., pp. 66-67.

By the end of the year, to obtain the necessary fats and oils, three small Irish ships on the Iberian service were diverted to Portuguese West Africa.[142] The acquisition of foreign tonnage remained a priority to ease shortages at home. To this end, External Affairs kept Leydon aware of international trade developments. The picture from the continent displayed the effect of Allied economic pressure.

After November 1941, the newly appointed Chargé d'Affaires in Lisbon, Colman O'Donovan, spent a large portion of his time attempting to secure ships for Irish use. In 1942, he reported that his efforts met with failure because Portugal was "also suffering from a lack of shipping and require[ed] all available space for its own essential imports".[143] The legation continued to try to obtain necessary supplies through ships that docked at Lisbon throughout the war, and they met with occasional modest success. In June 1942, O'Donovan informed Walshe that the legation was "instrumental" in obtaining an export licence for a consignment of 16 tons of Palm Kernels for the Irish Oil and Cake Mills Ltd., Drogheda. The consignment was originally destined for another importer in Spain on a different ship, but the British refused to issue a Navicert.[144] O'Donovan also received a secret letter from Dublin in June 1942 regarding the transhipment of goods via Lisbon. He was informed that goods from the United States were shipped to Lisbon and transhipped to Dublin until the Americans entered the war in December 1941. Over the following months, Irish ships had brought less essential supplies of citrus fruits and wines from Lisbon. This situation was "altered radically" after Grain Importers (Éire) Ltd. secured ships to transport wheat from the Argentine to Lisbon.[145] As the Swiss had previously chartered these ships, the freight costs increased due to competition. To obviate price increases, the Swiss

[142] Ibid., p. 68.
[143] NAI DFA 359/4, Annual Report of the Irish Legation, Lisbon (composed by P.J. O'Byrne), 14 May 1943.
[144] NAI DFA Lisbon Embassy Files B.7/42 (Lisbon Cargoes), O'Donovan to Walshe, 9 June 1942.
[145] Ibid., 22 June 1942.

contacted Dublin through their representatives in Dublin and London, and an informal arrangement was agreed to bid on ships in turn to avoid competition.[146] O'Donovan was also asked by Dublin to ensure the safe storage of goods destined for Ireland, and to explore the possibility of procuring more goods from Sweden.[147]

Throughout 1942 and 1943, O'Donovan liaised with Portuguese authorities and export companies in Lisbon to assist in the procurement of shipping space and Navicerts for essential supplies required in Éire.[148] In 1943, the legation secured 2,000 tons of cocoa beans and passed "four or five likely offers" for chartered neutral vessels back to Dublin. In 1944, the suspension of communications between Ireland and the continent in the lead up to D-Day, prevented the legation from securing more shipping, however they assisted in ensuring cargoes for Ireland, on British ships, were sent correctly.[149]

The supply difficulties, however, meant that the Irish people had to make do with what was available.[150] Francis Cremins also kept Dublin up-to-date with Swiss efforts to tackle supply issues. Cremins' numerous reports on Swiss supply measures were furnished to the Department of Supplies by Dr. Nicholas G. Nolan in External Affairs, who highlighted the important aspects of Swiss decrees. In January, Nolan informed Leydon of restrictions in force in Switzerland pertaining to the sale of heating fuel such as coal, firewood, gas and electricity. Economies in these areas were made by promoting "such means as the restriction to one day a week in the provision of hot water in apartment houses; the

[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid. Some goods from Sweden were transhipped via Lisbon. In 1944, these delays led to complaints from the Irish company Harpur Bros., Waterford, as their profits decreased due to delays in shipping. External Affairs identified delays within their own department and that of Supplies, and they sought to streamline their bureaucratic procedures. Delays relating to German safe conduct measures, however, were insurmountable. See NAI DFA 407/1/2.
[148] NAI DFA Lisbon Embassy Files B.7/42 (Lisbon Cargoes).
[149] See NAI DFA 359/4, Annual Reports of the Irish Legation, Lisbon.
[150] For more information on Ireland's supply difficulties see Peter Rigny, *Trains, Coal and Turf: Transport in Emergency Ireland* (Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 2010) and Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*.

curtailment of the period of central heating, restriction of hours for shops, restaurants, theatres".[151] Restrictions on the use of petrol were dramatic:

> Drastic restrictions on the sale of petrol remain in force in Switzerland. This has necessarily resulted in the removal from circulation of many thousands of motor cars, with unfortunate results for garage owners and employees. Different types of apparatus for the provision of gas from wood, have been introduced especially for heavy lorries, and also acetylene gas, but as these installations are expensive, they are not considered likely to become popular. Cycles have largely increased in number, and about 75,000 bicycles are now in use in Geneva, rendering special traffic supervision necessary, and resulting in hundreds of fines every week-end for breaches of the traffic regulations.[152]

In June 1941, due to the exigencies of rationing foodstuffs, Dr. Nolan once again brought Swiss measures to the attention of Leydon. Due to importation difficulties arising from the continuing blockade, attacks on shipping, and the Navicert system, the Swiss government made a number of curtailments which primarily affected "imported commodities such as rice, oil, foods from oats and barley, flour and maize, and the reductions amount[ed] to twenty per cent in the case of children".[153] From 1939 to 1942, the Swiss experienced a 50% drop in imports of foodstuffs, which represented a 25% drop in the country's total pre-war food provision capacity.[154] Under the new restrictions, bread could not be sold until after it was 48 hours old. Presumably this was to reduce wastage and the Swiss press reported that it was estimated that this delay resulted in a saving of "50,000 tons of cereals per annum".[155] To counteract any possibility of malnutrition and subsequent disease, the Swiss government issued school children with vitamin sweets. In the summer of 1941, to alleviate the pressure, the Swiss purchased four new ships. News of their purchase was conveyed by Cremins to Dublin, and from there to Supplies and Industry and Commerce.[156] The Irish government, however, had already established Irish Shipping Ltd. in March to

[151] NAI INDC EMR 5/39, Nolan to Leydon, 10 January 1941.
[152] Ibid.
[153] NAI INDC EMR 5/39, Nolan to Leydon, 11 June 1941.
[154] ICE, Switzerland: *Final Report*, p. 83.
http://www.uek.ch/en/index.html [cited 15-02-14]
[155] NAI INDC EMR 5/39, Nolan to Leydon, 11 June 1941.
[156] Ibid., 26 June 1941.

procure ships to ensure supplies, and within a few weeks it had purchased its first ship, *Irish Poplar*.[157] Though the ships that were procured were "old vessels in extremely poor condition, mostly obsolete and in need of major repairs",[158] they were of vital importance to the maintenance of Irish neutrality, which could have been threatened by sustained supply difficulties. In total Irish Shipping Ltd. secured 15 ships during the war, most of which were laid up in Irish ports.[159]

In November 1943, Cremins informed Dublin that "after many months of negotiations and failure, the Swiss have arrived at a temporary economic agreement with Germany…[which]…has reduced by 50% the exportations to Germany, in order to conform with present international circumstances".[160] Swiss armaments companies supplied war *matériel* to both sets of belligerents to varying degrees based on the war's outlook. For example, the Tavaro company sold time fuses for detonators to Germany after 1940 and stopped supplying Britain, which was a breach of neutral principles. Their supply to the German market stopped in November 1943 reflecting the new war conditions.[161] The new trade agreement roughly coincided with the British decision to resume the allocation of Navicerts to the Swiss, which had been suspended since May of that year. Cremins highlighted the seriousness of the period of suspension to the country in his report, which had left several Swiss merchant ships idle. External Affairs forwarded an excerpt of the report to Leydon as well as information on the Allies' success in achieving a reduction of Swedish-German trade, particularly with regards to Iron Ore.[162] The US led the charge in

[157] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 316.
[158] Captain Michael McCarthy, 'Foreword', in B. Cleare, B. Boyce, L. Coy and J. Boyce (eds.), *Irish Shipping Ltd.: A Fleet History* (Rosslare Maritime Enthusiasts, 2013), p. vi.
[159] See Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 23.
[160] NAI DFA 241/52 D, Cremins to DEA, 18 November 1943.
[161] See ICE, Switzerland: *Final Report*, pp. 200-219. The report contains tables which show a dramatic decline in Swiss exports of war *matériel* to Germany after 1943.
http://www.uek.ch/en/index.html [cited 14-08-16]
[162] NAI DFA 241/52 D, Boland to Leydon, 27 January 1944.

turning the economic screw on the continental European neutrals. Their economic strategy had precedence in the First World War during which the Allies' successfully reduced Swedish exports of food to Germany by 99% between 1917 and 1918. This point was discussed within the US Economic Warfare Division during the Second World War, and in 1944 it recommended that a state of constant economic pressure on the neutral states be maintained.[163] Indicative of the general supply difficulties, External Affairs' rather hopeful response to Cremins in January 1944 read, "presume Swiss have no idle tonnage we could buy or charter[?]".[164]

Unlike the Swiss, however, Éire did not rely so heavily on imports to feed her people and the Irish government was able to put in place compulsory tillage orders, which more than doubled wheat output during the war years.[165] Churchill's hope, that de Valera could be compelled through economic restrictions to acquiesce on the ports issue, ultimately failed. This was not on account of any lack of stringency, but rather because neutrality was overwhelmingly popular in Ireland and the country was sufficiently capable of agricultural subsistence.[166] In fact, British attempts to force concessions through economic pressure, though popular in Britain itself, re-enforced public support for neutrality in Ireland, where the blame for shortages was placed primarily on Churchill.[167] Irish efforts to obtain supplies and shipping tonnage involved some modest collaboration with Portugal, Switzerland and

[163] US NARA 107/24/910, Neutral Trade General File 1943 – 45, Confidential Report of Captain W. D. Puleston (Navy Liaison Officer) to Lauchlin T. Currie (Deputy Administrator/Economic Advisor to President Roosevelt), 15 May 1944. See also, NAI INDC/EMR/8/61 US Department of State bulletin entitled 'The Allied Blockade' by John V. Lovitt (Chief of Section on Blockade and the European Neutrals), 19 November 1944.
[164] NAI DFA 241/52 D, DEA to Cremins, 28 January 1944.
[165] Evans, *Ireland during the Second World War*, p. 29. Also see Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985*, p. 233 and Tim Pat Coogan, *Ireland Since the Rising* (Pall Mall Press, 1966), p. 120.
[166] See Murphy, *Ireland in the Twentieth Century*, p. 101.
[167] See O'Halpin, 'Irish Neutrality in the Second World War', p. 300.

Sweden and the efforts of the Irish legation in Lisbon to ease supply difficulties back home have gone unrecognised.

Protection of Irish Shipping

Irish shipping faced attack regularly throughout 1940 and 1941. From the beginning of the war until June 1942, a total of thirteen Irish registered ships had been lost, while a further twenty-seven had been attacked though not sunk.[168] These losses, and the concerns of merchant sailors facing the threat of attack, prompted James Dillon TD to put forward a question in the Dáil to the Minister of External Affairs on proposed measures to defend the ships:

> [Deputy Dillon] asked the Minister for External Affairs whether it [was] a fact that Irish ships [had] been bombed and Irish seamen machine-gunned when trying to escape in their boats by German aeroplanes, and, if so, [would] he arrange to have defensive armaments installed on Irish ships so as to enable [their] seamen to defend themselves against such attacks.[169]

In formulating External Affairs position on the matter, Michael Rynne observed that the question was "most unfortunate at the present time" owing to its "tendencious [sic] wording [that could] only render still more difficult the Government's task of maintaining Ireland's neutrality".[170] In Rynne's view, arming Irish ships was not practicable at a time when the government simply did not possess the weaponry, nor men capable of operating them on merchant ships.[171] However, the government did consider arming ships acquired later in the year by the newly created Irish Shipping Company, which was established in March 1941.[172] Crucial to the decision-making process was a review of the measures taken by the

[168] NAI DFA P/12/18, Unsigned reports entitled 'Irish vessels sunk owing to war causes since the outbreak of war' and 'Irish vessels attacked but not sunk since the beginning of the war', undated though after 29 June 1942.
[169] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 81, No. 14, Col. 2318 – 2319, 20 February 1941.
[170] NAI DFA P/12/18, Rynne to Walshe, 11 February 1941.
[171] Ibid.
[172] See Allen, *The Storm Passed By*, p. 96; Tony Gray, *The Lost Years: The Emergency in Ireland 1939 – 45* (Little, Brown and Company, 1997), pp. 136-138.

other neutral countries to protect their shipping. On 16 June, based on the views of his Department,[173] Joseph Walshe wrote to Industry and Commerce informing them that in the view of his department the arming of Irish shipping could lead to more intensive attacks, and that:

> [There was] no doubt, for these reasons among others that, both in the present and in the last war, neutral countries have decided against installing armament on their merchant ships, even in the face of the wholesale refusal of crews to sail. On the 1st June 1941 for example, Sweden had lost by belligerent action, including mines, 102 vessels of a total displacement of 392,470 gross registered tons... But Sweden has not armed her merchant ships and there seems to be no question of her doing so. This Department is not aware of any other neutral country in the present war which has provided defensive armament on its merchant vessels.[174]

Frederick Boland also informed Industry and Commerce of relatively successful non-military practices adopted by other neutrals, such as painting the name of the country in large white letters on the hull along with the national colours. His suggestion mimics the Swiss policy regarding their merchant vessels, which he had been informed of a month previously by Francis Cremins.[175] Boland remarked that:

> So far as we can see, that has now become the standard mode of marking neutral ships... The white lettering and the colours should be kept fresh and clean so as to be identifiable in low visibility...It may interest you to know that other European neutrals, principally Switzerland and Sweden, seem to be relying more and more, as a means of protecting their ships, on the method of informing both belligerents beforehand of sailings, giving particulars of the vessel, the cargo carried, the route to be followed, etc. Switzerland has followed this method with great success. Since the beginning of the war, she has not lost a single cargo. Sweden also relies on this method extensively but has lost four ships, particulars of which had been notified to both belligerents beforehand.[176]

Though Hempel had informed External Affairs, in August 1940, that the Germans would promise safe conduct to Irish shipping once they were given timely notice of sailings and details of the ships' cargoes, the government had not taken up this offer.[177] As Boland predicted, Industry and Commerce were indeed interested in news of the methods adopted

[173] NAI DFA P/12/18, Unsigned Memorandum, 6 May 1941.
[174] NAI DFA P/12/18, Walshe to Leydon, 16 June 1941.
[175] Ibid., Cremins to DEA, 12 May 1941.
[176] Ibid., Boland to T. J. Flynn (Department of Industry and Commerce), 17 June 1941.
[177] Ibid., Boland to Walshe, 9 March 1942.

by the other neutrals. In July, the Department urgently requested more details from External Affairs regarding shipping from Sweden and Switzerland, so as to prepare a submission to the government on the armament of merchant ships.[178] From Berlin, Warnock ascertained through the Swedish legation there that about six Swedish ships were operating monthly, and that their practice of notifying the belligerents of their ships movements did not always guarantee safe passage.[179] To clarify this point, he later learned that the Swedes had lost 109 ships in total from the beginning of the war until the end of August 1941.[180] Cremins was similarly asked to provide an update on Swiss shipping, in which he noted the loss of Switzerland's first ship to a mine in the Mediterranean.[181]

In September, a meeting took place between the secretaries of the Department of External Affairs (Walshe), Industry and Commerce (Leydon), and Defence (Lieutenant-General Peadar MacMahon), regarding the protection of Irish shipping. During the course of the discussions, it was decided that to notify the Germans of Irish shipping schedules would possibly serve to cause friction with the British, as the convoys in which Irish ships travelled along the Spanish-Portuguese route contained vessels bringing coal from British ports to Gibraltar.[182] Thus Walshe recommended that the ships remain within the convoys and that they would not notify the German authorities of sailings.[183] Arising from this discussion, and the reports of Warnock and Cremins, and, following the subsequent submission to government from Industry and Commerce, the government decided not to arm Irish merchant shipping.[184] This kept Irish shipping in line with the practice of the other neutrals in this regard; however, the crews of Irish vessels could not be expected to simply

[178] Ibid., J. O'Brien (Department of Industry and Commerce, Transport and Marine Branch) to Boland, 31 July and 16 August 1941.
[179] NAI DFA P/12/18, Warnock to DEA, 22 August 1941.
[180] Ibid., 23 September 1941.
[181] Ibid., Cremins to DEA, 20 August 1941.
[182] Ibid., Memorandum of Boland, 12 September 1941.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid., Department of the Taoiseach to Department of Industry and Commerce, 8 October 1941.

carry on as normal in the face of regular German aerial attack due to travelling in convoy. In an effort to avoid further incidents, Irish Shipping Ltd., with the consent of Industry and Commerce, decided not to follow the recommendations agreed at the inter-departmental meeting in September and instead began to travel outside of convoys. Though just like their fellow neutral counterparts, they displayed large markings indicating their ships were from neutral Éire.[185] When External Affairs was informed of this development, Hempel's offer of August 1940, to provide safe conduct to Irish shipping under the conditions imposed on the other neutrals, seemed more attractive. Frederick Boland noted his concerns to Walshe that were a ship to be attacked while sailing outside of a convoy, questions may be asked in the Dáil as to why safe conduct was not sought after from the Germans in line with other neutrals.[186]

In March 1942, de Valera directed External Affairs to contact the German Minister in Dublin to provide him with the particulars of Irish shipping, including their descriptions, tonnage, and usual routes.[187] O'Donovan was subsequently sent a copy of a list of Ireland's "most important ships" by External Affairs who instructed him to relay it to Warnock and the German Minister in Lisbon for forwarding in triplicate to the German Foreign Office.[188] The instructions also mentioned that Hempel had made the Foreign Office aware that a list was forthcoming. That this information was delivered to the *Luftwaffe* and *Kriegsmarine* would seem to be confirmed by German orders obtained by G2 from a scuttled U-boat in Cork harbour in the final months of the war. On the instructions of Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz, the neutrality of Irish ships was to be respected, and Irish ships in blockade zones

[185] NAI DFA P/12/18, Boland to Walshe, 9 March 1942.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid., Handwritten note of Boland, 13 March 1942.
[188] NAI DFA Lisbon Embassy B 7/42, DEA to O'Donovan, 5 May 1942. Though O'Donovan received this cable, instructing him to forward the list, in May, he did not receive a copy from Dublin until six weeks later due to shipping delays. On receipt he complied with the orders, see Ibid., O'Donovan to Warnock, 20 June 1942.

were not to be attacked for political reasons if identified, though there was no special obligation to determine their neutrality in such zones.[189]

In June and October 1942, O'Donovan received requests from Dublin to provide them with a translation of an order issued by the Portuguese Department for Mercantile Marine in relation to the painting of their shipping with the name of the country and colours of the national flag.[190] Thus, having taken a step back from considerations of arming Irish merchant ships, the government eventually began to adopt a policy almost identical to that taken by Sweden and Switzerland, and, as they later discovered, Portugal. Though not all ship masters ensured the paint remained fresh and clear,[191] the results appear remarkable. From September 1939 to November 1941, 12 Irish ships were sunk, and 24 Irish ships were attacked but not sunk.[192] From early 1942, when Irish ships adopted the practices of the other neutrals, until May 1943, only 4 ships were sunk.[193] In October 1942, Boland noted that over the prior 12 months, only one ship and one other vessel contracted by the government had been attacked, which he felt "must be very nearly a record for neutral states in this war or the war of 1914 – 1918".[194]

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[189] See Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 321-322, where he quotes a copy of 'Supplement 3 to German Standing War Orders No. 105', which he states was in the possession of former G2 intelligence officer, and later renowned newspaper editor, Douglas Gageby.

[190] NAI DFA Lisbon Embassy B 7/42, DEA to O'Donovan, 1 October 1942.

[191] O'Donovan was critical of those ship masters: "I avail myself of the opportunity to report that the painting of National [sic] colours on some of our ships leaves much to be desired. Some of the masters have the colours painted afresh on each voyage and their ships present a smart appearance with easily distinguishable colours. Others, however, are lax in this respect, and their ships do not do us credit in foreign port. There is also the more serious consideration that the colours may not be easily distinguishable by belligerent aircraft. If instructions are being drafted perhaps attention could be drawn to the necessity for frequent repainting of the colours, especially when cargoes such as coal are being carried". See Ibid., O'Donovan to Walshe, 20 January 1943.

[192] Based on a list of attacks on Irish ships compiled by External Affairs. There were 27 attacks in total, but 2 were the result of mines. Three of the attacks were not definitively attacks on Irish ships, but were included on the list. See NAI DFA P/12/18, Report entitled 'Irish vessels attacked but not sunk since the beginning of the war' (author unknown), date unknown but at least on or after 29 June 1942.

[193] Based on list of Irish ships sunk compiled by External Affairs (See Appendix B), see NAI DFA P/12/18, External Affairs' report entitled: 'Irish Vessels Sunk Since The Commencement Of The War', Undated, but after May 1943.

[194] NAI DFA P/12/18, Boland to Walshe, 29 October 1942.

Attacks on Irish ships reduced dramatically once their practices were brought into closer alignment with those of the other neutrals. It would be tempting, therefore, to argue that the adoption of safe conduct practices were the cause of this reduction. However, by the end of 1942, German aerial missions in the West had decreased, U-boat operations shifted further into the Atlantic, and Allied attacks on U-boats were proving more successful.[195] Furthermore, at least three, and possibly four, Irish ships were sunk by mines in 1940.[196] One ship may have been lost to bad weather, and another sank due to a collision with another ship.[197] These facts, however, must be balanced with the fact that, between January 1942 and January 1943, there was a greater number of U-boats in the Atlantic,[198] more ships were sunk than during any other period in the war,[199] and Irish ships sailed unprotected out of convoy. It may not be possible to determine to what degree the reduction in attacks on Irish ships can be attributed to the adoption of practices used by the other neutrals.[200] However, Boland's view, while acknowledging that the decrease in German aircraft in the West was a factor, was that the implementation of the neutrals' practices was key:

> We always held that the assumption that the Germans were anxious to sink our ships was wrong and that if our ships sailed out of convoy plainly marked — a point on which we laid great stress — the likelihood of attacks and losses would be decreased. On broader grounds of policy, we opposed the arming of our ships for the reason that

[195] See Allen, *The Storm Passed By*, p. 96 and Kennedy, *Guarding Neutral Ireland*, p. 224.
[196] The Germans engaged in a "vigorous mine-laying campaign around Britain" in 1940, and German U-boat attacks concentrated on neutral shipping. According to one source, of the 54 ships sunk by U-boats in January 1940, 43 were neutral. See Edwin P. Hoyt, *The U-Boat Wars* (Arbor House, New York, 1984), p. 48.
[197] Based on NAI DFA P/12/18, External Affairs' report entitled: 'Irish Vessels Sunk Since the Commencement of the War', Undated, but after May 1943.
[198] From April 1941, there was a steady increase in operational U-boats. At a height, 225 U-boats were in operation between April and July 1943, compared to 40 in January 1940. Based on figures in Bernard Ireland, *Battle of the Atlantic* (Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2003), p. 225.
[199] From September 1939 to August 1942, U-boats had sunk about 2,000 Allied ships in all waters. Between September 1942 and June 1943, 700 ships were sunk. From then until the end of the war roughly only 300 more ships were sunk by U-boats. See Clay Blair, *Hitler's U-Boat War: The Hunted 1942 – 1945* (Random House, New York, 1998), pp. xi-xii. See also Jak P. Mallmann Showell, *U-Boat Warfare: The Evolution of the Wolfpack* (Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2002), pp. 151-153, which contains useful statistics.
[200] This point was made by the Department of Industry and Commerce after the war. Irish Shipping Company Ltd., lost two large vessels on the trans-Atlantic route after the decision to sail out of convoy was made. Industry and Commerce argued that "there could have been no indication what our experience would be if ships continued to sail in convoy". See NAI INDC/7/19 EMR 3/16, Undated report entitled 'Shipping'.

> it would render difficult the maintenance of our neutrality […] The test of time and experience has shown, I think, which was the sounder and saner view.[201]

Conclusion

Irish diplomatic postings in neutral states were of vital practical importance to Dublin during the war. This point has been absent from treatments of Ireland's wartime experience as scholars have focused their attention mainly on the country's relations with the belligerent states. The maintenance of neutrality required the maintenance of communications with Irish diplomats in Axis territory and this was effected through Irish diplomatic postings in other neutral countries. These neutral outposts in Europe were the back-bone of the Irish communications network on the continent. Though delays were frequently caused by war developments, a regular line of communications was maintained and this chapter has mapped this network for the first time. New legations in Berne and Lisbon enhanced the security of the network. The Berne legation was a key node and communications centre for Ireland's diplomatic network, especially for the legations in Berlin and Vichy. The legation in the Holy See maintained connections with the legation in Rome, while Madrid and Lisbon acted as clearing houses for all communications between Dublin and the continent. Though outside of the scope of this thesis, it would be very interesting to trace the operation of diplomatic communication channels amongst Europe's neutrals during the war to further explore collaboration between diplomats of neutral states. The legation in Berne was also structurally important to External Affairs for sustaining the financial security of the other continental outposts. The funds held by Cremins provided a security net if communications with Dublin were cut for a number of

[201] NAI DFA P/12/18, Boland to Walshe, 29 October 1942.

months. As the Berne legation has received almost no focused scholarly attention, its practical importance as the centrepiece within the Irish diplomatic network on the continent has been overlooked by historians. This chapter goes some way to rectifying that oversight.

Another crucial component in the communications network was the Lisbon legation, based as it was at an entry point to the continent. The legation was, however, also of practical importance for Irish shipping interests. Only Filipe de Meneses has explored O'Donovan's career at the Lisbon legation in any detail, but his focus was more on diplomatic reportage. This chapter uncovers the Irish diplomat's other important duties at Lisbon where he acted as a quality control officer of sorts by ensuring the safe storage of supplies destined for Ireland. He spent a large proportion of his time sourcing supplies from Portuguese merchants as well as shipping. While not always successful in his endeavours, the modest success he did have alleviated some supply difficulties for Éire. This chapter has also, for the first time, shown that there existed some degree of informal collaboration amongst the European neutrals to avoid excessive chartering fees for shipping through competition.

One of the most important practical gains Ireland's neutral outposts brought, was information pertaining to the protection of Irish ships. Through information supplied by Irish diplomats across the continent, the benefits of sailing out of convoy, very visibly marking Irish ships, and providing the Germans with their descriptions and usual routes were learned. Though not adopted in full from the beginning of the war, knowledge of the efficacy of these measures amongst the other neutrals changed Irish minds. This form of learning through experience and information exchange was part of the broader effort on the part of the Irish government to learn best practices from their neutral counterparts. Once Irish ships adopted these practices, attacks on them reduced dramatically.

Section III

Neutral Alignment Under Allied Pressure

Chapter 5:

Not Breaking but Making International Law, 1943 – 1944

Introduction

This chapter examines the Irish government's reactions to the threats posed to neutrality from belligerent over-flights and forced landings of aircraft. The rules regarding the duties of neutrals with respect to belligerent aircraft were vague, relatively untested, and had already diminished in relevance due to the advances of aeronautical engineering in the decades since their creation. As a direct consequence, the neutrals all pursued pragmatic policies which evolved and moulded to circumstance over the course of the war. In the legal vacuum, Irish policymakers directed the country's response to the problem while keeping a watchful eye on the actions of their neutral counterparts in Switzerland and Sweden in particular. These observations shifted Irish policy from one which was ad hoc and isolated in the early years of the war, to a more structured and defensible policy based on emerging international norms from 1942 onwards. Keeping Ireland's neutrality policy broadly in line with those of the other neutrals was a key concern of the Department of External Affairs, and this reality is reflected clearly in their handling of the over-flight issue. To properly explain and contextualise the formulation of the Irish policy between 1942 and 1943, an account of the Irish approach to the over-flight menace from the beginning of the war will be made.

During the Second World War, the use of aerial bombardment brought modern industrial war-fare beyond the front lines and directly to civilian populations. Consequently, the issue of belligerent over-flights of neutral territory was a source of frustration, trepidation and fear for the neutral governments of Europe. To permit over-flights of belligerent bombers was to encourage avoidable risk to the lives of citizens; however, to actively engage belligerent aircraft was to run the risk of eliciting the opprobrium of their governments, regardless of international treaties protecting the inviolability of neutral territory. Accidental bombings brought the horrors of the conflict to the doors of citizens who were not party to the war, whilst the troublesome question of what to do with the crews of belligerent aircraft that crash landed on neutral territory tested the concept of neutrality itself. In the opinion of Michael Rynne, these issues were most pressing for Ireland, Switzerland and Sweden, who encountered over-flights on a regular basis.[1]

The issue of over-flights and forced landings in Éire during the war has already been the focus of some historical attention.[2] Ireland's benevolent policies towards the Allies in repatriating many aircrews and permitting the salvage of Allied aircraft, has long been identified. What these accounts have failed to identify, however, is that through observation, information exchange and consultation, the Irish government discovered that their benevolent policies were in tune with the practices of the other European neutrals. The Irish government was, therefore, able to justify its policies as being in line with international norms when the German Minister made frequent complaints in 1943.

[1] NAI DFA A26, Memorandum signed by Walshe, but certainly composed by Rynne, to de Valera, 18 February 1943.

[2] The subject has been covered extensively by T. Ryle Dwyer in particular, see Dwyer, *Guests of the State*; T. Ryle Dwyer, 'Guests of the State' in Keogh and O'Driscoll (eds.), *Ireland in World War Two*, pp. 107-125; Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*; Kennedy, *Guarding Neutral Ireland*; Browne, *Eagles Over Ireland*. A rather humorous account of the welcome received by two RAF airmen who made a forced landing in Éire during the war can be seen in Ralph Keefer, *Grounded in Eire: The Story of Two RAF Fliers Interned in Ireland during World War II* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), pp. 20-29.

Attempts to frame this issue in a comparative context are also absent, as historians have focused exclusively on how the over-flights and forced landings issue fit into the narrative of Allied-Irish co-operation. In the absence of universally recognised international law, the other European neutrals also took a flexible attitude towards the internment of belligerent aircrews. The Irish were aware, at least, of Swedish and Swiss actions, and may also have been aware of the Portuguese government's practice of releasing British aircrews and permitting them to destroy sensitive equipment on their aircraft.

Flexibility in Uncertainty

In 1939 aircraft were still a relatively new feature of warfare and there was a lack of international legislation regulating their use. Here it will be shown that the Irish government adopted a flexible attitude of its own creation from the beginning of the war. Exceptions to the official Irish policy to engage all belligerent aircraft and intern belligerent aircrews who landed in the country were occasionally made for the British, but not the Germans. Benevolent policies towards Britain increased over the winter of 1940/41 when the threat of an invasion from them was at its height. It will also be shown that Dublin's knowledge of the other neutrals' responses to over-flights appears to have been limited up to 1941. External Affairs only received the first meaningful reports in late 1940 from Switzerland and Sweden. They suggested a robust Swiss response and a comparatively non-aggressive Swedish attitude, but these reports did not reflect those neutrals' occasional flexibility, which only became apparent to the Irish government from late 1941. Without the benefit of historical precedents and a clear legal framework to guide them on air warfare, the neutrals projected an image of adherence to impartiality.

In the early days of the war, when Michael Rynne was busy interpreting the rights and duties of neutral states in time of war, he highlighted the lack of clarity regarding aircraft under the Hague Conventions. As aerial warfare had not been of significance in 1899 and 1907, when the conventions took place, a Commission of Jurists convened between late 1922 and early 1923 to impose regulations on the use of aircraft in wartime. The proposals called for limitations on the bombing of cities, civilian targets and expressed the inviolability of neutral airspace.[3] Unfortunately these proposals remained unratified, though Rynne stated that the inviolability of neutral airspace was "generally accepted" internationally.[4] The government emphasised this when they informed the British, French and Germans, on 12 September 1939, of restrictions placed on military vessels and aircraft in Irish territorial waters and over Irish airspace.[5] In the document, they cited the International Convention for Air Navigation of 1919, which directed that "the air space above the territory and territorial waters of a State shall be recognised as within its complete and exclusive sovereignty".[6] Around the same time, Rynne noted that the Irish government proposed not to take action against belligerent aircraft that were unarmed, though this distinction was not communicated to the belligerents.[7] Neutral airspace was, therefore, somewhat legally protected through international agreement.

Legal agreements may have provided a moral defence against belligerent fighter planes, but they were relatively useless so long as the country possessed such meagre defences. William T. Cosgrave,[8] opposition leader of the Fine Gael parliamentary party, perceptively highlighted this point to the Dáil as far back as February 1939:

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[3] See 'Rules concerning the Control of Wireless Telegraphy in Time of War and Air Warfare. Drafted by a Commission of Jurists at the Hague, December 1922 – February 1923'. http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/275 [cited 11-01-13]
[4] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Rynne to Walshe, 1 September 1939.
[5] Ibid., Unsigned proclamation to British, French and German governments, 12 September 1939.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid., Memorandum of Rynne, undated but September 1939.
[8] Co-founder of the Fine Gael party in 1933.

> While you may lay down, in your Constitutions and in your treaties, obligations, conditions, securities, and all the rest of it, does not everybody know that, in a time of war, these are, as they were described by one of the exponents of military power on the Continent, merely scraps of paper?[9]

The Irish attitude towards belligerent over-flights was complicated by the lack of resources to prevent them. Clearly it would have been desirable to engage aircraft likely to drop bombs on any piece of Irish territory; however, anti-aircraft defences in Ireland were "negligible".[10] As discussed previously, Irish military preparedness was hampered by a combination of financial considerations and poor planning, underscored by a pervasive attitude within the Department of Finance that defences were a waste of money in the face of far superior opponents.[11] In 1940, the state possessed only four searchlights and one anti-aircraft battery consisting of two 3.7mm guns,[12] though by 1941 purchases from Britain brought Dublin's complefment to six 3.7mm guns divided between Ringsend and Clontarf.[13] Naturally the positioning of the country's air defence weaponry reflected areas of key national importance, namely Dublin, the Foynes sea-plane base, Rineanna airport (now Shannon airport), Limerick port and the Ardnacrusha power station.[14] Their chances of successfully bringing down belligerent aircraft were low, but belligerent aircraft did frequently land on Irish territory, albeit for more mundane reasons such as lack of petrol or navigational errors.

The government's response to these forced landings displayed the imaginative lengths to which the state stretched the meaning of neutrality itself. Rynne's initial assessment of neutral obligations in this area, in September 1939, was based on the obligations pertaining

[9] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 74, No. 6, Col. 724, 16 February 1939.
[10] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 158.
[11] Investment in military aircraft remained low, and as a consequence the Irish government maintained, what has been described as, "a token level of military aviation" – See Michael C. O'Malley, *Military Aviation in Ireland, 1921 – 1945* (University College Dublin Press, 2010), p. 254.
[12] O'Halpin, 'Irish Neutrality in the Second World War', p. 287.
[13] Kennedy, *Guarding Neutral Ireland*, p. 167.
[14] Ibid., p. 164.

to belligerent naval crews, and he proposed that the state "make it known that we propose to intern military planes which land on our territory until the war comes to an end".[15] From the outset, however, this policy was both flexible and imposed with unequal rigour. On 3 September, shortly after Britain declared war on Germany, de Valera permitted an RAF Sunderland flying-boat to re-fuel and fly away after it had landed in the Irish Sea just off Skerries, Co. Dublin.[16] The crew of this aircraft were treated legally as "distressed mariners", and therefore not interned per Rynne's interpretation of international law.[17] Interestingly, in 1943, the Portuguese also designated the crew of a British flying boat that crashed in their waters as 'shipwrecked survivors' and released them.[18] Two weeks after the Irish incidents in September, Rynne suggested that all belligerent aircrews could be treated as distressed mariners, but he cautioned that such an interpretation would be "rather overstraining an already extremely tenuous line of argument".[19] In September 1939, such deviations from a strict interpretation of neutrality obligations can be associated with a lack of clear policy. Rynne's advice to Walshe illustrates this point:

> Other problems which have materialised only partially, such as the problem of the use of our waters by belligerent warships and submarines, and the invasion of our air-space by belligerent military aircraft, have been partially dealt with, or are being considered by the interested Departments with a view to dealing with them by further Emergency Orders. No doubt, the Taoiseach will be advised of this latter type of problem by each of the Departments at present engaged in providing a remedy for it.[20]

In October, when Walshe wrote to Hearne, in Canada, about how to present Irish neutrality, he informed him that "the most important measures remaining to be made will concern, one, naval and air forces of belligerents".[21] German aircrews were not extended comparably benevolent interpretations during this period however, though the possibility of a prisoner

[15] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Rynne to Walshe, 1 September 1939.
[16] See Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 104, which provides detail of the crew's brief sojourn at the local Garda Station.
[17] See Dwyer, 'Guests of the State', p. 107 and Duggan, *A History of the Irish Army*, pp. 178-179.
[18] TNA AIR 20/4414, British Air Ataché Lisbon (unnamed) to Air Ministry, 5 March 1943.
[19] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Rynne to Walshe, 14 September 1939.
[20] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Rynne to Walshe, 26 September 1939.
[21] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P4, Walshe to Hearne, 31 October 1939.

exchange was mooted briefly. John Maffey put this proposal to his government, but it was rejected.[22] Instead, he informed Walshe that "[t]hey did not see why we [the Irish] could not find some means of ignoring their presence when they made a false landing or of giving them an opportunity to escape".[23] The lack of clear guidelines was also highlighted by the Belgian government. Seán Murphy reported from Paris that the Belgian Foreign Affairs Ministry believed that "the absence of international rules which are recognised exposes small states to facile disputes as to the value of their (air) precautions and war action if the need therefor [sic] should arise at a time when such disputes are particularly dangerous".[24]

Irish flexibility was very much the exception rather than the rule in the first two years of the war. In a secret correspondence with the Office of the Revenue Commissioners in August 1941, Frederick Boland commented that within the previous 12 months only two or three belligerent planes (British) that had landed on Irish territory had been found "not to be internable – either because they were not military aeroplanes or for some other similar reason".[25] Boland did further note, however, that the chances of more landings, was not remote. The government was quite anxious that such exceptional circumstances were dealt with quickly and quietly. To this end, Boland informed Revenue that importations of petrol from across the northern border should be sanctioned quickly in these special circumstances by having them contact the border post by telephone.[26]

De Valera's government pushed the boundaries of neutrality further by permitting Allied aircraft to traverse a section of Irish airspace over a four mile area from Belleek, County Fermanagh to Ballyshannon, County Donegal, designated the 'Donegal

[22] TNA ADM 1/13338, M. J. Dean to J.E. Stephenson (Dominions Office), 26 February 1941.
[23] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A2, Memorandum of Walshe regarding a meeting with Sir John Maffey, 19 February 1941.
[24] NAI DFA 219/21, Murphy to Walshe, 28 December 1939.
[25] NAI DFA A26, Boland to J. Donnelly Esq. (Office of the Revenue Commissioners), 8 August 1941.
[26] NAI DFA A26, Boland to J. Donnelly Esq. (Office of the Revenue Commissioners), 8 August 1941.

Corridor'.[27] The government also began sharing observations of German aircraft and submarines with British intelligence from the recently established Coast-Watching Service.[28] The secret agreement to allow the Allies fly over the Donegal Corridor, concluded in January 1941, was premised on the understanding that it was intended for use by sea-planes based on Lough Erne engaged in air-to-sea rescues in the Atlantic. However, there was no practical way for the Irish authorities to know whether or not the corridor was being used for this limited purpose.[29] During the war, the Corridor was actually used for numerous operational missions,[30] including a successful mission to locate the German battleship *Bismarck*.[31] After the war, Walshe recalled that "[t]he Germans soon found out about the arrangement but didn't make any great issue of it".[32]

Irish co-operation was undoubtedly desirable, but it should be recognised that Éire lacked any capability of preventing British over-flights in the region anyway, and the British government had previously sanctioned violations of Swiss neutral airspace for operational reasons. Discussions within the British Air Ministry in 1940 show that, though they were concerned with minimising violations of Swiss airspace,[33] British Cabinet instructions gave them permission to "violate Swiss neutrality when proceeding to and from Milan".[34] The British were much more concerned with delivering a crushing blow to Italy

[27] For a very detailed account of the Donegal Corridor see Kennedy, *Guarding Neutral Ireland*, pp. 141-152.
[28] For an account of the Coast-Watching Services' activities and intelligence sharing, see Kennedy, *Guarding Neutral Ireland.*
[29] See Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, p. 129.
[30] Memorial plaques in Ballyshannon and Belleek, erected in 2007, commemorate the 320 men who died on 41 missions involving flying-boats at Lough Erne during the war. See Anita Guidera, *Irish Independent*, 19 April 2007.
[31] See Kennedy, *Guarding Neutral Ireland*, pp. 142-148, in which Kennedy argues that, were it not for use of the Donegal Corridor, the Catalina flying boats that found the *Bismarck* may not have discovered it all. Also see McGowan, 'The Donegal Corridor and the Battle of the Atlantic', p. 6, which quotes the log from the RAF base at Castle Archdale on the shores of Lough Erne that conformed the mission's success.
[32] NAI DFA 10/A/47, Walshe to Seán Nunan (Secretary DEA), 10 July 1953.
[33] TNA AIR 14/162, Minute of Senior Air Staff Officer (Bomber Command HQ) Norman Bottomley, 2 March 1940.
[34] British bomber captains were instructed to avoid violating Swiss territory on missions to Turin and Genoa, but that they were allowed to do so on missions to Milan. See Ibid., 18 September 1940 and Air Vice-Marshal,

than respecting Swiss neutrality and the Swiss themselves were unable to hit British bombers with anti-aircraft fire due to their high altitude.[35] Anglo-Irish co-operation over the Donegal Corridor was also not entirely unique. In October 1940, Walter Thurnheer, the Swiss Minister in London, informed the British Foreign Secretary, Viscount Halifax, that if British bombers were to violate Swiss airspace, they should do so via the Geneva route.[36] This was undoubtedly an effort at damage limitation from bomber sorties which the Swiss could not prevent, however, the RAF continued to regularly violate Swiss territory indiscriminately. Accidental bombings of Basel and Zürich during the winter of 1940 sparked indignation in Switzerland,[37] but official Swiss protests may have only deterred British operations for two days over the Christmas period.[38] Therefore, in light of British actions over Switzerland, it is far from clear to what extent the British Cabinet would have respected Irish airspace along the Donegal Corridor had the Irish government not been co-operative and the British need imperative.

Unlike the Swiss, however, the Irish government could reasonably argue that British planes which over-flew Irish territory were not on operational missions. The same could not be said of German aircraft for obvious geographical reasons. Nonetheless, despite limited air defences, the government did, on occasion, display an intention to honour the obligations of neutrals in wartime to protect the inviolability of their territory. On 27 September 1940, the Officer in Charge of Air Defence at Rosslare Port, Co. Wexford, informed Air Defence Command in Dublin Castle that they intended to "take action"

Deputy Chief of the Air Staff William Sholto Douglas to Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (Bomber Command HQ), 20 August 1940.

[35] See Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland and the Second World War*, pp. 200-201.

[36] Thurnheer told Halifax that "if we [the British] had to pass over Switzerland, he hoped that as far as possible we would use the Geneva route". The British War Cabinet took note of this and disseminated the information to the Air Ministry. See TNA AIR 14/162, Air Commodore (Director of Home Operations) Donald F. Stevenson to Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (Bomber Command HQ), 7 October 1940.

[37] TNA AIR 14/159, Walter Thurnheer to Viscount Halifax, 19 December 1940.

[38] For a more in-depth account of Anglo-Swiss tensions over bombing incidents see Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland and the Second World War*, pp. 205-210.

against a British aircraft which usually accompanied the 'Mail Boat'.[39] This aircraft made no attempts to attack the ship and it typically turned back outside Irish territorial waters. Consideration was given to the circumstances, and Assistant Chief of Staff Major General Aodh MacNeill ultimately directed not to fire on the aircraft.[40] That action was considered, despite the absence of threat, is illustrative of some degree of desire to maintain Irish territorial integrity regardless of the belligerent. In December, Irish fighters were scrambled to intercept a German fighter that had over-flown Dublin, though they were unable to make contact.[41] Fears of an invasion by either belligerent were high that month and anti-aircraft guns fired at planes which crossed the Irish coast for several weeks.[42]

In March 1941, Fine Gael TD Dr. Thomas F. O'Higgins' account of the views of government ministers was that the first side to attack was the enemy and whoever it may be, whether German, British or American, would be shot down.[43] When, in May of that year, German bombers overflew Dublin, and dropped bombs on the city's North Strand,[44] all the city's anti-aircraft batteries engaged the intruders. Therefore, like their neutral counterparts, the Irish government displayed its intention to defend neutrality by arms. However, J. J. Lee has rightly poured derision on comparisons between Ireland, Switzerland and Sweden in this regard, stating that, "Ireland was not [...] a neutral of Swedish or Swiss vintage. They both pursued a policy of armed neutrality, Ireland pursued,

[39] MAI ADC/21, Second Lieutenant A. Connick to Air Defence Command, Dublin Castle, 27 September 1940.
[40] Ibid., Assistant Chief of Staff Major General Aodh MacNeill to G2, Curragh Command, 22 November 1940.
[41] Kennedy, *Guarding Neutral Ireland*, p. 180.
[42] See Fisk, *In Time of War,* pp. 251-256.
[43] Fisk has stated that O'Higgins account was a "bloodthirsty assessment", see Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 255, referencing UCDA P7/C/114, Mulcahy Papers, O'Higgins, 3 March 1941.
[44] Arguments as to the rationale of this incident continue to persist, from suggestions of British interference with German instruments to ensure bombs landed on Dublin, to German retribution for de Valera's decision to send fire engines to Belfast after it's bombing a month previous. Michael Kennedy has proposed that the incident was a tragic accident caused by German bombers low on fuel who sought to reduce weight to prolong their flight time. See: Kennedy, *Guarding Neutral Ireland*, p. 189.

at most, a policy of half-armed neutrality".[45] Lee's apt assessment highlights the inherent contradiction in Éire's defence policy during the war. While the government was determined to defend the country like other neutrals, it lacked the military capacity to seriously deter attacks.

Belligerent over-flights were a serious challenge to all the neutrals, and the Irish were eager to discover the reactions of their neutral colleagues to these infractions. In November 1940, External Affairs instructed Francis Cremins, from his new posting in Berne, to "report fully all infringements of Swiss neutrality by air or otherwise stating action taken by [the] Swiss Government and [any] reply made by [the] offending belligerent".[46] In his typically dutiful manner, Cremins reported the following week that repeated representations were made by the Swiss government protesting belligerent over-flights, while their anti-aircraft guns sometimes opened fire on trespassing aircraft.[47] As noted earlier, however, the Swiss were unable to hit British aircraft in 1940 due to their high altitude. This situation only changed in 1942 when the Swiss equipped their batteries with 75mm guns and subsequently claimed "their first British scalp".[48] Switzerland had experienced numerous violations of its airspace since the first weeks of the war. From May 1940, after the German invasion of France, these transgressions became much more concentrated. Allied incursions over Swiss airspace, and consequential bombings, became more acute as the conflict progressed.[49] Cremins noted at the end of the war, that, in all, over 3,000 violations of Swiss airspace occurred between 1939 and 1944.[50] Geographical chance placed Switzerland in an unenviable position for any neutral country. The analogy

[45] Lee, *Ireland 1912 – 1985*, p. 236.
[46] NAI DFA Secretary Office P12/7, DEA to Cremins, 18 November 1940.
[47] NAI DFA 241/275, Cremins to DEA, 27 November 1940.
[48] Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland and the Second World War*, p. 201.
[49] Switzerland was the neutral which suffered most from American accidental bombings, and 167 US aircraft were either forced down or crash landed during the war. See Jürg Martin Gabriel, *The American Conception of Neutrality After 1941* (Palgrave MacMillan, Updated and Revised Edition, 2002), pp. 43-44.
[50] NAI DFA 241/275, Cremins to DEA, 9 May 1945.

Philipp Etter — President of the Swiss Confederation 1942 – 1943 — provided Francis Cremins with, underscored Switzerland's geo-strategic difficulties: "Ireland had always been an island, and now, Switzerland had become an island".[51]

Despite the inherent dangers of retaliation from an aggressive expansionist neighbour, the Swiss did not adopt a *laissez-faire* attitude to aerial encroachments of their territory. A list of breaches of Swiss airspace in 1940, compiled within External Affairs, shows that the Irish were aware of a large number of incidents of belligerent over-flights in Switzerland, and all too frequent accidental bombings.[52] Cremins noted in his post-war report on belligerent over-flights that "a certain number of intruders were shot down, whilst others were damaged and had to make forced landings outside Swiss territory".[53] Hitler was particularly angered by Swiss actions because their air force engaged German fighters and followed them into French airspace using fighters sold to them by Germany.[54] Cremins filed frequent reports of similar engagements with foreign fighters over Swiss territory. Dublin's knowledge of the comparatively robust Swiss response to belligerent over-flights contrasted with the more tempered picture that emerged from Sweden. An excerpt from 'Review of the Foreign Press', compiled in December 1940 by the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House), detailed how the Swedes only opened fire on belligerent aircraft that were found to be deliberately over-flying their territory.[55] The

[51] NAI DFA Embassies Berne Box 7 Be 4/7b CD Berne, Cremins to DEA, 7 January 1942.
[52] NAI DFA 241/275, List entitled 'Violations of Swiss Neutrality Since Mar. 1st 1940', undated, but after December 1940. The RAF's unfortunate accidental bombings of Switzerland have been explored in Wylie, *Britain, Switzerland and the Second World War*; other accounts of violations of Swiss airspace and accounts of Swiss internment practices, often containing varying degrees of bias against Swiss neutrality, which can especially be seen in Cathryn J. Prince, *Shot From the Sky: American POWs in Switzerland* (Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 2003) and Stephen Tanner, *Refuge from the Reich: American Airmen and Switzerland During World War II* (Sarpedon, Rockville Center, NY, 2000).
[53] NAI DFA 241/275, Cremins to DEA, 9 May 1945.
[54] See Detlev F. Vagts, 'Switzerland, International Law and World War II', *The American Journal of International Law* (Vol. 91, No. 3, July, 1997) p. 467.
[55] NAI DFA 241/275, Extract from 'Review of the Foreign Press', compiled by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 19 December 1940.

Swedes were hesitant to open fire on all violators as it may have "unnecessarily endanger[ed] lives around the A.A. [Anti-Aircraft] station[s]".[56]

From the fall of Denmark and Norway in 1940 until increasing Allied pressure in the summer of 1943, "Swedish official policy followed the line least likely to bring about open confrontation with the powerful architects of *Neuropa*".[57] Though the population was overwhelmingly pro-Allied, the government permitted serious breaches of the country's neutrality in favour of the Germans. The most keenly debated violation was the decision to allow the transportation of German troops in Norway across Swedish territory to Finland at the outset of Operation Barbarossa.[58] German planes were also routinely permitted to traverse Swedish airspace on their journeys to and from Norway. As will be shown later in the chapter, the Irish government later became aware that some German military planes that landed on Swedish territory were deemed to be non-operational and were subsequently not interned. This period of appeasement and concessions to Nazi Germany has been described as "the most controversial and indeed difficult period in modern Swedish history".[59]

What is clear, however, is that the Irish government was pursuing a pragmatic policy of its own creation in the early years of the war. Irish policy officially prohibited all military aircraft from over-flying the state, and warned that all aircrews that landed on the island would be interned. In reality, the policy was far from rigid, and was especially favourable to the British Royal Air Force (RAF). Irish benevolence contrasted with their knowledge

[56] Ibid.
[57] C.G. McKay, *From Information to Intrigue: Studies in Secret Service Based on the Swedish Experience: 1939 – 45* (Frank Cass, 1993), p. 42.
[58] See Stig Hadenius, *Swedish Politics during the 20th Century* (Third Edition, Swedish Institute, 1990), pp. 51-52.
[59] Paul A. Levine, 'Swedish Neutrality during the Second World War: Tactical Success or Moral Compromise', in Wylie (ed.), *European Neutrals and Non-Belligerents*, p. 312.

of Swiss impartiality in this sphere early in the war. Éire's air defence policy, in its application, was more akin to that of Sweden than of Switzerland; a policy of partiality. On closer inspection after 1942, however, the Irish government discovered that compromise, concession, and flexibility was the norm amongst their neutral colleagues, and Ireland's benevolent policy was defended strongly on these grounds at a time when the war began to shift in the Allies' favour.

New Interpretations

Not long after Cremins had been appointed as Chargé d'Affaires to Switzerland (in late 1940), he was instructed to inform External Affairs of the Swiss government's reaction to breaches of their neutrality by aircraft. Regular reports from Berne carried news of over-flights and forced landings, which were then compiled into a list of violations. The following year a curious incident piqued Dublin's interest, "[we] saw reference to a case in which a German plane made [a] forced landing in Switzerland and was released on the ground[s] that it was unarmed".[60] Cremins was requested to enquire into the matter and report back to Dublin with more details. Two days later, he replied that the aircraft had been an unarmed training craft that had violated Swiss airspace in error and that the crew had been released on these grounds. He further noted that there was a factor of reciprocity, as Swiss crews of a similar nature had been returned.[61] Michael Rynne highlighted, however, that neutral aircrews were not liable to internment and therefore "it [was] difficult to imagine how 'reciprocity' in a matter such as this was possible".[62] He drew special attention to the instructional nature of the aircraft, which he categorised as very different to

[60] NAI DFA 241/275, Code Telegram DEA to Berne, 1 October 1941.
[61] Ibid., Cremins to DEA, 3 October 1941.
[62] Ibid., Note of Rynne on Cremins to DEA, 3 October 1941.

an unarmed bomber. His misgivings aside, this incident marks the Irish government's first example of how the other neutrals were applying their internment policies vis-à-vis belligerent aircrews. Furthermore, it supported the publicly undeclared Irish policy, noted by Rynne in September 1939, that, unarmed belligerent aircraft would not be interned. Indicative of the report's importance, it was brought to the attention of Joseph Walshe. In early December 1941, Cremins reported another similar incident where the crew of an unarmed instructional plane were released. This report was seen by Boland and subsequently retained for further reference.[63] A further later example emphasised that a clear distinction was made in Switzerland between internable and non-internable aircraft.[64] The timing of these incidents is significant, having occurred shortly before and after the arrival of the American troops in Northern Ireland and the subsequent increase in violations of Irish airspace.

The arrival of American troops in Northern Ireland elicited a strong protest from de Valera who resented not having been consulted on the matter by the US or British governments.[65] Since coming to power in 1932, de Valera had made what he saw as the unjust partition of the island the cornerstone of his "nationalist foreign policy".[66] Through the League of Nations, he sought to highlight this injustice by invoking the principles of self-determination as set out by former US President Woodrow Wilson. For de Valera, the arrival of the American troops, without his consultation, challenged the claim of the Irish people to "supreme jurisdiction" over the whole island.[67] His protest, however, betrayed

[63] NAI DFA 241/275, Cremins to DEA, 2 December 1941.
[64] Ibid., Cremins to DEA, 27 March 1942.
[65] Plans for their arrival had, in fact, been made, following secret Anglo-American talks earlier in the year. American technicians were sent to Northern Ireland during the summer of 1941 to build bases to be used once America joined the war. See Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, p. 143 and Cronin, *Washington's Irish Policy*, p. 120.
[66] Mervyn O'Driscoll, 'Concluding Thoughts', in Keogh and O'Driscoll (eds.), *Ireland in World War Two*, p. 292.
[67] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P43, DEA to the Irish Legations at Washington and the Holy See, and to the High Commission in London, 27 January 1942.

the benevolence shown to wayward Allied aircrews in the South. The day after it was issued, de Valera granted permission for an American military plane to be re-fuelled and take-off, after it had made an emergency landing at Dublin airport. Gray reported to Cordell Hull, US Secretary of State, that such incongruity was typical of the situation he faced when dealing with the Irish government.[68] Contrary to Gray's often acerbic analyses, there was a broadly shared desire for an Allied victory within de Valera's government,[69] and it was clear that benevolence toward Allied aircrews would remain. Furthermore, to accommodate and defend this benevolence, the Irish government began to compile examples of international precedents from the other neutrals to justify their actions.

From 1941 onwards, more and more examples of aircraft and crews released or not interned in the other neutral states were presented to External Affairs. The flexibility exhibited by the Swiss and the Swedes, in particular, supported the Irish position. In June 1942, the Acting Swedish Consul in Dublin provided Frederick Boland with the text of a speech given to the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) by the Prime Minister, Per Albin Hansson, which sought to justify a redefinition of the obligations of neutrals to prevent violations of their airspace:

> If such flights are made on purpose or accidentally is of course not always easy to determine. The simplest way to be on the safe side is obviously to shoot down the intruder. This is no doubt our right but not an obligation of neutrality and hardly laudable from a humanitarian point of view.
>
> The latter particularly holds if we assume that generally the flights are unintentional and accordingly do not aim at violating or harming our country. There are good grounds for such an opinion. We have a right to assume that countries with whom we

[68] FRUS, Dept. of State Diplomatic Papers 1942, Gray to Cordell Hull, 30 January 1942. http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?type=turnandentity=FRUS.FRUS1942v01.p0765andid=FRUS.FRUS1942v01andisize=Mandq1=eire [cited 11-01-13]

[69] De Valera had indicated his sympathies toward an Allied victory from the outset of the war in a secret meeting with Sir John Maffey (UK representative to Ireland) – See Dwyer, *De Valera: The Man and the Myths*, pp. 227-229. Though Walshe believed a German victory was inevitable in the summer of 1940, he maintained secret co-operation with Britain. Despite his irritation with British attacks on Irish neutrality in the media, he did not wish for a British defeat – See Aengus Nolan, 'A Most Heavy and Grievous Burden: Joseph Walshe and the Establishment of Sustainable Neutrality, 1940', in Keogh and O'Driscoll (eds.), *Ireland in World War Two*, pp. 134-135.

> maintain friendly relations do not undertake aggressive actions against us. [...] After careful testing of the circumstances in each individual case I consider myself able to declare without hesitation that in no case can it be assumed that the respective belligerent power had the intention to violate Swedish neutrality.[70]

In reply, Boland thanked the Acting Swedish Consul for providing the text and stated that the Department had read it "with the greatest interest".[71] Joseph Walshe subsequently forwarded the speech to de Valera and the Secretary of the Department of Defence, Peadar MacMahon, which highlights the importance the government attached to this document.[72] Sweden's official attitude exhibited a desire to presume on the benign intentions of aircraft violating their airspace, though later reports received by External Affairs noted some Swedish successes in bringing down belligerent aircraft.[73] Nonetheless, precedents in Sweden were now being monitored with the same interest as those in Switzerland. Though it is not clear if the Irish government were aware, the Swedish government made an agreement with the Germans in 1941 to permit them to over-fly Swedish territory. German pressure also resulted in a reduction of warning shots fired by Swedish forces to discourage over-flights.[74]

In July, Michael Rynne explained the reasons for closer scrutiny of the actions of the other neutral states, when he noted that:

> Coming down to the points of detail, which do not always seem to be covered by general rules [international laws of neutrality], one method has been to ascertain whenever possible the practice of other neutral States in similar circumstances. In that way we are able to justify the stand we take in any particular case on an actual precedent. To some extent at least, we are thereby helping to create international law ourselves by confirming new precedents or by modifying them when occasion requires.
>
> ...

[70] NAI DFA 241/275, Text of reply of Swedish Prime Minister Per Albin Hansson to Herr von Friesen, Plenary session of the Riksdag, 10 June 1942, provided by Stig Winberg to Boland, 26 June 1942.
[71] NAI DFA 241/275, Boland to Stig Winberg, 6 July 1942.
[72] Ibid., Walshe to Peadar MacMahon, 6 July 1942.
[73] Ibid., Memorandum entitled "Swedish Neutrality 1940", received by Boland, September 1942.
[74] There were nearly 1,000 belligerent violations of Swedish airspace in 1941, but, only 56 warning shots were fired and no planes were shot down. From May 1943, warning shots against lone aircraft violating Swedish airspace were stopped. See John Gilmour, *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War* (Edinburgh University Press, 2010), pp. 223-224.

> Our main guides have been (1) the practice of other neutral States, (2) the pre-eminent rule of strict impartiality, and (3) simple commonsense [sic] which is, perhaps, the surest guide of all in the more or less trackless desert of the 'neutrality law' of modern wartime.[75]

In September, the Swedish Consul-General provided clarity on the circumstances under which belligerent aircrews were deemed internable:

> Belligerent military planes, which land in Sweden, are <u>always</u> interned, while planes which are used for civil flying (for example transport or courier planes) are not interned even if the plane itself is of military type.[76]

That the knowledge of Swedish policies was influential on Rynne's moulding of Ireland's legal position, vis-à-vis over-flights and internment, is quite clear. A few short months after External Affairs received the text of the Swedish Prime Minister's speech, and mere weeks after receiving further clarifications, Rynne advised Walshe:

> [W]hen a plane, although a belligerent military machine, finds itself on neutral territory by a pure accident due neither to the desire of its crew to use that territory as a base nor to their need to treat it as a refuge, is there any obligation on a neutral Government to take drastic action?
>
> Given the condition of strict impartiality and, of course, the condition that the belligerent plane and crews depart, within a reasonably short time, from the neutral country, it would seem possible to answer the foregoing question in the negative.[77]

In August 1942, External Affairs instructed O'Donovan, in Lisbon, to provide a copy of the Portuguese measures in the event of forced landings.[78] If a reply were received however, it appears not to have been kept, and External Affairs was seemingly not interested in exploring Portuguese policy further.[79] However, it is not outside the bounds of possibility that the British informed Dublin of benevolent Portuguese practices. A British Foreign Office telegram, from March 1943, to their Ambassador in the United States, Viscount

[75] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Papers, Memorandum of Rynne to Walshe, 14 July 1942.
[76] NAI DFA 241/275, Memo from Swedish Consul-General (Undated though marked that it was received on 26th September 1942).
[77] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A 26, Rynne to Walshe, 30 November 1942.
[78] Ibid., Boland to O'Donovan, 6 August 1942.
[79] One case was known, however, of a British aircrew that crashed in Portuguese Africa and was subsequently repatriated to Britain through Lisbon. This information reached the DEA through a confidential source who informed G2 that the crew had contracted malaria. Rynne informed Walshe that this was allowable under the Prisoners of War Convention, 1929 – See Extract from Summary of Reports from I.O. Shannon for October 1942 [received by the DEA from G2 on 17 November 1942] in NAI DFA 241/271.

Halifax,[80] stated that while air personnel who landed in Portugal were interned, they were in practice allowed to escape.[81] This information was subsequently provided to the Americans through Halifax. British aircrews who had to make a forced landing, meanwhile, were instructed to land at the Tancos military airfield when possible, as the Portuguese authorities there allowed them ten hours to destroy any sensitive equipment or documents.[82] The British also approached Salazar regarding a proposed exchange of British aircraft which had made forced landings in the country in return for new Spitfires, though Salazar was not convinced of the proposal's legality.[83] British archival documents show that, at least on occasion, aircraft that had landed in Portugal were gifted to the Portuguese in return for the release of the aircrew.[84] While there is no physical evidence the Irish were aware of this Anglo-Portuguese co-operation, it is possible it was mentioned in conversations between Irish and Allied authorities.

Sweden and Switzerland were, nonetheless, the prime focus of Irish interest in this area. Through the winter months of 1942/43, Francis Cremins' reports also indicated a slackening in Swiss efforts to repel belligerent over-flights. German protests suggested the Swiss were ignoring Allied bombers en route to targets in Northern Italy,[85] and Cremins forwarded a number of brochures and press extracts suggesting a more "passive defence against attacks from the air".[86] He noted that similar accusations from Berlin had been made in 1940, but that the Swiss press had rebuffed such claims by questioning why Allied

[80] Halifax was replaced as Foreign Secretary by Anthony Eden in December 1940 and assumed the role of Ambassador to the US until 1946.
[81] This telegram was distributed to the War Cabinet, see TNA FO 371/34676, M.S. Williams (Foreign Office) to Halifax, 17 March 1943.
[82] TNA FO 371/31144, H.G. Crowe (Director of Allied Air Co-operation and Foreign Liaison) to R.M. Makins (Foreign Office), 27 January 1942.
[83] See TNA FO 371/34676, in which numerous despatches throughout 1943 chart the course of discussions with Salazar who could not be convinced that such an exchange would not be a breach of neutrality.
[84] Ibid., Air Ministry (Whitehall) to RAFDEL (Royal Air Force Delegation in Washington), 3 September 1943.
[85] NAI DFA 241/275, Cremins to DEA, 3 November 1942.
[86] Ibid., 22 January 1943.

aircraft were permitted to reach Swiss territory unmolested via other countries in the first place.[87] In February 1943, Cremins also re-stated the ongoing practice of the Swiss to release German aircrews of unarmed instructional aircraft.[88] It was becoming ever more apparent to the Irish government that strict interpretations were impractical.

Exceptions to the rules and obligations of neutrals pertaining to the inviolability of their territory were made by all. Rynne justified these exceptions by arguing that "[i]nternational law in respect of air warfare...[was] largely based on the practice of States", as the old regulations were "unworkable theories".[89] By conceding "defensible exceptions", Rynne argued, that Ireland was "not breaking but making international law", and that "[i]nsofar as the few remaining neutral States appear to have also recognised some exceptions to the old rules, it may be said [Ireland was] supported by precedents".[90] Unsupported, however, were the occasions when Allied military aircraft were permitted to repair or refuel before making a hasty departure.[91] From a legal perspective, justifications to do so were highly dubious. Rynne advocated that no attempt be made to defend the practice under international law by "assimilating" military aircraft and naval vessels which were permitted to enter neutral waters and put in at neutral ports for repairs.[92] It was deemed best to treat these occurrences as practical in nature, with the implication that they should also remain secret. Based on information supplied by the British Air Attaché to Dublin, Wing Commander Malcom Begg, the British Air Ministry encouraged aircrews to land at Irish aerodromes or sea-plane alighting areas if they had to make a forced landing. Aircrews were told that this procedure

[87] NAI DFA 241/275, 3 November 1942.
[88] Ibid., 15 February 1943.
[89] NAI DFA A 26, Rynne to Walshe, 30 November 1942.
[90] Ibid.
[91] The Department of Defence proposed that the British government refund the Irish Army for fuel given to British aircraft. The British government agreed to replace the fuel and stores granted to them in 1942. See Ibid., Secret message from Assistant Secretary of the Department of Defence to Walshe, 30 April 1942 and W.C. Hankinson (Dominions Office) to Walshe, 28 October 1942.
[92] Ibid., Memorandum of Rynne, 30 November 1942.

was preferable because "[e]xperience has shown that aircraft landing at these places are frequently refuelled and sent on their way with the minimum of delay".[93]

The accumulation of examples from neutral colleagues, in connection with over-flights and forced landings, assisted Rynne in the creation of a defensible legal basis for Éire's benevolent policy. Defending Irish policy was not simply desirable, but also necessary, following queries from Herr Hempel and Thomsen, at the German legation. It had come to their attention that, on occasion, Allied aircraft were permitted to leave after a forced landing had occurred.[94] One of these cases referred to the landing, in July 1942, of a bomber *en route* from Montreal to Northern England, which had come down near Strokestown in Co. Roscommon. A report on the incident from Garda Inspector Denis Falvey revealed the precarious nature of secretly enacting benevolent policies contrary to the public pronouncements of strict neutrality. Following the forced landing, "a party of mechanics in civilian attire, equipped with lorries apparently the property of the British Government, salvage equipment and army tents arrived from Northern Ireland",[95] with the express purpose of recovering the craft piece by piece. The following day, Inspector Falvey noted that the situation in Strokestown had become acute, as the sentiment amongst the local population – in particular amongst those in the Local Defence Force (L.D.F.) – was that it was a breach of neutrality not to have interned the crew and to allow the removal of the aircraft. A prominent solicitor in Strokestown, a Mr. Montgomery, who was a member of the L.D.F., tendered his resignation in protest. The final paragraph of his resignation letter underscored the schism between public perceptions and reality:

> It is absolutely manifest that the Government are not honest with the people. They are playing at being neutral with the attendant disadvantages whilst in practice they are

[93] TNA AIR 20/4414, Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Policy) Charles Medhurst to Air Officer Commander-in-Chief Sholto Douglas, 21 February 1943.
[94] NAI DFA A 26, Note of Boland, 12 October 1942.
[95] NAI DJUS JUS 8/901, Inspector Denis Falvey (Roscommon Station) to Assistant Commissioner Roscommon 14/7/42 and forwarded to Minister for Justice by A/C on 18/7/42.

> actively pro-British and anti-Nazi. They have enticed men to join the L.D.F., appealing to their sense of patriotism to defend their country and to preserve our neutrality. I joined because of this appeal I now resign because, to put it colloquially – It is all Balls.[96]

The arrival of the L.D.F. at the scene of forced landings was the subject of much internal debate within the upper echelons of the Army and G2, who wished to minimise the L.D.F.'s involvement.[97] It is almost certain that there was close co-operation on this concern between Éire and Britain. Discussions in London on revised policies for aircrews that had to make a forced landing in Éire took place in late 1942 between the Air Ministry, the Dominions Office and John Maffey.[98] In the context of drafting rules pertaining to the removal or disposal of secret equipment from British aircraft, Walter Crossfield Hankinson, in the Dominions Office, opined that:

> [P]robably most of the forced landings will take place in some out of the way spot where there are no Eire army near and where the machine and its crew will be taken in charge by the local Garda or by members of the L.D.F. with the help of some yokels. In such cases it is almost certain that the L.D.F. would insist on removing the whole crew under guard from the aircraft and set their own guard on the latter while they reported to the authorities in Dublin and obtained instructions as to disposal.[99]

Naturally, de Valera's government wished to keep a lid on their secret collusion with the British military as such incidents were injurious to the credibility of Irish neutrality. To this end, G2 proposed to make it an "open secret" to the British and American air forces, that, they would be permitted time to dismantle their aircraft *before* selected members of the Irish authorities were informed of the landing. It was further proposed not to inform these Irish authorities of the arrangements.[100] Situations such as that at Strokestown, which came

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[96] NAI DJUS JUS 8/901, Inspector Denis Falvey (Roscommon Station) to Assistant Commissioner Roscommon 14/7/42 and forwarded to Minister for Justice by A/C on 18/7/42.

[97] An Army Order was contemplated in 1942, and drafted in 1943, to create a chain of command in dealing with downed aircraft, which placed the L.D.F. at the bottom of the list. There were concerns that the L.D.F. would impede the work of British repair gangs coming from Northern Ireland. Proposals for the order, to be issued by the Army's Chief of Staff, Lt. General Dan McKenna, were thought possible to arouse suspicion however. See Handwritten notes of Commandant S. O'Beirne (G2, Plans and Operations Staff), undated but Spring 1943, MAI EDP 23/8 and Colonel M. Hogan to Assistant Army Chief of Staff Liam Archer 6 July 1942, MAI LDF 141 2/76486.

[98] See TNA DO 35/1109/17.

[99] Ibid., W. C. Hankinson to N. E. Archer (Dominions Office), 9 December 1942.

[100] MAI EDP 23/8, Handwritten notes of Commandant S. O'Beirne (G2, Plans and Operations Staff), undated but spring 1943.

to the attention of Herr Hempel, were dangers the government wished to avoid. To aid the illusion of strict neutrality Malcolm Begg, "advised the RAF to instruct all aircrews not on training flights to pretend they were on rescue missions if they had to land in Ireland".[101]

Secret military assistance was complemented by diplomatic assurances to the American and British governments. Supported by precedents in other neutral countries, Joseph Walshe acceded to a request from the US State Department in December 1942, to restrict internment only to aircrews on combat flights.[102] During discussions with David Gray, the American Minister adopted Walshe's proposal to classify the distinction between combat and training, or instructional, flights, as being 'operational' and 'non-operational'.[103] Merely a month later, an American Flying Fortress landed in Athenry containing four US Generals.[104] It was subsequently permitted to leave, but knowledge of this incident again reached the German Minister who questioned Frederick Boland on the matter.[105] Hempel informed him that he understood the plane was of military type and that rumour suggested Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Commander of the North African Theater of Operations, was on board. Boland truthfully rejected the rumour as a work of fiction, but prevaricated on whether the aircraft was civilian or military. He further equivocated on the nature of the aircraft that had landed in Strokestown, informing Hempel that the crew was on an undetermined civilian mission and wore no insignia marking them as belonging to any belligerent air-force. Boland defended Irish policy, in refusing to intern non-combatant aircraft, by referring to the experiences of Switzerland and Sweden who had both released

[101] Dwyer, 'Guests of the State', p. 118.
[102] NAI DFA A 26, Walshe to Gray, 11 December 1942.
[103] Ibid., Gray to Walshe, 22 December 1942.
[104] A detailed account of this incident has been published, featuring a number of photographs of the aircraft and its crew. See Browne, *Eagles Over Ireland*.
[105] NAI DFA A 26, Memorandum of Boland, 4 February 1943.

German aircrews that were on training flights, whilst the Swedish also permitted passage over their territory to German courier planes.[106]

Providing a credible defence for Éire's deferential internment policy was a significant concern for de Valera, who requested Walshe to provide him with a note on the matter in February 1943.[107] This document outlined the evolved Irish position, and is worth quoting at length:

> The present war has brought an enormous increase in the number of aircraft used by belligerents, and with that increase neutral governments have been presented with new and serious problems. It has been found by experience that strict adherence to the Hague rules would impose too great a burden on the neutrals whose geographical situation makes them particularly liable to constant accidental overflying. Hence the custom has grown up in countries so situated to make certain exceptions to the rules about internment. Transport planes are not usually interned. Neither are training planes. Indeed, from the practice of neutral Governments, not always easy to discover during the period of belligerency, the custom is slowly emerging of confining internment to planes and crews actually engaged on a strictly operational flight. Naturally, special problems frequently arise which have to be decided in the special circumstances of each case, and one group of neutrals may have difficulties which never arise for another. It is clear, for instance, that Sweden, Switzerland and Ireland are faced with difficulties which are not experienced by the other European neutrals. And the European neutrals as a whole afford little basis of comparison with neutrals far from the theatres of war. Each Government is doing what it can within the framework of its special difficulties to build up a body of rules or customs based on the broad principles of international law.
>
> Notwithstanding relatively minor divergences in practice, it will probably be found after the war when new rules come to be framed that the experience of the European neutrals will have led them to adopt a more or less common attitude in relation to the general problem of belligerent aircraft.[108]

During a later meeting with Hempel, Boland offered, by way of further explanation, that Ireland "had started out on certain principles which seemed to [them] appropriate, only to find that other neutral States seemed to be following quite different rules".[109] By

[106] NAI DFA A 26, Memorandum of Boland, 4 February 1943.
[107] Ibid., Walshe to Kathleen O'Connell (Personal secretary to de Valera), 18 February 1943.
[108] NAI DFA A 26, Memorandum for the Taoiseach drafted and signed J.P.W. (Walshe) on 18 February 1943 regarding a note from Miss K. O'Connell, Department of the Taoiseach, who was asked to give the Taoiseach a short note on internment of aircraft.
[109] Ibid., Memorandum of Boland, 7 May 1943.

comparison, however, he proffered the view that the Irish practice was "much stricter than that of other neutrals in the present war".[110]

Boland was, understandably, somewhat liberal with the truth. External Affairs' agreement, in April 1943, to a request from the British government to permit their aircrews remove secret equipment from their downed aircraft contradicted his claims of a strict Irish policy.[111] Then, in June, at the request of the US military, the Irish government increased in size twenty 'pin-point' markers on prominent headlands, to aid the navigation of Allied aircraft.[112] Hempel was unaware of the depth of Anglo-Irish collaboration. Walshe thought it better to be more frank when he met the German Minister later that day. He told Hempel that only crews of aircraft that were on 'operational' flights at the time of a forced landing would be interned.[113] Geographical realities thus meant that German aircrews were more likely to be on 'operational' missions and thereby more likely to be interned. Were the policies of the other neutrals more in keeping with a strict interpretation of neutrality principles, then it is unlikely Walshe would have spoken with such candour. Hempel, not satisfied with the explanations provided by Boland and Walshe, made a formal request for the government to report to him regarding a number of specific cases where Allied aircrews were released.[114] Col. Dan Bryan (G2) was tasked with ascertaining the details of the cases unfamiliar to External Affairs,[115] though his subsequent report mattered little as External Affairs had no desire of complying with Hempel's request. No doubt this was in part due to a sense that no further explanation was necessary after the previous discussions, but also because Dublin had come into possession of intriguing new information from Sweden. A

[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid., Note handed to Lt. Gen. Peadar McMahon (Secretary, Department of Defence) by John Maffey, 1 April 1943; and Ibid., Walshe to Maffey, 15 April 1943.
[112] US NARA 319/47/779, 000.24 – 580.6 Ireland, Report of Major George E. Sprague (Assistant Military Attaché for Air), 15 June 1943.
[113] NAI DFA A 26, Handwritten memorandum of Walshe, 10 May 1943.
[114] NAI DFA A 26, Hempel to de Valera, 21 May 1943.
[115] Ibid., Boland to Col. Bryan, 9 June 1943.

few days after Hempel's formal request, External Affairs learned that a Swedish aerodrome was instructed to intern all non-German military aircraft landing in the country, but German aircraft were permitted to leave once repairs had been made.[116] A special inquiry into the situation at the Swedish aerodrome found that governmental instructions issued in the summer of 1941 regarding German aircraft had been misinterpreted. Knowledge of this procedure provoked considerable criticism from the Swedish press. However, "public annoyance" was focused on the discovery that German military personnel regularly travelled over the country.[117] Once again, Swedish actions appeared to resemble those of the Irish.

Not having received a response to his query, Hempel sent two reminders in July;[118] the latter containing a protest from the German government:

> The Government of the German Reich considers the release of British and American aeroplanes as well as their military crews and passengers in all the cases mentioned in my note of the 21st of May as infringing the obligations of neutrality, so long as Germany is not treated on equally favourable terms. I am therefore instructed to protest against these releases and to request for the future the strict execution of internment, unless equally favourable treatment be meted out to both sides.[119]

In September, Walshe again met with Hempel to discuss the issue of internment, as no formal reply had yet been received by the German Minister. Walshe reminded Herr Hempel that the release of aircrews on 'non-operational' flights was "a part of the policy of every neutral Government".[120] A memorandum drawn up in October highlighted that the Irish position regarding internment stood up favourably in comparison to other neutrals, and that as international law in this area was based on the practices of the neutrals during the conflict, the Irish government was in compliance.[121] Regarding the delay in providing

[116] NAI DFA 241/275, Extract from British Review of the Foreign Press, 21 May 1943, received by Boland from the Controller of Censorship, Michael Knightly, 27 May 1943.
[117] Ibid.
[118] NAI DFA A 26, Hempel to de Valera, 7 July 1943; Hempel to de Valera, 27 July 1943.
[119] NAI DFA A 26, Hempel to de Valera, 27 July 1943.
[120] Ibid., Memorandum of Joseph P. Walshe, 15 September 1943.
[121] Ibid., Unsigned DEA memorandum, 4 October 1943.

Hempel with a reply, the memorandum stated that the Germans were "in no position to complain", as they had not replied to notes from the Irish government concerning German bombing incidents in 1940 and 1941.[122] New information received, detailing the exchange of British and German aircrews interned in Switzerland,[123] and the release of all interned aircrews in Turkey,[124] further bolstered the Irish position. Armed with international precedents, de Valera was in a position to publicly admit a distinction between 'operational' and 'non-operational' flights to the Dáil on 4 November 1943. Though he avoided specifics in his response to a question on the number of belligerent aircraft detained or released since 1939, he stated that "those which were engaged on operational flights were detained and their crews interned. The others were released".[125]

Hempel continued to repeat his calls for equal treatment of Allied and Axis aircrews,[126] but aside from the repatriation of one German airman on medical grounds,[127] his requests were not granted. According to John P. Duggan, Hempel was, however, surprised to learn that the Irish at least broached the subject of repatriating the German internees during negotiations with the British.[128] He believed the arrangement would follow the same lines as that of the Swiss, but he later reported "that the British Secret Service were opposed to any such arrangement".[129] Maffey had again broached the possibility with the British government of a prisoner exchange,[130] but it was rejected to deny the Germans long-range bomber pilots who were interned in the Curragh.[131] Hempel, on a point of principle,

[122] Ibid., Unsigned DEA memorandum, 4 October 1943.
[123] Ibid., Cremins to DEA, 16 October 1943.
[124] Ibid., Unsigned and undated document, but after 16 October 1943, detailing positions in neutral countries towards interned aircrews.
[125] *Dáil Debates*, Vol. 91, No. 12, Col. 1555, 4 November 1943.
[126] NAI DFA A 26, Pro-Memoria of Eduard Hempel, 30 November 1943.
[127] Oberfeldwebel Hohaus was released on medical grounds under the frame of an Anglo-German exchange of prisoners; three Allied airmen were released under this exchange. See Ibid.
[128] Duggan, *Herr Hempel*, p. 171.
[129] Ibid., pp. 171-172.
[130] TNA ADM 1/13338, Maffey to Machtig, 24 December 1941.
[131] Ibid., Un-identified author to Machtig, 23 April 1943.

requested the aircrew of a crashed German plane be released, like Allied aircraft, on the grounds that it was 'non-operational'. External Affairs, however, was unwilling to presume a German aircraft over Irish territory was anything other than 'operational'.[132] By the end of 1943, with Germany's eventual defeat to the Allies inevitable, the Irish government felt little compulsion to press the case of German internees.

Rynne had expressed the view, in November 1942, that the lack of formal protest from the belligerents was deemed tacit approval of the neutrals actions.[133] Though Hempel later protested Irish actions, External Affairs was able to point to the favourable treatment the Germans had received in other neutral countries, particularly Sweden, as a justification for their own policy. Dublin's attitude towards Hempel's protests should also be seen in the context of a general shift amongst the European neutrals towards appeasing Allied desires. German reverses in the USSR, combined with Allied successes in North Africa and Italy, focused the minds of the European neutrals on their position in the post-war international system. The inevitability of a German defeat was pressed by Allied diplomats as the scales tipped in their favour. The threat of German aggression against the neutrals for actions unfavourable to the Reich was tested by them in 1943 and found wanting. Sweden cancelled the German transit agreement — which permitted German soldiers to pass by rail across Sweden to and from Norway — in July 1943 and signed a trade agreement more favourable to the Allies that September,[134] Portugal ceded use of the Azores Islands to the Allies in

[132] NAI DFA A 26, Walshe to de Valera, 15 December 1943.
[133] Ibid., Rynne to Walshe, 30 November 1942.
[134] The cancellation of the transit agreement, in place since July 1940, was primarily in response to heavy-handed German actions in Norway which led to growing numbers of Norwegians seeking refuge in Sweden. By the end of 1942 the transit agreement was linked to the Norwegian situation in the Swedish press and in political debates. See Åmark, 'Sweden: Negotiated Neutrality', pp. 359-360. Also see Krister Wahlbäck, *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality* (The Swedish Institute, 1986), pp. 64-65 and Kent Zetterberg, 'The Case of Sweden', in John Gilmour and Jill Stephenson (eds.), *Hitler's Scandinavian Legacy: The Consequences of the German Invasion for the Scandinavian Countries, Then and Now* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), pp. 112-113.

October 1943,[135] and, in the same month, Spain re-adopted an officially neutral stance as Allied economic and strategic pressure increased.[136]

Further emboldened by this shift in the war, the Irish government was confident in its defence of its partisan internment policy. The pragmatism of the European neutrals regarding over-flights and forced landings had thus been established as the norm. Walshe noted the underlining principle of how this pragmatic approach accommodated itself with international law, when he wrote that, "[t]he fundamental principle is, of course, that neutrals must not do anything which could be interpreted as taking part in the war".[137] Rynne's assessment was therefore rather apt, the neutrals were 'not breaking[,] but making international law'.

[135] The German reaction to this agreement was somewhat muted while Portugal continued to supply wolfram (used in the production of armaments) to the Germans, see Neill Lochery, *Lisbon: War in the Shadows of the City of Light, 1939 – 1945* (Public Affairs, 2011), pp. 191-192. In the summer of 1943, the strategic importance of the Azores Islands to the Allied war effort almost precipitated an invasion. Churchill took a strident line in War Cabinet meetings, and suggested on a number of occasions that the air-bases on the Azores should be taken by force. His Cabinet thought a more diplomatic route was preferable and they recommended invoking the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance of 1373. Churchill acquiesced and negotiations began shortly thereafter. Despite some minor delays, which made Churchill again ponder invasion, the Allies were granted use of the Azores bases. Joint planning, between the US and Britain, for the seizure of important island bases such as the Azores, Cape Verde and Iceland, took place as early as 1940. See Norman Herz, *Operation Alacrity: The Azores and the War in the Atlantic* (Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 2004), pp. 24-26; Glyn A. Stone, 'The Official British Attitude to the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance, 1910 – 45', *Journal of Contemporary History* (Vol. 10, No. 4, October 1975), pp. 741-742; Fernando Rosas, 'Portuguese neutrality in the Second World War', in Wylie (ed.), *European Neutrals and Non-Belligerents*, p. 269 and Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal*, p. 123.

[136] Franco asserted the Spanish position as one of 'vigilant neutrality' in a speech to the Falange (Franco's political party) on 1 October 1943. In September, Franco also withdrew the Spanish contingent (Blue Division) from the German army, see Paul Preston, 'Spain: Betting on a Nazi victory', in Bosworth and Maiolo (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Second World War: Volume II*, p. 345. Also see Richard Wigg, *Churchill and Spain: The Survival of the Franco Regime, 1940 – 1945* (Sussex Academic Press, 2008), p. 131; Hernández-Sandoica and Moradiellos, 'Spain and the Second World War, 1939 – 1945', p. 264 and Reginbogin, *Faces of Neutrality*, p. 119. Allied successes in North Africa, in winter 1942 under Operation Torch, forced a Spanish rapprochement with the Allies. See David A. Messenger, 'Rival Faces of France: Refugees, Would-be Allies, and Economic Warfare in Spain, 1942 – 1944', *The International History Review* (Vol. 27, No. 1, March 2005), pp. 25-46.

[137] NAI DFA A 26, Handwritten note of Walshe on his memorandum, 18 February 1943.

Conclusion

Though Éire's intention to maintain strict adherence to the protection of their neutral airspace was communicated to the belligerents at beginning of the war, the government's actions were markedly different. From the first hours after the British declaration of war, de Valera's government took an ad hoc approach to internment. A clear deference to the cause of the Allies operated solely in secret until information from their neutral companions in Europe provided justification, and a framework, under which to be more open. Pragmatism replaced abstract, vague, and unmanageable interpretations of international law, based on the experiences of the neutrals as the war progressed. Reports from neutral diplomats, particularly Francis Cremins and the Swedish Consul in Dublin, made it apparent from 1942 onwards, that flexibility was preferable, and Irish policy was subsequently set out to reflect its correlation with emerging international norms amongst neutrals. Historical accounts of the overflights and internment issues have been much too myopic, and Irish-Allied collaboration in this sphere has been advanced as the cornerstone of the 'unneutral Ireland' thesis. By failing to examine these issues, and Ireland's wartime experience in general, in a wider context, critics of Irish neutrality have failed to appreciate that the Irish government was acting in line with other European neutral states. The inadequacy of international regulations on aircraft during war were well known before September 1939, and, therefore, the neutrals developed international norms through their wartime experience.

It is also important to remember, however, that Irish actions, while most notably similar to those of the Swedish, were based on differing rationales. The Irish willingly engaged with the British and American militaries out of a desire to provide a benevolent neutrality,

especially after America's entrance into the war.[138] *Per Contra*, the Swedes' increasingly relaxed attitude to German over-flights was borne out of classic *realpolitik* based on fears of a German invasion. Sweden's iron ore deposits, which were essential to Germany's armaments production, made the country a strategic target, and unlike the Irish, they could not rely on the influence of a large diaspora to restrain aggression were it practicable for the belligerent's war effort.[139] Sweden's concessions to Germany have been described, therefore, as "the only possible alternative" available in the face of German demands for transit rights across Swedish territory.[140]

[138] See Fisk, *In Time of War*, pp. 327-332.
[139] Christian Leitz described Sweden as "an attractive target for the Nazis owing to its wealth of iron ore, a raw material much coveted by Germany" – See Christian Leitz, *Nazi Germany and Neutral Europe: During the Second World War* (Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 52-53. A diary entry of the Permanent Under-Secretary to the Foreign Office dated 17 January 1940, shows that the British also appreciated the value of Swedish iron ore early in the war, and that some members of the British Cabinet advocated gaining control of the valuable commodity. However, this was rejected for fears it would damage relations with the USA – See David Dilks (ed.), *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan O.M. 1938 – 1945* (Cassell and Company Ltd., London, 1971), p. 247.
[140] Hadenius, *Swedish Politics during the 20th Century*, p. 50.

Chapter 6:

Allied Pressure, Policy Alignment, Deviation and Breakaway, 1944 – 1945

Introduction

This chapter will explore what affect Allied economic and political pressure had on Irish neutral policy-making from 1944 until the end of the war. Ireland's relations with the Allies during this period has been examined extensively.[1] Rather than till old ground, this chapter will show that the government was eager to learn of the other neutrals' reactions to Allied pressure and Irish actions in the diplomatic sphere were brought into close alignment with them until the end of the war. For Europe's neutrals, the final phase of the war was characterised by persistent Allied political and economic pressure. In the months preceding the D-Day landings, Irish protestations against Allied economic restrictions were tempered by a desire to maintain friendly relations. Knowledge of the comparably more severe restrictions imposed on their neutral colleagues in Europe may also have been a factor. The Allies increasingly sought to reverse the balance of trade between the continental neutrals and the belligerents to the detriment of the German war effort.[2] Switzerland, Sweden, Portugal and Spain were all suppliers of necessary war materials to the Germans for the production of military equipment and ordinance, and the Allies sought to disrupt this trade

[1] For the most detailed assessments, see Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, pp. 280-335; Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, pp. 253-284 and Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, pp. 182-196.
[2] NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944, composed July 1944, pp. 63-64.

by using economic weapons.[3] Economic pressure on Ireland had been applied since early in the war to exact strategic concessions through the control of supplies, however, shortages never reached levels approaching their counterparts on the continent.[4] These measures were much more successful when directly applied to the continental neutrals, however this can be explained by the absence of Irish-German trade, which had been cut off at the beginning of the conflict.[5] The continental neutrals were exploitable due to their exports of war *matériel* to Germany; they had more ground to give. Nonetheless, all the European neutrals faced food, fuel and material shortages which precipitated rationing.

The main focus of this chapter is Allied political pressure and how Éire's neutrality policy evolved in the final stages of the war from adherence to the actions of their neutral colleagues, to deviation, and eventual breakaway. In response to increased Allied pressure, External Affairs initially sought to align Ireland's position to that of the other neutrals. Dublin made a close examination of their attitudes towards the new French authority under General Charles de Gaulle before determining the Irish response. In February 1944, however, the Irish government was caught off-guard when the Allies requested them to expel all Axis diplomats from the country. The subsequent crisis, and de Valera's rejection of the request in March, had damaging implications for Irish-American relations in particular. A formal rejection of the Allies' request was never in doubt politically, and the Irish government's agreements to fund the German and Japanese legations, when they ran into financial difficulty, was indicative of that fact. However, the Allied *demarché* signalled rising American bellicosity towards Europe's neutrals and neutrality in general, which

[3] NAI INDC/EMR/8/61 US Department of State bulletin entitled 'The Allied Blockade' by John V. Lovitt (Chief of Section on Blockade and the European Neutrals), 19 November 1944.
[4] As Joe Lee opined: "She [Éire] faced nothing like the problems confronting Switzerland, only 52 per cent self-sufficient before the war. That Ireland could afford to fret over the colour of bread and the rationing of tea 'which is so extraordinarily important to the Irish' reflected the relative comfort of her situation". See Lee, *Ireland: Politics and Society*, p. 234.
[5] NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944, composed July 1944, p. 25.

induced External Affairs to examine the other neutrals' reactions in greater detail. When the Allies pressed the neutrals to provide assurances that they would not harbour war criminals after the war, Walshe closely followed the Swiss line, though the Irish response was less explicit.

Irish policy began to deviate from that of their neutral colleagues in the final days of the war. On news of the death of Adolf Hitler, de Valera and Walshe personally visited the home of Dr. Hempel in what was, and continues to be, widely described as a gesture of official condolence. The visit attracted broad condemnation, particularly in light of news reports from the continent of German extermination camps. Had the government taken a cautious approach, and elicited the views of the other neutrals prior to the visit, the situation could have been avoided. After the war, the Allies ordered neutral countries to repatriate former German representatives, agents, and nationals who were deemed a danger to peace. Though the Irish government kept close observation on their neutral counterparts' efforts to comply, the Irish government quietly chose not to publicly act on, or react to, the Allied *demarché*. Ireland had begun to chart its own unique course in the post-war landscape.

Neutral Alignment – From Adherence to Breakaway

The tide of the war began to turn against Germany in 1942. Their faltering operations on the eastern front were compounded by Allied successes in North Africa over the winter of 1942/43, and the Allied invasion of Italy in September 1943. In 1944, the Allied advance across Europe produced a diplomatic challenge for the neutrals over the recognition of a new Free French polity. Meanwhile, Allied diplomatic pressure on the neutrals, to gain concessions at the expense of the Axis, increased. The 'American Note' crisis, sparked by

an Allied request for the Irish government to expel the Axis diplomats from the country, also signalled the possibility of post-war political isolation for Éire. To accommodate these new realities, Dublin sought counsel from their diplomats in the European neutral states to affix Ireland's position.

Earlier in the thesis it was shown that the moral tone of Irish neutrality mirrored that of the Vatican and Irish diplomats were advised to keep close to the position of the Nuncio's within their host countries. As other chapters have shown however, the Irish government looked to the other European neutrals when faced with more practical concerns. Clearly reports from Irish diplomats in other neutral states influenced the management of Irish neutrality in the areas of shipping and belligerent aircraft. Here it will be seen that, in the latter half of the war, the reactions of the other neutrals to diplomatic problems were similarly influential on Irish policy-makers.

Adherence

On 8 November 1942, the Allies invaded French North Africa in an operation code-named 'Torch'. French forces loyal to Vichy in Algiers were approached by the Allies prior to the invasion and key officers agreed not to resist. French forces in Casablanca and Oran initially defended their positions, but were ordered to cease hostilities and cooperate with the Allies two days later. Accommodation was made with the former Vichy forces, and the new French North African government was headed by the former Vichy Prime Minister François Darlan, who happened to have arrived in Algiers the day prior to the Allied invasion on a private trip. Darlan wanted the French Minister representing Vichy in Dublin, François Xavier de Laforcade, to choose between allegiance to Vichy or the French Committee of National Liberation (CFLN - *Comité français de Libération nationale*) in

North Africa.[6] Laforcade and his Chargé d'Affaires at the legation in Dublin, Benjamin Cauvet-Duhamel, were pro-Gaullist by summer 1943, despite their diplomatic responsibilities to Vichy.[7] Darlan's assassination on 24 December 1942 saved Laforcade the trouble of publicly renouncing Vichy, though his loyalties to the Free French Forces made his position somewhat unsure.

In the summer of 1943, External Affairs received a report from O'Donovan in Lisbon which detailed an accidental meeting he had with a representative of the French Committee of National Liberation, called Monsieur Clarac.[8] O'Donovan thought he was to meet with the Chargé d'Affaires of the French legation (Vichy), and explained to Dublin that Mr. Clarac was obviously not officially recognised by the Portuguese government. As such he stated he would not return his call. However, the incident highlighted the diplomatic need to address the Irish position vis-à-vis the new French authority. In September External Affairs sent a telegram to O'Donovan, Francis Cremins and Leopold Kerney to learn of the responses of their host countries to this new reality:

> What is the attitude of the Swiss/Portuguese/Spanish Government to the French Committee in Algiers. Has it recognised the Committee and is it likely to do so. Is there an Algiers agent in Berne/Lisbon/Madrid? If so what status and privileges in the way of immunities, right to telegraph in cipher, etc., are accorded to him, and to what extent does his presence create difficulties with Vichy Legation. Please wire present position and keep us informed on future developments.[9]

Dublin learned from Kerney, in Spain, that *de facto* recognition was given to the CFLN due to the proximity of North Africa, trade relations, and the protection of Spanish citizens in the area.[10] O'Donovan, in Portugal, informed them that semi-official *de facto* recognition of the situation existed by Mr. Clarac's presence in the country, though his activities were

[6] See Arnold, 'Irish Neutrality between Vichy France and de Gaulle, 1940 – 45', p. 23. http://www.tara.tcd.ie/xmlui/bitstream/handle/2262/68334/Irish_Neutrality_between_Vichy_France_and_de_Gaulle_1940-45*.pdf?sequence=1 [cited 25-08-15]
[7] Ibid., pp. 22-23.
[8] NAI DFA 205/124, O'Donovan to Walshe, 6 July 1943.
[9] NAI DFA 205/124, DEA to O' Donovan, Cremins and Kerney, 3 September 1943.
[10] Ibid., Kerney to DEA, 7 September 1943.

thought to be confined to trade concerns.[11] He noted, however, that no formal recognition of the CFLN existed. From Switzerland, Cremins reported that no official recognition was given, though contact existed "on basis of fact[,] not of right".[12] Cremins further clarified that "Switzerland does not recognise definitively during wartime changes brought about by war".[13] External Affairs also learned that the Swedish extended *de facto* recognition from news extracts provided by the Swedish Honorary Consul in Dublin.[14]

The Irish position had not yet been formulated when Laforcade informed External Affairs that he was "accepting instructions from [the] French Committee", and that he had informed his superiors in Vichy.[15] Dublin was anxious not to be forced into a position whereby they would have to choose between the competing French authorities and asked their Minister in Vichy, Seán Murphy,[16] to sound out the French on whether they would allow Laforcade remain in his post.[17] The German Minister, Hempel, voiced his concern of a possible Irish recognition of the CFLN two days later which increased the pressure.[18] Murphy felt Walshe's request would "leave impression here [Vichy] that Dublin favours North Africa", and recommended Walshe to reconsider his suggestion.[19] Walshe's reply displayed a sense of exasperation with Murphy that was a feature of their wartime relationship, and was mutual.[20] He instructed Murphy to informally approach the Vichy

[11] Ibid., O'Donovan to DEA, 11 September 1943.
[12] Ibid., Cremins to DEA, 8 September 1943.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., Extract from "Swedish News" issued by Swedish Consulate, Dublin, No. 10, October 1943.
[15] NAI DFA Paris Embassy 18/5, DEA to Murphy, 13 September 1943.
[16] Murphy had served as Minister to France since 1938 and had remained *in situ* following the German victory over the country in 1940. He subsequently served as Irish representative to Vichy. Murphy was the only diplomat to have served under the French Third Republic (1938 – 40), Vichy (1940 – 44), the Provisional Government of the French Republic (1944 – 46) and the Fourth Republic (1946 – 1950).
[17] NAI DFA Paris Embassy 18/5, DEA to Murphy, 13 September 1943.
[18] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A2, Memorandum from Walshe to de Valera, 15 September 1943.
[19] NAI DFA Paris Embassy 18/5, Murphy to DEA, 20 September 1943.
[20] Murphy and Walshe had exchanged tempestuous communications regarding Murphy's reports from France in 1940. Murphy felt that Walshe did not trust his assessment of the situation on the ground. When Walshe criticised Murphy's lack of reporting subsequently, his reply "bordered on insubordination", by suggesting that Walshe felt he knew better from his own sources and so he thought he need not provide his own assessments. See Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, pp. 161-164.

authorities and seek their views to his suggestion.[21] Murphy acceded to the request and he met with the director of the European Section of the Vichy Foreign Office, with whom he was friendly. Murphy was informed by the director that he assumed Laforcade "would be revoked at once otherwise the situation would be really too comical".[22] He also learned that an Irish recognition of Laforcade as a representative of the CFLN would be regarded as "doubly slighting".[23] Walshe essentially set-out the Irish position to Murphy on receipt of his report:

> We do not intend to recognise Committee or to receive special agent from them but we cannot take any positive action against Laforcade beyond ceasing to treat him as Minister if he is fired. Our attitude towards him is and will be purely passive. Please so inform friend.[24]

On 3 November, Walshe met with Laforcade to tell him, based on information received from Murphy, that he had been removed from his post as Minister of France in Ireland.[25] Cauvet-Duhamel was appointed as Chargé d'Affaires and the Irish government recognised him as such. Though Cauvet-Duhamel initially considered a refusal, due to his CFLN allegiances, he accepted the position to keep out the French Naval Attaché, Captain H.E. Albertas,[26] who was considered "a source of infinite trouble", due to his anti-British and pro-Vichy views.[27] Laforcade stayed in Ireland to represent the interests of the CFLN until he was appointed French Minister once again in August 1944.

The Irish position, therefore, closely mirrored that of the Swiss and the Portuguese. Laforcade was permitted to remain in the country, contact was maintained, and the Irish government made no attempt to give formal recognition to a representative of the CFLN

[21] NAI DFA Paris Embassy 18/5, DEA to Murphy, 23 September 1943.
[22] Ibid., Murphy to DEA, 28 September 1943.
[23] Ibid.
[24] NAI DFA Paris Embassy 18/5, DEA to Murphy, 5 October 1943.
[25] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A2, Memorandum of Walshe, 5 November 1943.
[26] Albertas, and Vichy military attaché Commandant Lachèvre, were eventually recalled to Paris from Dublin in October 1944. See O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, p. 270.
[27] Maffey and Gray were happy for him to take the position to "avoid a local scandal", see NAI DFA Secretary's Files A2, Memorandum of Walshe, 5 November 1943.

until the eventual demise of Vichy. External Affairs' interest in the practices of the other neutrals was not new by that time, but, from late 1943 until the end of the war, interest in their diplomatic positions assumed greater significance and influenced Irish positions.

Allied Pressure

As seen in the previous chapter, Irish benevolence towards the Allies was at its height in 1943 as the balance of the war began to tip in their favour and fears of German reprisals receded. Allied aircrews and salvaged aircraft were regularly conveyed across the border into Northern Ireland, and planes capable of re-flight were simply permitted to fly away. By January 1944, Irish benevolent co-operation, particularly vis-à-vis the United States, occasionally extended beyond their expectations. In one instance, an American soldier, who had stabbed a local man after he had demanded money from him, was handed over to the US Army discreetly and without charge.[28] Lieutenant Colonel J. L. Hathaway — US Military Intelligence Attaché to Ireland — believed this incident, handled both secretly and informally, illustrated "the Irish desire to cooperate with the United States and at the same time avoid any international complication with powers hostile to the Allies".[29] The depth and extent of co-operation between G2 and MI5, which had developed from early in the war, was also well established,[30] and Walshe had drawn up a list of benevolent Irish practices towards the British for de Valera to presumably use in discussions with the

[28] The American soldier, William Nolan, had been sentenced to twenty years imprisonment in England following a court-martial. He escaped and fled to Dublin, where he stabbed John O'Mara, the Honourable Secretary of the Amateur Billiards Association, on 27 January 1944. Mr. O'Mara suffered injuries to his shoulders and arms. Rather than bring the soldier to justice through the Irish legal system, he was handed over to the US Army without consultation with the American legation and without charges. Though an account of the incident was relayed in the press, no mention was made of the identity of the perpetrator, his nationality, nor his military background. See US NARA 319/47/779, 000.24 – 580.6 Ireland, Military Intelligence Division, Military Attaché Report of Lt. Col. J. L. Hathaway, 7 February 1944.
[29] Ibid.
[30] See O'Halpin, *Defending Ireland*, pp. 228-229.

Allies.[31] However, co-operation between the Irish civil and military authorities and those of the Allies contrasted with developments at the political level.

On 21 February 1944, David Gray presented a request to de Valera, on behalf of his government, that he expel all German and Japanese representatives from Ireland; Maffey presented the British Cabinet's support to the *demarché* the next day. The note took the government by surprise,[32] and, in the immediate aftermath of the war, Walshe listed the request as a 'moment of special crisis'.[33] What subsequently came to be known as the 'American Note' was conceived by Gray as a ploy "to prevent the Irish partition issue being injected into post-war American politics by de Valera".[34] For Gray, measures taken to discredit de Valera would dampen any objections at home for greater co-operation with Britain.[35] As it was highly unlikely that de Valera would accede to the request, Gray predicted a formal rejection would also diminish American sympathies for Irish neutrality.[36] Allied security officials, however, felt the note could hinder Irish intelligence cooperation,[37] and reports from military intelligence and the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) highlighted the benevolence of Irish neutrality to the Allied war effort.[38]

[31] NAI DFA Secretary's Files, Memoranda to Taoiseach, undated (c. 1944).
[32] "We had no previous inkling of this", See NAI DFA Washington Embassy File 73, Brennan to Walshe, 22 February 1944.
[33] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A2, Memorandum of Walshe, 15 May 1945.
[34] FRUS, Vol. III (1943), Ireland, Gray to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, 13 September 1943, p. 146.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Gray had conceived a range of possible courses to discredit de Valera's Fianna Fáil government, including requesting the use of bases in the South, recalling the Axis representatives, demanding the Irish government clarify whether or not it was part of the British Commonwealth, and enacting conscription in Northern Ireland. See Dwyer, *Irish Neutrality and the USA*, p. 167.
[37] See O'Halpin, 'Irish-Allied Security Relations and the 'American Note' Crisis', p. 72.
[38] See Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, pp. 275-276. Dwyer has quoted J Russell Forgan — former deputy commander and later commander of the OSS in Europe — whom Dwyer contacted in 1970: "I doubt that in the last year of the war there was an Axis spy in Ireland the Irish and ourselves did not know about … [m]ost of them were 'doubled'. By that I mean they worked for us and sent their so called superiors news which we fed them", see T. Ryle Dwyer, *Irish Examiner*, 1 January 2013. This author preferred the ranks associated with Forgan as detailed in his obituary in the *New York Times*, 1 February 1974.

Even while Gray's proposal to send the note was under consideration, the Irish authorities, at the behest of the Allies, interned German sailors rescued by an Irish coastal trading vessel, *MV Kerlogue*.[39] Under the Hague Conventions governing the obligations of neutral countries towards distressed mariners, the sailors should have been released; however, by late 1943 Irish-German relations had hit a low ebb due to the presence of German spies in the country and benevolence towards the Allies had effectively reached its zenith. Irish-Allied security cooperation had developed to the point that even the British Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) concluded there would be no security benefit to the removal of Herr Hempel from his post.[40] Reservations from the intelligence community were subservient to politics however, and the note was approved by the US State Department and the British Cabinet. Gray's political motivations aside, the British and American administrations could reasonably justify the move through a general desire to prevent possible security leaks in the run-up to Operation Overlord and could point to recent incidences of German espionage.[41]

The note's contentions did not reflect the close cooperation that existed on intelligence and military matters:

> It has become increasingly apparent that, despite the declared desire of the Irish Government that its neutrality should not operate in favour of either of the belligerents, it has in fact operated and continues to operate in favour of the Axis Powers and against the United Nations on whom your security and the maintenance of your national economy depend. One of the gravest and most inequitable results of this situation is the opportunity for highly organized espionage which the geographical position of Ireland affords the Axis and denies the United Nations.[...] We do not question the good faith of the Irish Government in its efforts to suppress Axis espionage. Whether or to what extent it has succeeded in preventing acts of espionage against American

[39] Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain,* p. 277.

[40] In Eunan O'Halpin's examination of the Anglo-Irish security relationship he states: "The planned demand caused something approaching consternation in both MI5 and SIS". See O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland,* p. 247 and O'Halpin, 'Irish-Allied Security Relations and the 'American Note' Crisis', p. 72 and Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain,* p. 279.

[41] In fact, German Intelligence initiatives in Ireland had finally ended in December 1943 with the apprehension of John Francis O'Reilly and John Kenny, two Irishmen who were recruited by the *Sicherheitsdienst des Reichsführers-SS* (SD), which was the intelligence agency of the SS. Both men had parachuted into the country and were referenced in the 'American Note'. See Hull, *Irish Secrets,* pp. 196-207, which details German intelligence activities in Ireland in 1943.

> shipping and American forces in Great Britain and Northern Ireland is, of course, impossible to determine with certainty. Nevertheless, it is a fact that German and Japanese diplomatic and consular representatives still continue to reside in Dublin and enjoy the special privileges and immunities customarily accorded to such officials.[...] It is our understanding that the German legation in Dublin, until recently at least, had had in its possession a radio sending set. This is evidence of the intention of the German Government to use this means of communication. Supporting evidence is furnished by the two parachutists equipped with radio sending sets recently dropped on your territory by German planes.
>
> As you know from common report, the United Nation military operations are in preparation in both Britain and Northern Ireland. It is vital information from which may be deduced their nature and direction should not reach the enemy. Not only the success of the operations[,] but the lives of thousands of United Nation soldiers are at stake. We request therefore that the Irish Government take appropriate steps for the recall of German and Japanese representatives in Ireland...[42]

The issue of Herr Hempel's radio transmitter had already been brought to a conclusion in December 1943 when it was securely deposited in a Dublin bank by Frederick Boland and Herr Thompsen,[43] and the capture of the parachutists proved that Irish security measures were in fact working well. However, an alarmist political campaign was waged by the Allies to highlight the defensive frailties of a neutral country within their defensive zone. Allied claims were occasionally farcical, such as when the Irish Minister in Washington, Robert Brennan, was called to the US State Department to answer to a report that 3,000 Japanese spies had infiltrated Ireland.[44] Though German spies had landed in Ireland throughout the war, they were never especially successful in their missions. This "Wodehousian galaxy of characters",[45] was "splintered by competing bureaux, overlapping authorities, and contradictory ambitions".[46]

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[42] UCDA P150/2658 Éamon de Valera Papers, Gray to de Valera, 21 February 1944.
[43] NAI DFA Secretary Files A 25, Walshe to de Valera, 21 December 1943. Access to the transmitter required four bank directors, a member of the German legation and a member of External Affairs to be present with keys, see Duggan, *Herr Hempel*, p. 190.
[44] In an *Irish Press* article, Brennan was attributed as having stated in reply to the State Department: "Is there no limit to the credulity of the Americans?" The article summed up the fatuousness of the claim by suggesting the first questions that should come to mind on hearing such a report would include: "Where did those Japanese come from? – how was the influx concealed in a country whose total Japanese population numbers 4? – and if it comes to that, how *do* you disguise a Japanese as an Irishman?" NAI DFA Secretary's Files A 53, Extract from the *Irish Press*, 21 March 1944.
[45] O'Halpin, *Defending Ireland*, p. 237.
[46] Bell, *The Secret Army*, p. 220.

Consequently, the Irish government was aggrieved by Gray's machinations and the formal pressure imposed by the Allies to further isolate the country. Gray recounted his meeting with de Valera to the US Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, in which he described the Taoiseach's appearance on reading the note as "sour and grim".[47] Before he finished reading, de Valera told Gray that his answer would be no, and would remain so as long as he remained in power. He then queried Gray as to whether the note was an ultimatum, to which Gray told him that he did not believe it was any more "than a request to a friendly state".[48] Gray's account of the Taoiseach's reply conveyed de Valera's feelings of injustice in light of Irish-Allied co-operation:

> As long as I am here Eire will not grant this request; we have done everything to prevent Axis espionage, going beyond what we might reasonably be expected to do and I am satisfied that there are no leaks from this country; for a year and a half you have been advertising the invasion of Europe and what has got out about it has not been from Eire; the German Minister, I am satisfied, has behaved very correctly and decently and as a neutral we will not send him away.[49]

Nonetheless, Gray described de Valera's attitude as "controlled".[50] When Maffey presented the British note the next day, Maffey told Gray that the Taoiseach "showed intense emotion" and "agitated indignation".[51] The US military attaché reported de Valera's reaction to the note as "panicky".[52] Maffey was left with the impression that the Taoiseach regarded the maintenance of the Axis Missions "as the symbol not only of neutrality but of sovereignty".[53]

Indicative of the Irish government's intention to reject the Allied request, the government agreed to financially support the German legation in Dublin. Around the same

[47] FRUS, Vol. III (1944), Ireland, Gray to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, 21 February 1944, p. 222.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid., 23 February 1944, p. 223.
[51] Ibid.
[52] US NARA 319/47/779, 000.24 – 580.6 Ireland, Military Intelligence Division, Military Attaché Report of Lt. Col. J. L. Hathaway, 2 March 1944.
[53] FRUS, Vol. III (1944), Ireland, Gray to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, 23 February 1944, p. 223.

time that the government received the 'American Note', the German legation informed External Affairs that they had run out of funds. External Affairs liaised with the German Foreign Office to establish a method of financing them through Switzerland. Warnock was informed of the proposed procedure, which he relayed to Cremins in Berne, who was to be the centrepiece of the arrangement.[54] Under the proposal the German government was to forward monies to Cremins, who would then inform External Affairs, after which they would pay the equivalent in Sterling to the German legation in Dublin. Cremins' telegram to Dublin a few days later displayed his seeming unease with the arrangement:

> Payment of Swiss Franc Bank notes 348,000 equivalent of 20,000 pounds proposed yr. Tel. 13 STOP No alternative method of payment practicable STOP Obviously I could not deposit these or smaller sum in Bank account STOP Keeping in safe impracticable STOP I am convinced that payment of funds through this Legation would be most inadvisable STOP confidential.[55]

Despite his reservations he was told by Dublin to accept the full amount in notes and set up a new bank account to deposit the payments. Perhaps to assuage any fears regarding the purpose of the funds, External Affairs also informed Cremins that the monies represented "payment on account of our accrued claim for internment expenses etc".[56] Per their instructions, he acted promptly and created a new bank account the following day into which he deposited the full amount.[57] Until the end of the war five further payments were received by Cremins; the final payment was received on 1 May 1945 from the German legation in Berne and was ostensibly ear-marked for the upkeep of German internees in Ireland.[58]

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[54] NAI DFA Embassies Berne Box 10 Misc, Warnock to Cremins, 26 February 1944.
[55] Ibid., Cremins to DEA, 1 March 1944.
[56] Ibid., DEA to Cremins, 7 March 1944.
[57] Ibid., Cremins to DEA, 8 March 1944.
[58] Hempel's post-war recollection of the German legation's financial situation suggests that until 1945 funding difficulties "were in no way insurmountable, as there was still a good deal of claims of German firms against Irish debtors available". This position changed when the Irish government enacted an Emergency Power Order to re-coup reparations from the Germans for damage caused by German bombing incidents on Irish territory. The government seized monies owed by Irish debtors to German firms, but permitted the German legation to receive a share of up to 10% of these claims for its maintenance. When the war ended, Hempel sought to turn over the funds at the disposal of the former legation to the Irish government, but they

On 6 March, Walshe sent the Irish reply to the 'American Note' through the Irish Minister in Washington:

> From the beginning, by the establishment of strong observation and defence forces, by a wide and rigorous censorship of the Press and of communications, by an extensive anti-espionage organisation, and by every other means within our power, we have endeavoured to prevent the leakage through Ireland of any information which might in any way endanger British lives or the safety of Great Britain. Since the United States entered the war, the same spirit of scrupulous regard for American interests has been shown. American officials have had an opportunity of seeing the measures which have been taken – they have, indeed, made favourable comments on their effectiveness.[59]

On 10 March, the State Department published the exchange of notes and the Irish refusal "made front-page news" across the US.[60] The Irish government came in for strong criticism in the Allied press, and they were unable to publicly point to their benevolent policies without jeopardising neutrality. Misgivings from the Allied intelligence community of possible negative ramifications for security co-operation due to the note never came to fruition however, and it soon became clear that business would continue as usual. On 16 March 1944, a Martin B-26 Marauder crash landed in Skibbereen, Co. Cork. The crew of five were released from technical internment and transported to Northern Ireland by Irish Army personnel and the aircraft was salvaged. As Assistant Military Attaché for Air Major George Sprague noted:

> This was the first incident of its kind, involving U.S. aircraft, since the government of Eire rejected the request of the U.S. Government that German and Japanese representatives be recalled form this country [...] It is believed that the Eire Government contemplates no change in its policy of releasing aircraft and personnel which force land in this country.[61]

Despite continued co-operation, the crisis prompted External Affairs to pay even closer attention to the experiences of the other neutrals in reaction to Allied pressure. From Berlin, Dublin learned that the Germans viewed the 'American Note' "as in line with pressure on

recommended he retain it to provide for himself and his staff until they were able to return to Germany. See NAI DFA Secretary's Files A 54, Hempel to Boland, 14 May 1946.

[59] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A53, Walshe to Brennan (reply to the American Note), 6 March 1944.

[60] Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain,* p. 293.

[61] US NARA 319/47/779, 000.24 – 580.6 Ireland, Military Intelligence Division, Military Attaché Report of Major George E. Sprague to U.S. Military Intelligence Division, 17 March 1944.

Turkey, Spain, Portugal, Argentine", and that it formed "part of a drive on neutral countries preconcerted at Tehran".[62] Cordell Hull's broadcast, on 9 April, confirmed this suspicion:

> The period during which the neutrals and the United Nations were forced to accept compromises concerning the help to be given to the enemy by the neutrals was drawing to a close. The U.S.A. could no longer acquiesce in the neutrals drawing upon the resources of the Allied world while at the same time contributing to the death of troops whose sacrifice contributed to their own salvation as well as that of the Allies. It was clear that Allied strength could make only one outcome of the war possible; therefore the neutrals were not being asked to expose themselves to certain destruction by stopping the help they had given to the enemy by permitting official German agents to carry on their espionage activities, or by sending essential supplies to Germany.[63]

Hull's speech also called for a unified effort from the US, the UK and the Soviet Union in bringing about the defeat of Germany. The spectre of greater Soviet influence in the post-war world was of particular concern to Walshe, who forwarded a copy of a speech given by General Jan Smuts, to a British Parliamentary Association on 25 November 1943,[64] to Francis Cremins. In his speech, Smuts had raised the prospect of a post-war League of Nations institution under the leadership of the UK, the USA and the Soviet Union. It also highlighted the USSR's future influence over European affairs due to a desolated Germany, a weakened France and Italy, and the disappearance of Japan as a security threat on the USSR's eastern borders. Walshe informed Cremins that, "[t]he views of the Swiss Press on this and other post-war problems are of great interest to us. We should also be very glad to have any information which you are able to glean about the official view on these problems, particularly on Soviet influence in the post-war world".[65] Hull's call to pressurise the neutrals took greater precedence at the time however, and External Affairs instructed their representatives in Portugal and Switzerland to keep them informed "of official and other

[62] NAI DFA Berlin Embassy 18/2, Con Cremin to Walshe, 16 March 1944.
[63] Mr. Cordell Hull's Broadcast on U.S. Foreign Policy, *Bulletin of International News* (Royal Institute of International Affairs, Vol. 21, No. 8, 15 April 1944), p. 303.
[64] 'General Jan Smuts's Speech on Nov. 25 to the U.K. Branch Empire Parliamentary Association', *Bulletin of International News* (Royal Institute of International Affairs, Vol. 20, No. 25, December 11, 1943), excerpt from *The Times*, 3 December 1943 (author uncredited), pp. 1081-1083.
[65] NAI DFA 219/7A, Walshe to Cremins, 4 February 1944.

reactions to Hull's statement re neutrals and any action taken by Allies" against them.[66] Cremins and O'Donovan were told to keep in touch with the Foreign Offices in Berne and Lisbon and that they would be made aware of the Irish position to allow them reciprocate. Dublin was left in no doubt that Allied political pressure would be increased until the conflict came to an end. From Dublin's perspective, more unified diplomatic pressure required a more unified response from the European neutrals to the threat.

In the security sensitive months preceding the D-Day landings, economic pressure was once again applied. To prevent information leaks of the Allied military build-up, and to provision their military forces, the British halted the Aer Lingus service between the two countries, reduced coal exports to Ireland by 50% and denied Navicerts in April 1944 to Irish ships travelling to the Iberian Peninsula.[67] Though ostensibly these restrictions were designed to prevent any leakage of information regarding the landings, they also served a secondary political purpose of isolating Éire to satisfy public opinion.[68] To cause unease in Dublin, Churchill disingenuously and publicly insinuated that the restrictions, imposed for security reasons, were a form of economic sanction, and he "was in no hurry to give Dublin any reassurance on this point".[69] The Irish were aware from at least 14 March, that the travel ban to Britain was most likely imposed for security reasons;[70] however, doubts remained for some time after as to whether or not restrictions were really sanctions.[71] In the end Walshe deduced that "[a]lthough it is difficult to be very definite about their

[66] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A57, DEA to O'Donovan and Cremins, 14 April 1944.
[67] NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Report entitled 'Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944', p. 32.
[68] "Moreover, no doubt, they would be glad to be able to tell Parliament that our isolation is complete. That they have this question of satisfying public opinion in mind is shown by the interruption of the Aer Lingus service between Britain and Ireland, an interruption for which they gave a very inadequate explanation". NAI DFA Secretary's Files A 2, Memorandum from Walshe to de Valera, 3 April 1944.
[69] Dwyer, *Irish Neutrality and the USA*, p. 194.
[70] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A53, DEA to Brennan, 14 March 1944.
[71] Walshe met Maffey at a cocktail party on 17 March, during which they discussed the matter, but Maffey equivocated on the true purpose of the restrictions. Ibid., Memorandum from Walshe to de Valera, 18 March 1944.

purpose, the British, without actually imposing sanctions, would like to be able, if the occasion arose, to give the impression that they had done so".[72] Maffey also provided Walshe with unofficial assurances as to the true reason for the restrictions.[73] An acceptance of the necessity of restrictions in light of the D-Day preparations, and the need to maintain good relations with Maffey due to American stridency,[74] tempered Irish protestations in the economic sphere.[75]

Reports of economic pressure on the other neutrals were similarly persuasive. The Irish legation in Berlin informed Dublin that strong pressure had been brought to bear on Spain and Portugal in relation to their supply of Wolfram to the Germans. British demands on Portugal to cease all exports of Wolfram to Germany were met with offers of compromise by Salazar's government to sell more of the metal to the British. The legation learned from the Portuguese Minister, Count Tovar, that this did not satisfy London however, but that their main focus was on preventing all exports of Wolfram through Spain over the Pyrenees. While the British were willing to accept a reduction in Spanish exports, the Americans refused.[76] Kerney reported that the Spanish were determined to resist this Allied pressure and maintain "strict neutrality".[77] From Lisbon, O'Donovan reported that diplomatic pressure by way of Allied notes had been received,[78] though the Portuguese expected that pressure regarding the trade of Wolfram would be placed more on Spain.[79] He also relayed the contents of an article that appeared in the Portuguese press which was sympathetic to

[72] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A2, Memorandum from Walshe to de Valera, 3 April 1944.
[73] See Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, pp. 264-265.
[74] Ibid., p. 264.
[75] When a prohibition was placed on the purchase of dried fruit from Argentina in May 1944, Supplies believed it to be part of economic pressure on that country and did not seem perturbed. See NAI INDC/EMR/7/18 EHR 3/15, Record of activities of the Department of Supplies from its establishment to 30 June 1944, composed July 1944, p. 70.
[76] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A57, Cremin to Walshe, 30 March 1944.
[77] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A57, Kerney to DEA, 24 April 1944.
[78] Ibid., O'Donovan to DEA, 26 April 1944.
[79] Ibid., 24 April 1944.

Ireland's plight due to economic restrictions, which he believed to have been written in anticipation of the imposition of similar economic measures on Portugal.[80] In May, Francis Cremins learned that the Swiss were "now being pressed in London trade negotiations to transfer some items [of] manufactured goods from [the] exportations list to [the] prohibited list".[81] He also reported that though the Swiss were willing to comply with reductions, the President declared that "if the pressure should be renewed, they [the Swiss] would defend energetically, like Sweden, their right to life and existence".[82] As the war progressed pressure from the United States to "control Switzerland's economic relations", translated to criticisms of the US in Switzerland's "newspapers, over the radio, in parliamentary debates and diplomatic negotiations".[83] It was clear to the Irish government that the Allies were turning the economic screw across the continent.[84]

Allied machinations taught the Irish government to be cautious. When, in April 1944, External Affairs was requested by the American Consul-General for "detailed statistics showing the distribution of our [Irish] annual imports and exports by countries since 1938",[85] Walshe was not inclined to be forthcoming:

> I don't know whether the particular statistics required by the Consul-General have been, or could be easily, compiled. In any case, I feel that the present is hardly the time for arming the Americans with further information about our national economy, and

[80] Ibid., 30 April 1944.
[81] Ibid., Cremins to DEA, 23 May 1944.
[82] Ibid., Cremins to Walshe, 25 May 1944.
[83] Marc Perrenoud, 'Foreign Trade and Swiss Politics 1939–45', in Kreis (ed.), *Switzerland and the Second World War*, p. 35.
[84] Allied pressure via restrictions on Navicerts and the creation of a blacklist of companies that engaged in trade with Germany led to a series of trade talks aimed at stifling Swiss-German trade. Unsurprisingly, Swiss concessions were inextricably linked to international strategic developments. In 1942 an agreement to reduce the supply of textiles to Germany was agreed, though the Allies were unsuccessful in getting the Swiss to agree to "the reduction of, or for the fixing of a ceiling for the Swiss exports of war-materials". See Memorandum of the Swiss Trade Delegation to the British-American Delegation, 31 July 1942, *FRUS*, Vol. III (1942), Europe, p. 393. Allied pressure, from their own point of view, "was absolutely relentless" and the Swiss "were visibly very worried". See Winfield W. Riefler to US Secretary of State Cordell Hull, 6 May 1942, *FRUS*, Vol. III (1942), Europe, p. 381. Riefler was an American economics professor and head of the Enemy Objectives Unit (EOU), which was part of the Economic Intelligence section of the Economic Warfare Division in London, see Mark Guglielmo, 'The Contribution of Economists to Military Intelligence during World War II', *The Journal of Economic History* (Cambridge University Press, Vol. 68, No. 1, March 2008), pp. 109-150.
[85] NAI INDC/EMR/18/12, Walshe to Seán Leydon, 24 April 1944.

> our inclination would therefore be to tell the Consul-General that we regret that the statistics are not available.[86]

At Supplies, Leydon had similar reservations and informed Walshe:

> From our point of view the only question involved is whether the furnishing of these statistics would help us in our efforts to obtain supplies, and I am afraid that our willingness to furnish information to the American Authorities has not so far paid us any great dividends in the way of additional supplies. I cannot see how the additional information sought could help us in the matter of supplies; in fact, there is a danger that it might have the opposite effect.[87]

The Irish were right to be sceptical in light of continued reports of Allied economic pressure on the other neutrals. In December 1944 and January 1945, Cremins told External Affairs that Allied pressure on Switzerland to reduce their trade with Germany continued at a time when imports and exports with France had stopped.[88] Consequently the Swiss were "now more than ever dependent on reserves and home production".[89] Similar reports from Cremins continued to pour in to External Affairs in the final months of the war. O'Donovan, meanwhile, deplored the miserable condition of the poor in Portugal upon his departure from the country in February 1945. He noted that the bread ration, "the staple food of the working man", was 300 grammes, whereas in normal times it would have been 1kilogramme.[90] Olive oil "and a few other items of the poor man's diet" had also been rationed.[91] The Irish were never placed in such a precarious position, but they too had suffered from Allied economic pressure. The screw was tightened from the early stages of the war to force concessions and isolate the country to satisfy Allied domestic opinion. However, as Aenghus Nolan has highlighted elsewhere, "[w]hile the strategy of economic coercion succeeded in causing hardship, there was little evidence to show that the de Valera government was going to capitulate".[92]

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[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid., Leydon to Walshe, 28 April 1944.
[88] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A57, Cremins to DEA, 22 December 1944 and 7 January 1945.
[89] Ibid., 22 December 1944.
[90] NAI DFA 313/11, Memorandum of O'Donovan, 22 February 1945.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 254.

In June/July 1944, another example of Ireland's determination to remain neutral and reject Allied pressure was exemplified by the decision to fund the Japanese Consulate in Dublin which, like the German legation, had run into financial difficulty. Similar to the solution found for the German funding predicament, Cremins acted as financial intermediary. The timing of this situation was perhaps unfortunate for both External Affairs and the Japanese Consul-General, Setsuya Beppu. On 27 May, Walshe gave him a friendly warning regarding the activities of his Consulate's Secretary, Kazuo Ichihashi, who was "in touch with Irish subversive elements" within the country.[93] Walshe was in no doubt that Beppu was fully aware of such contacts, and presumed he was the instigator.[94] When Walshe met him again on 1 June, Walshe felt Beppu had not understood the seriousness of the previous warning. He told Beppu that Ichihashi was suspected of providing funds to subversive groups and that he had helped with the publication of a subversive news-sheet.[95] Beppu was left in no doubt that if Ichihashi engaged in anti-British activities it would "constitute a definite violation of [Irish] neutrality".[96] O'Halpin has stated that other neutrals who encountered similar situations, such as Sweden, demanded the removal of the offending diplomats. He suggested that the Irish government may not have chosen to do so with respect to Ichihashi because it would have given credence to the claims of the Allies that the Axis legations were centres of espionage in Éire.[97]

Allied propaganda regarding German and Japanese spies in Éire, combined with the 'American Note' crisis, an increase of Allied pressure generally, and press reports of

[93] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A2, Memorandum from Walshe to de Valera, 27 May 1944. See also, O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, pp. 271-272.
[94] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A2, Memorandum from Walshe to de Valera, 27 May 1944.
[95] Ibid., 1 June 1944.
[96] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A2, Memorandum from Walshe to de Valera, 1 June 1944. Walshe also stated that Beppu "got as pale as a Japanese can", when made aware of the Irish government's knowledge of Ichihashi's activities. O'Halpin notes that the Americans were aware the Japanese Consulate was not a centre for intelligence gathering, though the Irish authorities did not know their code-breakers had been capable of reading Japanese cables. See O'Halpin, 'Irish neutrality in the Second World War', p. 291.
[97] O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, p. 272.

Japan's poor treatment of POWs,[98] made the Japanese Consulate's activities even more dangerous to Irish neutrality. As a result, External Affairs strongly insisted on secrecy regarding the financial arrangements to maintain their presence in Dublin. Francis Cremins contacted the Japanese Minister in Berne to propose the exchange of funds through him to the tune of £5,000, and advised him:

> [I]n agreeing to assist in this way, my Authorities imposed the condition that the Consul-General should not mention the subject in any telegram to Berne, and they insisted that any communication should be made through themselves. The Consul-General gave his solemn assurance as to this. My Authorities ask for a similar assurance from the Japanese Minister at Berne (i.e. that the subject should not be mentioned by him in any telegram or communication to Dublin, and that any communication necessary on the subject should be made through the Irish Legation, Berne) ... [I]t is particularly requested that any reference to Tokyo in this matter should be in the safest cypher.[99]

The first tranche of funds (CHF 87,000 - £5,000) was deposited on 14 July.[100] Cremins instructed the new Japanese Minister in Switzerland of the importance of maintaining secrecy regarding payments later in the year,[101] and Dublin asked him to emphasise the need for secrecy again in January 1945.[102] It would appear that External Affairs provided payments to the Japanese for the upkeep of Irish missionaries in the capital of the Philippines, Manila. Beppu's transmissions to Tokyo, which were decoded by the British, showed that much of his work involved relaying Dublin's concern for these missionaries who were in concentration camps.[103] As they had left Ireland pre-Independence, they were in possession of British papers, not Irish.[104] In August 1945, the Irish legation in Berne sought assurances from their Japanese counterparts that they would destroy any

[98] External Affairs kept numerous newspaper clippings in early 1944 on the ill treatment of POWs by Japan after receiving requests to issue a protest. See NAI DFA 241/402.
[99] NAI DFA 2013/51/93, Cremins' hand delivered memorandum to Mr. Yosano (Chargé d'Affaires, Japanese Legation, Berne), 1 July 1944.
[100] See NAI DFA 2013/51/93 for receipts.
[101] Ibid., Cremins hand delivered Aide-Memoire to Japanese Minister, Berne, 28 October 1944.
[102] Ibid., DEA to Cremins, 17 January 1945.
[103] During the summer of 1945 reports reached the Irish government of the murder and imprisonment of Irish missionaries by the Japanese, see T. Ryle Dwyer, *Strained Relations: Ireland at Peace and the USA at War, 1941 – 45* (Gill & Macmillan, 1988), p. 167.
[104] See O'Halpin, *Spying on Ireland*, p. 205.

documentation in relation to the payments, and those previously arranged for their Consulate in Dublin.[105] This highlights the degree of anxiety within the Department to keep the financial arrangements quiet.

Francis Cremins' actions as financial intermediary shine an interesting light on the determination of the Irish government to retain the Axis diplomats despite Allied pressure. External Affairs was clearly anxious that the payments should not come to light. Cremins' facilitation of these arrangements was important to the maintenance of strict diplomatic neutrality, though they came attached with risk of Allied opprobrium and the use of the funds for 'unneutral' activities.

Greater Policy Alignment

The issue of the asylum of war criminals became a concern in the latter half of 1944. To affix the Irish position, External Affairs ascertained the Swiss position in depth and responded in a similar vein. On 21 September 1944, Gray delivered a note from the American government requesting that the Irish not accept Axis war criminals seeking asylum.[106] The note indicated that Sweden, Switzerland and Spain had replied favourably, and that the replies of Argentina and Portugal were awaited. External Affairs immediately instructed Francis Cremins to "act with all speed" and contact the Swiss government to ask them confidentially for a text of their reply to the Americans.[107] On 25 September Cremins received an Aide-Memoire of the Swiss reply to the British in 1943 in relation to war criminals.[108] This reply asserted the right of Switzerland, as an independent neutral country, to make autonomous decisions when determining the right of asylum. It highlighted the

[105] NAI DFA 2013/51/93, Note of W.B. Butler (DEA) of conversation with Mr. Nagata, 13 August 1945.
[106] NAI DT S13572, Gray to de Valera, 21 September 1944.
[107] NAI DFA Berne Embassy, Box 3, 2/312/9, 6.S.1, DEA to Cremins, 22 September 1944.
[108] Ibid., 'Strictly Confidential' Aide-Memoire of 18 August 1943 received by Cremins, in French, from the Swiss government, undated but most likely 25 September 1944.

absence of a precise and generally accepted definition of what a war criminal was, and declared that the country would continue to act in the interests of the state, keeping in mind its neutral duties and the higher principles of humanity. It also pointed out that the question was, for the time, abstract, and that international law had not resolved the problem. The Swiss closed their response by stating that their attitude was manifest by their neutral record during the war.[109] Cremins immediately sent a telegram detailing the Swiss response to Dublin.

The Swiss had come under pressure since this reply, however, and the British sought greater assurances while negotiating on issues of trade.[110] Cremins clarified the next day that the Swiss had since made a crucial modification. Their position evolved to allow for the exclusion of foreigners who had made themselves unworthy by reprehensible acts, or acts that were contrary or dangerous to Swiss national interests. He was informed by the Swiss Political Department that they believed this modification was the basis of the Allies' declaration that their reply was favourable. Cremins told Dublin that it was probable that the Swiss Foreign Minister had given private assurances to the Americans verbally, but that this had not been publicised, and that each case would be dealt with on its merits by the Swiss alone.[111] On 29 September, he also learned that members of the policing branch of the SS, and the Gestapo, would be refused entry at the Swiss frontier, as they were not combatants, and the Swiss government was gradually formulating its policy.[112] The same

[109] Ibid., Translation by Cremins from Aide-Memoire, Cremins to Walshe, 25 September 1944.
[110] In January 1944, Cremins relayed the contents of an article entitled 'L'Angleterre et la Suisse' that had appeared in several Swiss newspapers from a London correspondent who highlighted British displeasure at Swiss exports to Germany. Though there was some praise for Swiss humanitarian efforts and the country's role as a protecting power, the article warned that "the attitude of Britain towards Switzerland [was] also influenced by the Swiss standpoint on such questions as, for example, the right of asylum [of war criminals]". See NAI DFA Embassies Berne Box 3 10.A.1, Cremins to DEA, 22 January 1944.
[111] NAI DFA Berne Embassy, Box 3, 2/312/9, 6.S.1, Cremins to Walshe, 26 September 1944.
[112] Ibid., Cremins to Walshe, 29 September 1944.

day, US Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, announced that neutral countries would "lose American goodwill for years to come" if they harboured war criminals.[113]

Before receiving Cremins' last reply, Walshe had already spoken with de Valera on 28 September, and informed him that an Aide-Memoire, by way of reply to Gray, was preferable.[114] He told de Valera, that the advantage of this approach was that the reply would be brief, and that an Aide-Memoire allowed off-the-record verbal explanations.[115] It is obvious that Walshe had read Cremins' telegrams with interest, and sought to align the Irish response with that of the Swiss, which had been received favourably. Gray pushed for the Irish response,[116] which came on 9 October 1944:

> (1) The Irish Government note that the right to grant asylum is not in question, and they feel that the United States Government will understand that the Irish Government can give no assurance which would preclude them from exercising that right should justice, charity, or the honour or interest of the nation so require.
> (2) The Irish Government wish moreover to point to the absence of a comprehensive international code applicable to the subject matter of the request of the United States Government, and to the lack of a generally recognised Court or procedure for the judicial determination of individual cases.
> (3) On the other hand, since the present war began, it has been the uniform practice of the Irish Government to deny admission to all aliens whose presence would be at variance with the policy of neutrality or detrimental to the interests of the Irish people, or inconsistent with the desire of the Irish people to avoid injury to the interests of friendly States, and when such aliens land they are deported to their countries of origin as soon as possible. It is not intended to alter this practice.[117]

When questioned on the Irish response by the US Under-Secretary of State, Edward R. Stettinius Jr., the Irish Minister in Washington clarified that persons such as Hitler would not be granted asylum. He further explained that any person who landed in Ireland without permission or a visa would be deported.[118] Ireland's reply matched that of the Swiss closely, though it was met with a somewhat qualified acceptance; the Americans felt it did not go

[113] NAI DT S13572, *Irish Press* clipping retained by de Valera, 29 September 1944.
[114] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P78, Walshe to de Valera, 28 September 1944.
[115] See Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 281.
[116] See Ibid.
[117] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P78, Aide-Memoire from de Valera to Gray, 9 October 1944.
[118] Ibid., Brennan to DEA, 17 November 1944.

far enough.[119] When the Swiss press commented negatively on the Irish response in comparison to that of their own state, Cremins objected to the Swiss government.[120] They provided him with the Federal Council's response to a question on the issue. The Swiss official position differed in only one sense, though it was crucial. The Swiss publicly stated, that though they retained the decision on all asylum cases, they could not grant asylum to those who committed acts contrary to the laws of war.[121] The Irish government had followed Swiss practices as closely as they could from the information they had to hand, but were unaware until too late that the Swiss position was more publicly explicit.

Deviation

In the weeks preceding the end of hostilities in Europe, both Roosevelt and Hitler died. On Roosevelt's death on 12 April, de Valera, Walshe and members of the Cabinet called on Gray at the US legation to offer their condolences.[122] On 2 May, when news of Hitler's suicide broke, de Valera, in the company of Walshe, paid a formal visit to Dr. Hempel at

[119] NAI DFA Berne Embassy, Box 3, 2/312/9, 6.S.1, Radiogram of American reply on 14 November 1944, received by Cremins, 21 November 1944.
[120] Cremins objected to an article which appeared in the Swiss newspaper *Journal de Genève* which levelled criticism at the Irish government over its reply. Cremins' letter to Dr. Walter Stucki (a Minister in the Swiss government) on 21 November 1944 stated that the criticisms were unjustified and objectionable and he sent copies of the aide-memoires he had received from the Swiss themselves. See NAI DFA Berne Embassy, Box 3, 2/312/9, 6.S.1.
[121] NAI DFA Berne Embassy, Box 3, 2/312/9, 6.S.1, Copy of Swiss government response to question on the Federal Councils attitude towards the problem of war criminals, provided by Dr. Stucki to Cremins, 21 November 1944.
[122] The fact that Michael MacDunphy, secretary of the Irish President Douglas Hyde, did not call to offer condolences to Gray was a source of controversy later when MacDunphy called Hempel on the news of Hitler's death. Gray suggested to the US State Department that his withdrawal from Ireland was warranted because of this apparent slight. On examination, however, Gray found that the Irish President had telegrammed his condolences to President Truman, de Valera sent his condolences to the Secretary of State and called on Gray, the Irish Minister in Washington (Brennan) sent a message of sympathy to Eleanor Roosevelt, and the Dáil was adjourned for a day as a mark of respect. See Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, pp. 294-295.

his residence.[123] This move attracted severe criticism, all the more severe in light of the news of Nazi death camps on the continent,[124] and Herr Hempel himself was surprised by the visit.[125] De Valera justified his actions by making reference to protocol, a desire not to set a "bad precedent", and a sense of courtesy for Hempel, whom he deemed more friendly and 'correct' in comparison to Gray.[126] The incident has been the source of much heated debate since,[127] and no definite consensus exists for de Valera's true motivations. Explanations have included: a reaction on the part of de Valera to a request from Gray for access to the German archives at their legation in Dublin, prior to VE day;[128] a symbolic act designed to show the Allies that Éire "had not accepted the values of the warring nations and did not intend to do so in the future";[129] and, "a pedantic gesture of independence which even the Führer's erstwhile protégé Franco forbore to make".[130] An accumulation of factors no doubt influenced de Valera's decision, which he took against the advice of Walshe, Boland, and some within his Cabinet.[131] A sense of injustice at Allied pressure and Gray's often intemperate manner in spite of Irish benevolence throughout the war may also have contributed to the decision. At best, however, de Valera's visit could be described as unnecessarily punctilious in adherence to strict neutrality, or a defiant display of Irish

[123] Hempel was found to be in a pitiable state, contrary to the expectations of de Valera and Walshe. See Duggan, *Herr Hempel*, p. 219; An undisclosed member of the German legation stated that they had heard of Hitler's death on the radio but had not received word from Berlin, see 'Herr Hitler's Death: Callers at German Legation', *The Irish Times*, 3 May 1945.
[124] Tim Pat Coogan, *De Valera: Long Fellow, Long Shadow* (Hutchinson, London, 1993), p. 610.
[125] See Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 291.
[126] UCDA P150/2676 Éamon de Valera Papers, de Valera to Brennan, 21 May 1945.
[127] Karen Devine, in a lengthy footnote, took umbrage with the prevailing description of de Valera's visit as one of conveying condolences on the death of Hitler. Devine points out that de Valera and Walshe officially paid a 'courtesy call', and counter to some claims made, they did not sign a book of condolence. See Devine, 'A Comparative Critique of the Practice of Irish Neutrality in the 'Unneutral' Discourse', p. 75.
[128] Dwyer, *Behind the Green Curtain*, p. 328. See also: UCDA P150/2687 Éamon de Valera Papers, Memorandum of de Valera, 30 April 1945, in which de Valera recounts Gray's effort to secure the German legation prior to Germany's surrender: "He said that a person who was rolling in the mud struggling with someone who was trying to kill him didn't appreciate the person who was standing aside saying I am friendly to you but I am friendly to the other fellow also, and was proceeding to argue further against our neutrality. Again I told him that we had argued this matter with each other many times and that there was no point in going over it again".
[129] Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 537.
[130] O'Halpin, *Defending Ireland*, p. 256.
[131] See Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 291.

sovereignty.[132] Allied press reactions were predictably negative, and de Valera personally received a large number of hostile letters from Irish-Americans in the immediate aftermath of the visit.[133]

Though Éire's wartime experience was regularly punctuated by careful considerations of the attitudes and actions of the other neutrals to guide or justify Irish actions, the responses of the European neutrals to Hitler's death offered the Irish no protection from Allied opprobrium on this occasion.[134] By 4 May, once international condemnation of de Valera's actions became apparent, External Affairs sent urgent requests to their diplomats in Spain and Switzerland, to ascertain the reactions of their neutral colleagues:

> Did Swiss government take any measures condolence or official mourning on Hitler's death? Please telegraph immediately.[135]
>
> Please telegraph immediately whether Spanish government took any measures condolence or official mourning Hitler's death.[136]

The responses they received only served to highlight the political tactlessness of de Valera's actions. Cremins' reply on 5 May that "no flags were flown at half mast [sic] in Berne, not even by the German legation...no action was taken by the Swiss Government",[137] indicated their cautious approach. Cremins had already sent the Department a Swiss newspaper article two days previous by mail, which stated that no diplomatic mission in Berne, including the German mission, flew their flag at half-mast.[138] The Swiss line of reasoning

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[132] Dermot Keogh has stated that the visit was "the worst decision of his [de Valera's] sixteen-year term as Minister for External Affairs". See Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, p. 191.
[133] See Brian Hanley, ''No English Enemy ... Ever Stooped so Low': Mike Quill, de Valera's Visit to the German Legation, and Irish-American Attitudes during World War II', *Radharc* (Vol. 5/7, 2004 – 2006), p. 262.
[134] A rather detailed account of the international reaction to de Valera's visit to Hempel on the death of Hitler can be found in Dermot Keogh, 'Éamon de Valera and Hitler: An Analysis of International Reaction to the Visit to the German Minister, May 1945', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* (Vol. 3, No. 1, 1989), pp. 69-92 and Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, pp. 191-196.
[135] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P98, DEA to Cremins, 4 May 1945.
[136] Ibid., DEA to Kerney, 4 May 1945.
[137] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P98, Cremins to DEA, 4 May 1945.
[138] NAI DFA Berne Embassy Box 7 Be 4/6b CD, Cremins to Walshe, 3 May 1945. The letter sent by Cremins would have taken at least two weeks to reach Dublin, by which time they had already received his report via telegram.

hinged on the lack of an official notification of the Führer's death.[139] Swiss inaction must have brought anxiety to many within Iveagh House who received a "deluge of negative international reaction to the visit".[140]

Kerney's report on 7 May would similarly have done little to assuage apprehensions within External Affairs.[141] Unlike de Valera and Walshe, Kerney had actually contacted his Swiss counterpart in Madrid to learn of their proposed response before making any decision himself. Nevertheless, he found himself in a condemnable position. Kerney's report stated that though he felt it his duty to offer condolences as he had on a "recent comparable occasion", presumably that of Roosevelt's death, he "decided to act in the same manner as the Swiss Minister", who he said took precedence over him.[142] On 2 May, Kerney was advised by the Swiss representative not to do anything that night, and that it was "advisable to have confirmation of the news of the death".[143] If such news came though, Kerney was counselled that a formal visit might not be required as the German legation only contained a Chargé d'Affaires ad Interim. At 12.15pm the next day, Kerney received a call from his Swiss counterpart to inform him that he was going to the Spanish Foreign Office to ascertain for definite that Hitler had died before taking any further action. At 1pm, the Swiss Minister called again to tell Kerney that it had been decided to leave cards at the embassy and to take them there personally. He also confidentially told him that though the Spanish Foreign Minister intended to call to the embassy personally at 5pm, he did not feel they needed to do so themselves. At 1.15pm, Kerney called to the German legation where Kerney reported there was a large number of "sympathisers waiting their turn to sign their

[139] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P98, Cremins to DEA, 4 May 1945.
[140] Nolan, *Joseph Walshe*, p. 290.
[141] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P98, Kerney to DEA, 7 May 1945. **Documents on Irish Foreign Policy, Vol. VII, 1941 – 1945*, erroneously indicates that Kerney's report is contained in P78; however, that collection of documents pertains to 'Asylum of War Criminals'*
[142] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P98, Kerney to DEA, 7 May 1945.
[143] Ibid.

names at one or other of the three tables prepared for the purpose".[144] On entering the embassy he was recognised by a messenger who asked him if he wished to see Freiherr von der Heyden-Rynsch, the Chargé d'Affaires ad Interim. Kerney reported that he "expressed sympathy and made this applicable also to the German people as a whole, stating that Ireland's sympathies always went out to those who suffered".[145] The Chargé then informed Kerney that de Valera had similarly called on Hempel to express his condolences; a fact Kerney was unaware of at the time. In the view of Dermot Keogh, Kerney was "unwise" to have found himself in such a position,[146] which is a judgement that may well be ascribed to his previous dalliances with the German authorities. The following day, Kerney received a reply from von der Heyden-Rynsch which stated:

> I would not like to refrain from assuring Your Excellency how much I have been moved by this proof of condolence, for which allow me to express my deepest gratitude. I know the admiration always felt by the Führer for Ireland and her history and I am sure that his death for the liberty of his people will be also understood by the Irish people.[147]

Kerney only avoided another potentially embarrassing situation of half-masting the flag at the legation due to the fact that there was no announcement of the date of burial. His report suggests that he would have done so had this been known.

This could well have compounded the unfortunate position in which the Irish legation in Lisbon had found itself. Two days of mourning were declared by Salazar on the death of the Führer, and on 3 May an *Associated Press* report, picked up by the *Irish Times*, indicated that a Swastika was hoisted at half-mast over the legation by the Irish representative in a sign of mourning for Hitler.[148] Fortunately this report was stopped by

[144] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P98, Kerney to DEA, 7 May 1945.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Keogh, 'Éamon de Valera and Adolf Hitler', p. 78
[147] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P98, Kerney to DEA, 7 May 1945.
[148] Keogh, 'Éamon de Valera and Adolf Hitler', p. 71.

the Censor as it was inaccurate, though not wholly untrue.[149] A Swastika and a Portuguese flag were flown at half-mast over the legation, but not at the hand of the staff in the Irish legation. On 11 May, External Affairs learned from Patrick J. O'Byrne, Second Secretary at the legation in Lisbon, of the unfortunate circumstances which led to this awkward situation:

> For the reason given in my report on the events here connected with the death of President Roosevelt, the Irish flag did not at all appear on the Irish Legation – which brought us into unusual prominence and was the cause of a great deal of speculation. The building in which our present premises are situated (on the ground floor) consists of two upper stories, the second of which has been occupied for the past five years by a German organisation supposed to be engaged in the insurance business (but quite obviously in other more important activities). Thus, the only flags that flew on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors from this building (right over the Legation) were the Swastika at half-mast and alongside it a Portuguese flag similarly displayed. As the existence of the German office seems not to have been generally known and as the only nameplates on the entrance to the building are those of the Irish Legation (Passport and Shipping Office), it was generally supposed that the whole building was ours and consequently the Legation which had never before during three years displayed a flag here, had produced a German one especially in sign of mourning for Hitler.[150]

O'Byrne consequently spent much time clarifying the position "on the telephone, in the streets, and even at home".[151] Despite this, the original inaccurate report made its way to some newspapers on 4 May, including the *New York Herald Tribune*.[152] O'Byrne did not call to the German legation, but instead sent his card expressing the condolence of the Irish legation, which he stated was "[i]n compliance with the formal procedure".[153] No reply was received, in contrast to Kerney, but O'Byrne's report did note that religious services were held for the Führer at the German Catholic and Protestant churches at the instigation of the German legation. Though the Portuguese had held two days of mourning, they merely sent

[149] Keogh, 'Éamon de Valera and Adolf Hitler', p. 71. The *Associated Press* correspondent submitted a correction and sought the cancellation of the story.
[150] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P98, Patrick J. O'Byrne to DEA, 11 May 1945.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Keogh, 'Éamon de Valera and Adolf Hitler', p. 79.
[153] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P98, O'Byrne to DEA, 11 May 1945.

a "high functionary" of their foreign office to the German legation to express their official condolences.[154]

De Valera's decision to make a personal visit to the German Minister, when compared with the picture that unfolded within Europe's other neutral states, was at variance with the more cautious approach taken by the Irish government up to that point. From the very outset of the war the Irish government had acted with reference and occasional deference to the other neutrals, particularly the Swiss. The Taoiseach's departure from this successful method unnecessarily soured international opinion of Irish neutrality right at the moment of its *de facto* success in keeping Ireland out of the war. Dermot Keogh's opinion tallies with such an analysis:

> At Iveagh House, Walshe and Boland had been made aware very quickly of the fact that Spain and Portugal were the only countries in Western Europe where condolence calls had been made. The Irish government had gone to great lengths to distance itself from the rightist 'Catholic bloc' during the war. There was no comfort to be drawn, therefore, from the fact that the authoritarian governments of Franco and Salazar had been more nuanced than the Irish in their handling of the delicate diplomatic question of condolence on the death of Hitler. The Swiss had provided the Irish with a model for action, but de Valera had acted with uncharacteristic speed and had to suffer being attacked as a pro-Axis fellow traveller.[155]

Cremins' telegram reply to Dublin, which informed External Affairs of the lack of activity in Berne, was received in Dublin a mere day after their request for information. Had de Valera and Walshe pro-actively, rather than reactively, gauged Swiss opinion and displayed patience as in previous instances, the situation could have been prevented.

[154] NAI DFA Secretary's Files P98, *Irish Press* article, 21 July 1945, by Alphonsus Hobbins who translated verbatim an article which appeared in the Spanish newspaper *El Correo Espanol–El Pueblo Vasco*, 4 May 1945.
[155] Keogh, 'Éamon de Valera and Adolf Hitler', p. 80.

Breakaway

After the war, the Allies sought the repatriation from neutral countries of German representatives, captured agents/spies, interned soldiers, and so called 'obnoxious Germans' who were deemed a danger to peace. Reports from Irish diplomats in the other neutral countries poured into External Affairs over the coming months and years, however, on this occasion Walshe refrained from instructing Irish representatives to ascertain the neutrals' positions. The government's intention was to remain silent on the issue as far as practicable. Gray believed the best approach for the Allies was to ask for all the Germans to be handed over at the same time. He thought de Valera would, if given the option, simply repatriate the internees and permit German diplomats and spies to remain.[156] While Gray consulted with his government, Maffey broached the possibility of an official note on the issue with External Affairs in June 1945, but was told by Walshe that he hoped this "barren method of dealing with [Ireland] could surely be dropped".[157] Walshe informed Maffey that the government did not intend to compel Hempel to leave, and that he was free to remain in Ireland as a private citizen until such time as he chose to return to Germany. He also rebuffed Maffey's suggestion that un-interned Germans, such as German agent Hans Becker, should be expelled,[158] and told him that the Irish had a sufficient security organisation to see that "they conducted themselves properly" while in the country.[159] De Valera agreed to hand over the military internees but only on the condition that none of them would be executed or given over to the Soviets.[160] Despite Gray's opposition — on the grounds that de Valera was attempting to split the Allies — the State Department

[156] Dwyer, *Strained Relations*, p. 168.
[157] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A74, Memorandum of Walshe for de Valera, 14 June 1945.
[158] Becker, who was described to British intelligence by their agent Sir Charles Augustus Tegart as the 'Gauleiter of Galway', taught German classes there and was instructed by the Nazis to remain in Éire after the war broke out. See Fisk, *In Time of War*, p. 328.
[159] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A74, Memorandum of Walshe for de Valera, 14 June 1945.
[160] Dwyer, *Strained Relations*, p. 168.

instructed him to follow Maffey's line. Maffey accepted the conditions and most of the German internees left from Dublin on a British battleship in August.[161] However, official requests for the repatriation of German representatives, spies and 'obnoxious Germans' were eventually issued in September 1945 on foot of a resolution of the Allied Control Council in Berlin.[162] The new provisional French government added its representations to those of the British and Americans in seeking the removal of these Germans for processing and possible trial in occupied Germany.[163]

Prior to the Allied Control Council's decision, External Affairs gathered numerous newspaper clippings and received a large volume of information from their diplomats in neutral countries on this topic. From these reports, it was clear to the government that their colleagues were acting in accordance with their own national interests in the absence of international regulations. The Swedes, the Swiss and the Portuguese appeared to be repatriating German officials, but remained quiet on the issue of German nationals generally.[164] When Con Cremin — who had been re-posted to Lisbon — informed External Affairs that the Portuguese government sought the Irish attitude to the problem, he was instructed to avoid answering their enquiry. The Irish government felt that "the less attention that is drawn to our position the better".[165] He was confidentially informed that German military internees had been repatriated and the government intended to retain German spies and agents in their custody.[166]

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[161] Dwyer, *Strained Relations*, p. 169. When the first boat arrived to take the internees to Germany, twelve were missing. Eight were subsequently re-captured and returned home, but de Valera granted four of them asylum. Two men were ill, and the other two were Austrians who feared they would be treated unjustly. They were permitted to stay in Ireland on condition that they keep their presence secret from the Austrian authorities. See Ibid., p. 169 and Dwyer, *De Valera: The Man and The Myths*, p. 288.
[162] Governing body of Allied-occupied Germany.
[163] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A74, Allied request to repatriate German officials, agents and 'obnoxious Germans' and their families, 27 September 1945 (British request), 28 September 1945 (American request), 2 October 1945 (French request).
[164] See NAI DFA Secretary's Files A74.
[165] Ibid., DEA to Cremin, 24 September 1945.
[166] See Dwyer, *De Valera: The Man and The Myths*, p. 288.

After the Control Council's order, in September 1945, the Spanish Minister in Dublin, Count d'Artaza,[167] sought the Irish government's attitude, and specifically whether they intended to oppose the order.[168] Boland and de Valera agreed that it would be imprudent to provide them with information which could be used as justification for Spanish resistance to Allied demands. The Irish government had previously used the actions of the other neutrals as precedents to justify their own policies; Boland wished to avoid Ireland being used in a similar fashion by the Spanish which might, thereby, encourage more Allied pressure.[169] Later reports from the other neutrals suggested that their compliance with the Control Council's order was slow, and far from full.[170] Cremin reported that, in the course of a conversation with a member of the Swiss legation in Lisbon, he learned that the Portuguese did not force Germans to leave the country.[171] Francis Cremins' report in December, of a response given in the National Council by the Swiss President,[172] provided the Irish government with some degree of justification for adopting a unique policy:

> [I]t went without saying that if other persons who had no longer a Government to protect them, had to be expelled, it was important that every guarantee, moral and legal, should be given to them. "Our methods must remain Swiss", he said, "and the Nazi system must not be allowed to enter into them".[173]

Cremins' report in January 1946, of the suicide of the former German Minister to Switzerland in an American concentration camp in Germany,[174] no doubt bolstered the desires of the Irish government not to compel Hempel and his staff to leave the country.

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[167] Don Luis Olivares Y Bruguera was also given the appellation Count d'Artaza, which initially caused confusion for the Office of the 2nd President of Ireland, Seán T. O'Kelly, who had only been appointed two months previously. See NAI PRES P 2526.
[168] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A74, Note Verbale of Count d'Artaza to Walshe, 2 October 1945.
[169] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A74, Minute of Boland, 4 October 1945.
[170] In Sweden, while the government publicly agreed with the proposition that war criminals should be extradited, they claimed none resided in the country. Furthermore, the Swedish authorities were passive in pursuing Nazi war criminals and only one war criminal was extradited. In the opinion of Klas Åmark, "Sweden actually became a refuge for war criminals, where they were allowed to live without threat of prosecution". See Åmark, 'Sweden: Negotiated Neutrality', p. 372.
[171] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A74, Cremin to Walshe, 28 November 1945.
[172] Eduard von Steiger held the position of President of the Swiss Confederation in 1945, and was also Head of the Department of Justice and Police that year.
[173] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A74, Cremins to Walshe, 26 December 1945.
[174] Ibid., Cremins to Walshe, 12 January 1946.

Similarly, his next report detailed the slow pace of expulsions in Switzerland and the apparent acceptance of the Swiss authorities to permit some members of the former German legation to remain in the country.[175] From Kiernan, in the Vatican, External Affairs was told that the former German Minister was allowed to remain there until sufficient assurances as to his treatment were provided by the Americans.[176] Nonetheless, reports from Switzerland, Sweden, Spain and Portugal, all indicated that they were making efforts to comply to some extent with the Allied demands.

De Valera, despite numerous negative press articles and repeated requests for a reply from the Allies, chose not to respond until June 1946, when he set out the government's position verbally to the French and American Ministers in Dublin. He explained to Gray that the Irish people would not understand if he did not grant asylum to the German officials and agents. He also told Gray that he believed Hempel had acted with "correctness" throughout the war, that he "was a very decent man", and that he "could not bring himself to return [Hempel] to a Germany without a government of its own and in extreme economic disorder".[177] Later in the year, Hempel and his former staff received personal orders from the Allies to return to Germany. Hempel approached External Affairs, who informed him that they would not compel him to return, but they were firm to impress upon him the need to refrain from giving any indication that he had spoken to the Department in relation to the matter. The Irish government wished to avoid any suggestion by the Allies that they had encouraged the Germans to stay.[178] De Valera did signal to the Americans that he was willing to repatriate German spies at the end of 1946, but he left the issue in the hands of the Minister for Justice, Gerry Boland. Boland had threatened to resign over the issue

[175] Ibid., 15 January 1946.
[176] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A74, Kiernan to Walshe, 23 March 1946.
[177] Ibid., Memorandum of Conversation between de Valera and Gray, 24 June 1946.
[178] NAI DFA Secretary's Files A74, Minute of Boland, 18 October 1946.

because the government had given the Germans assurances that they could stay. He eventually relented and the German agent Hermann Görtz was detained in May 1947. Görtz was told he was to be deported and, fearing persecution, he took a cyanide capsule and died.[179] The Irish government subsequently refused to deport another German spy, Werner Unland, who was permitted to stay and who unsuccessfully attempted, along with his English wife, to gain Irish citizenship in 1952 and 1961.[180]

The former German Minister, Eduard Hempel, did not return to Germany until 1949 when he was recalled to the German Foreign Ministry to complete his service; he retired in 1952 with a pension.[181] Hempel's welfare had been an important factor in Ireland's break from alignment with the other neutrals. In 1972, on Hempel's death, de Valera wrote to his widow to express his "heartfelt sympathy" for a man "who always understood Ireland's position".[182]

Aftermath of Ireland's Wartime Neutrality

In the aftermath of the war, Irish foreign policy continued to focus on issues of independence and Irish unification. The government was successful in the former by declaring a Republic in 1948, but sympathy towards the partition issue amongst the higher

[179] See Dwyer, *Strained Relations*, pp. 169-170.
[180] See NAI DFA Secretary's Files A 74. The reasons for refusing to grant the Unlands naturalisation were set out by Con Cremin: "The Minister [for External Affairs – Frank Aiken] feels that the Unlands cannot really feel aggrieved at not being granted naturalisation. The purpose for which they came here was certainly not such as to warrant such a gesture on our part and the Minister believes that, in the circumstances, they should be quite contented to be allowed to stay in Ireland. Furthermore, he feels that for us to naturalise them would provide ammunition which the more sensational press in England might, should the occasion arise, use against us". Aiken also referred to the negative press Ireland had received regarding the presence in Ireland of British Fascist Sir Oswald Mosely and the colourful former SS Lieutenant Colonel Otto Skorzeny. See NAI DFA Secretary's Files A 74, Cremin to P. Berry (Secretary of the Department of Justice), 11 October 1961.
[181] Duggan, *Herr Hempel*, p. 227.
[182] NAI PRES 1/P 519 de Valera to Frau Eva Hempel, 13 November 1972.

echelons of power in the United States was seriously undermined.[183] In the opening line of his book on Irish-American relations in the immediate post-war period, Troy D. Davis remarked that relations between the two states "were at an all-time low".[184] De Valera and Aiken travelled to the US in 1948, after they had lost a general election, in an attempt to drum up support on the partition issue, but the State Department and President Truman were not willing to intervene in a matter they considered to be for the Irish and British governments to resolve.[185] John Bowman described the loss of American sympathies over the partition issue as "a casualty of the war".[186] Irish attempts to engage with the international community were also frustrated by the rejection of their membership application to the League of Nations successor body, the United Nations (UN), in 1946. The following year, when Ireland's application came up for review, the Soviet Union blocked the country's proposed membership because in their view "Éire had not helped lay the foundations of the organisation…[and]…even in the most critical part of the war, Ireland expressed sympathy with the Axis".[187] Ireland also remained outside the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) after the government tied possible membership in 1949 to progress on partition, which was not forthcoming.

Ireland gained UN membership in 1955, and one author has described the decade to that point as a period of "considerable diplomatic isolation".[188] Conor Cruise O'Brien has painted the period in a similar light by claiming that "Ireland/Éire felt the cold breath of international disapproval, in the aftermath of the war".[189] Mervyn O'Driscoll has challenged the isolation discourse by pointing out that, despite delays to Ireland's full

[183] O'Halpin, 'Irish neutrality in the Second World War', pp. 302-303.
[184] Troy D. Davis, *Dublin's American Policy: Irish-American Diplomatic Relations, 1945 – 1952* (The Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C., 1998), p. 1.
[185] See Maurice Fitzgerald, 'Ireland and the US in the Post-war Period', in Dermot Keogh, Finbarr O'Shea and Carmel Quinlan (eds.), *The Lost Decade: Ireland in the 1950s* (Mercier Press, 2004), p. 195.
[186] Bowman, *De Valera and the Ulster Question*, p. 250.
[187] Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, pp. 202-203.
[188] Doherty, *Ireland, Neutrality and European Security Integration*, p. 41.
[189] Conor Cruise O'Brien, *States of Ireland* (Granada Publishing Limited, 1974), p. 133.

engagement with the post-war system, the country "became a member of several specialised United Nations agencies in the late 1940s".[190] O'Driscoll has contended that it would be "incorrect to view Ireland as isolated in international or regional terms",[191] as it was a founding member of the Organisation of European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) in 1948 and the Council of Europe in 1949. Ireland also received aid from the United States under the Marshall Plan. Indeed O'Driscoll's point can be further bolstered by the fact that from the end of the war until Ireland joined the UN in 1955, Ireland established formal relations with Sweden (1946), Australia (1946), Argentina (1948), Norway (1950), the Netherlands (1950), West Germany (1951), Turkey (1951), and Austria (1952).[192] On balance, it would be more accurate to state that Ireland was unable to embrace full international engagement through a mixture of Cold War politics — in the form of a Soviet veto of Irish UN membership — and the country's failed attempt to tie Irish membership of NATO to the partition issue; but the post-war period should not be described as one of isolation.

Conclusion

Allied pressure, through economic restrictions and political manoeuvres, was applied to all the neutrals including Éire, despite the high degree of Irish-Allied security co-operation, and the country's limited connections to the Axis Powers. Reports from Irish diplomats in the other European neutral countries highlighted the importance of their trade relations to the German war effort. Ireland had no such trade relations with Germany. Nonetheless, the

[190] Mervyn O'Driscoll, 'Multilateralism: From 'Plato's Cave' to the European Community', p. 37.
[191] Ibid.
[192] Based on Table 2 in Keatinge, *The Formulation of Irish Foreign Policy*, p. 307.

country was treated in similar terms to the other neutrals due to political and strategic factors. This fostered a feeling of deep injustice, particularly aimed towards Gray and Churchill, who sought to isolate the country to appease Allied domestic public opinion. In response to repeated political pressure, the Irish government kept Irish policy closely in line with the other neutrals.

Irish neutral alignment, however, eventually gave way to deviation when de Valera took the politically foolish decision to pay a formal visit to the German Minister's residence after the death of Hitler. Sympathies for the plight of Herr Hempel permeated conversations between Gray and the Taoiseach towards the end of the war. Gray's bellicose attitude contrasted with Hempel's 'correctness', which may in part explain de Valera's actions. When the Allies issued their *demarché* to repatriate German officials, the Irish had broken from adherence to the neutral pack. Ireland's neutrality policy, which was brought into broad alignment with their colleagues on the continent for almost the entire duration of the war, refused to bend. The other neutrals, who had come under intense Allied scrutiny towards the end of the war, displayed greater flexibility on the issue of asylum under public pressure. This did not mean that the Irish lost interest in the actions of the other neutrals; of the three new Irish legations established between 1945 and 1947, two — Sweden and Argentina — were neutral during the war.[193] Ireland's policy schism with that of the other neutrals at the end of the war merely signified the government's drift into new post-war realities. Desires to project Irish independence resurged and resulted in the declaration of an Irish Republic and Irish foreign policy, despite challenges, took on a more internationalist appearance based on an à la carte approach.

[193] The other was Australia (1946).

Conclusion

This thesis breaks new ground in the historiography of Irish neutrality in the Second World War. Primarily, it has identified that the Irish government refined their neutrality policies through knowledge acquisition, based on reports from Irish diplomats in European neutral states, and through experiential learning. An appreciation of Ireland's relative lack of experience in international affairs and large scale conflict has been missing from Irish historiography. This point was the driver behind the development of the Irish government's learning process during the war. It has been highlighted here, for the first time, to reframe how Irish neutrality should be seen. Ireland was a new state seeking acceptance of its independence and sovereignty by enacting a neutrality policy that the government wanted to be respected as internationally credible. Irish diplomats on the continent were tasked with providing necessary information and research material to assist Dublin in achieving this goal.

This thesis has shown that, before the war, External Affairs began tentative explorations of the practice of neutrality in the First World War and kept a moderately interested eye on war preparations undertaken by other neutral states. Irish preparations to defend neutrality were sluggish in comparison, particularly in the defensive sphere, but after the war began, the government's interest in contemporary neutral practices and actions increased. Initial concerns after September 1939 centred on censorship policies and defence concerns more generally. German advances in the summer of 1940, however, prompted Dublin to make more specific and detailed requests for information from their diplomat in Switzerland, Francis Cremins. To avoid international and diplomatic isolation, avail of logistical benefits

for Irish communications and shipping, and to profit from closer consultations and direct access to the other neutrals, the Irish government established legations in Switzerland and Portugal.

At the outset of the war it is clear — based on internal documents and parliamentary speeches — that the government wished to pursue a neutrality policy that was independent and bespoke to Irish concerns. However, it is similarly clear that policy-makers were not averse to learning about more successful methods of implementation from the other neutrals. Over the course of the war, these external influences increasingly affected Irish reactions to crises. When Irish ships faced belligerent attacks, the Irish response evolved to mirror that of the other neutrals and likely saved lives. Though Ireland's policy regarding the internment of belligerent aircrews was partial to the Allies from the outset of the war, the degree of partiality increased with knowledge of similar practices in Switzerland, Sweden and possibly Portugal later in the war. By 1943, the Irish policy was defended against criticisms from the German Minister in Dublin by reference to legal justifications abroad and, from the perspective of External Affairs' Legal Advisor, the neutrals were making international law, not breaking it. In the final phase of the war, Irish responses to diplomatic challenges, such as the recognition of the new French government and Allied demands to give assurances regarding German war criminals, closely matched those of the other neutrals. In the latter case, the Irish response was designed to resemble that of the Swiss as far as possible. As a consequence, Irish actions were brought broadly into line with those of the other neutrals, particularly Switzerland and Sweden in relation to the multifarious practicalities of maintaining neutrality, and the Vatican in rhetoric and tone.

The practical importance of Irish legations in neutral states has been relatively unrecognised. Yet these diplomatic outposts were crucial links in the communications network which linked Dublin to Irish diplomats in Axis territory. Heretofore, mention of

Irish diplomatic communications on the continent has only ever been made as an aside when discussing larger issues. Only where communications impinged on Dublin's ability to effectively communicate during a time of crisis has this topic received any attention. To rectify this, this thesis has, for the first time, attempted to trace and document the operation of the network, and has shown that despite interruptions, delays, and interceptions, for most of the war the network was a stable conduit of communications. The legations in Lisbon and Madrid were key co-ordination posts for the network and the legation staff in Lisbon also dedicated much of their time to attempts to secure additional supplies for Ireland. The legation in Berne, meanwhile, undertook a financial role for Irish legations across the continent and was instrumental in ensuring the Axis legations in Ireland remained funded. In detailing the centrality of Berne to the everyday operations of Ireland's diplomatic network on the continent, this thesis has advanced knowledge of the foundations upon which Dublin's foreign policy on the European continent was conducted. The Berne legation has not yet received the attention it deserves from Irish historians of the Second World War.

This thesis has also highlighted the important roles played by Irish diplomats in neutral postings during the war. The influence Francis Cremins and Michael Rynne had on the formulation and maintenance of Irish neutrality deserves special mention. Cremins' career within the Department of External Affairs has not received the attention it deserves. Michael Kennedy has stated that Cremins is "one of Ireland's least known diplomats".[1] As his wartime reports from Switzerland were very valuable to External Affairs, were read with interest by Rynne, Walshe and de Valera, and had influence on Irish policies, it is surprising that authors have consistently overlooked his contribution.[2] Cremins remained

[1] Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations*, p. 191.
[2] Michael Kennedy appears to be the only historian who has shed some light on Cremins through his book *Ireland and the League of Nations*, and his entry for Cremins in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, though neither explore Cremins' role during the war in any detail.

Chargé in Berne until his eventual retirement from the Department in 1949. His departure was not a happy one for him personally; he was anxious to receive money owed to him from the Department, he held the belief that he should have been given a higher rank, and he complained of neglect for not having been provided with a secretary, which he believed affected his health.[3] Towards the end of his career, Cremins avoided company and wished to retire quietly in Switzerland.[4] Rynne wrote to Boland, who was the Secretary of External Affairs in 1949, to confidentially convey Cremins' feelings and suggested that he be contacted:

> I mention this confidentially (I was told to say nothing) because I feel you may like to drop Frank the farewell line. It seems a pity he should go out unwept, unhonoured etc. The Dept. has not so many old hands now from First Dáil days and Frank did his stuff better than most of them without the incentive of regular promotion.[5]

It is this author's hope that future publications will highlight Cremins' contribution to Irish neutrality.

Michael Rynne has similarly received sparse mention in Irish historiography. This is surprising considering his relatively senior position within the Department of External Affairs and his strong influence on the shape of Irish neutrality during the war. Rynne's papers have at least been available at the National Archives since 2008 and many appear in the published documents included in the *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy* series. Rynne's clear interest in the neutral practices of Switzerland was brought to the fore after the war, when he suggested to Boland — who had taken over the role of Secretary of External Affairs from Walshe in 1946 — that Irish neutrality should mirror that of the Swiss. Boland, however, rebuffed this idea as lying "outside the bounds of practical

[3] Cremins believed he had cancer and formulated a self-imposed diet of fruits and vegetables. Rynne believed Cremins was suffering from hypochondria and that his appearance of "a walking skeleton" was simply a result of undernourishment. See NAI DFA 10/PS/18, Rynne to Boland, 7 July and 30 July 1949.
[4] Ibid., 7 July 1949.
[5] NAI DFA 10/PS/18, Rynne to Boland, 30 July 1949.

politics".[6] From files released to the National Archives by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2015 — on foot of requests from this author — it can be seen that Rynne, like Cremins, also complained of his rank within the Department after the war. He believed his experience, influence and contribution was diminished by the promotion of Con Cremin to a second Assistant Secretary position;[7] previously, Rynne was third in seniority behind the Secretary and one Assistant. Rynne also believed the Department undervalued the responsibilities and workload of the Legal Advisor, which he claimed was at least comparable to that of the second Legal Assistant to the Attorney General or the Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman.[8]

Chosen by de Valera, who bypassed Walshe, to be the author of the *aide-mémoire* announcing Irish neutrality that was presented to the belligerents at the outset of the war, Rynne was clearly highly regarded, trusted, and respected by the Taoiseach. Rynne's memoranda were typically sent to Walshe who often merely made minor amendments before presenting them to de Valera. In this author's opinion, if Walshe is recognised as de Valera's *éminence grise*, then it would seem fair to suggest that Rynne was the *éminence grise* behind the *éminence grise*. This thesis has, to some modest degree, highlighted Rynne's important contribution to the formulation and defence of Irish neutrality during the war, and it is this author's hope that future scholarship on this period of Irish history will acknowledge his work.

[6] NAI DFA Legal Advisor's Miscellaneous Papers 2/202/37, Boland to Rynne, 5 February 1949. For Boland geo-strategic realities precluded Ireland from performing a similar 'international neutral' role (i.e. as protecting power, International Red Cross HQ, and communication hub for belligerent powers), as the country relied too heavily, logistically, on Britain for communications and travel.
[7] NAI DFA 10/PS/18, Rynne to Boland (Secretary DEA), 5 June 1948.
[8] Ibid.

Concluding Thoughts

As this thesis has shown, the government saw itself as a respectable neutral state and actively sought to learn from the policies and practices of the other neutrals. By uncovering that the Irish government actively sought to keep Irish neutrality broadly in line with their neutral counterparts, this thesis has challenged the arguments presented by advocates of the 'unneutral Ireland' discourse. By placing Ireland's wartime experience in a wider context, it has been shown that the main criticisms levelled at Irish neutrality, such as Allied-Irish cooperation and a flexible attitude to the neutral obligations under the Hague Conventions, were not atypical. Ireland's partisan policies regarding Allied aircrews, for example, were justified by reference to similar actions amongst the other neutrals. In fact, Irish neutrality compares favourably with the neutrality policies of the other successful neutrals. Ireland did not have a formal transit arrangement with the Allies to permit their forces to travel across the country like Sweden. Ireland did not produce war *matériel* for the Allied war effort like Switzerland, Sweden, Spain and Portugal did for the Germans, and no military bases were ceded to the Allies, like Portugal did with the Azores. Unlike the Swiss, Ireland did not trade in gold looted by the Nazis.[9] The degree of Irish-Allied intelligence co-operation was, perhaps, unique, but intelligence co-operation itself was not. Co-operation existed between MI5, MI6 and Portugal's *Polícia de Vigilância e de Defesa do Estado*

[9] The Americans had been warning the Swiss over their acceptance of German gold, which was of a dubious nature, since 1943. In 1946, the Swiss agreed to contribute $250m in gold to the 'pacification and reconstruction' of Europe by signing the Allied-Swiss Washington Accord. Much ink has been spilled over the subject of Switzerland's handling of looted gold. See Vagts, 'Switzerland, International Law and World War II', p. 473; Leitz, *Nazi Germany and Neutral Europe: During the Second World War* (Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 11; Mariatte Denman, '"If Auschwitz Were in Switzerland…": German Swiss Intellectuals Respond to the Nazi Gold Affair', *New German Critique* (No. 85, Special Issue on Intellectuals, Winter, 2002), pp. 167-191; Philippe Marguerat, 'German Gold – Allied Gold', p. 72; Tom Bower, *Blood Money: The Swiss, the Nazis and the Looted Billions* (MacMillan, 1997); Steven Murphy, 'Ireland, Switzerland, and the Second World War' (Masters Thesis, University College Cork, 2007), pp. 85-86 and NARA RG59 Decimal Files 1945 – 49, Fletcher Report, 2 May 1946.
http://www.ushmm.org/assets/documents/usa/1998/I-4.pdf [cited 08-08-07]

(PVDE – State Defence and Surveillance Police),[10] which they had infiltrated.[11] The same was true for Germany, whose *Abwehr* agents engaged in espionage "extensively".[12] Anglo-Irish defence discussions were also not unique and they may be compared to the defence agreement between Switzerland and France prior to the war and Portuguese defence consultations with the British regarding East Timor.[13]

Ireland's benevolent policies towards Britain and the US, should, therefore, not be treated *ex parte*. The other European neutrals faced similar, if not greater, economic and political pressure, engaged in co-operation with Allied and Axis military and intelligence organisations, and made concessions of arguably greater magnitude to both belligerents. With the exception of Spain between 1940 and 1943, they achieved this without fatally compromising their neutrality. When one places Ireland's 'unneutral' acts in a broader context it is clear that, not only was Ireland neutral like its European counterparts, Switzerland, Sweden and Portugal, but Irish neutrality was comparably more inviolable in some crucial aspects.

Ireland's neutrality policy was not formulated and developed in a vacuum; it was moulded and re-shaped with reference to the actions, experiences and compromises of their

[10] PVDE was renamed *Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado* (PIDE – International Police and State Defence) after the war in 1945, and the acronyms are used interchangeably in some of the literature.
[11] Douglas L. Wheeler, 'In the Service of Order: The Portuguese Political Police and the British, German and Spanish Intelligence, 1932 – 1945', *Journal of Contemporary History* (Vol. 18, No. 1, January 1983), pp. 1-25.
[12] Wheeler, 'In the Service of Order: The Portuguese Political Police and the British, German and Spanish Intelligence, 1932 – 1945', p. 10.
[13] Threading the line of neutrality, the Portuguese wished to frame arrangements in such a way as to make it seem the country was forced to accept British, Australian and Dutch assistance in the event of a Japanese attack. The British Foreign Office entertained such an arrangement — until it became impractical due to Japanese gains in the area — as they had their eye on Portuguese possessions in the Atlantic, the Azores and Cape Verde. See Nicholas Tarling, 'Britain, Portugal and East Timor in 1941', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* (Vol. 27, No. 1, The Japanese Occupation in Southeast Asia – March 1996), pp. 132-138. When a small contingent of Dutch and Australian forces landed in East Timor in December 1941, prior to the eventual Japanese attack, Salazar made a "strong and dignified" protest. See NAI DFA 359/4, Annual Report of Irish Legation, Lisbon, Patrick J. O'Byrne (Assistant to Colman O'Donovan) to DEA, 14 May 1943. See also Dilks, *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan*, p. 609n.

neutral counterparts. Neutral diplomats throughout Europe informed one another of the positions adopted by their respective states, and, as this thesis has shown, these connections were influential in Irish foreign policy-making during the period. In failing to examine Irish neutrality and Irish diplomatic relations from a broader international context most historians have failed to perceive the influence learning about neutrality practices had on Irish actions. The Irish government initially wished to pursue a neutrality policy that was bespoke to its particular circumstances and relationship with Britain. By learning to respect and rely on the advice and precedents of other neutrals, Irish reactions can be seen to have become consciously more closely aligned with those of their neutral counterparts than is commonly accepted or acknowledged.

This thesis has focused exclusively on the Irish perspective vis-à-vis diplomacy with the other neutrals. To what extent these other neutrals assessed the neutrality policies of their peers is an area of investigation that has yet to be undertaken. Though the other neutrals were experienced in maintaining neutrality policies, the similar positions in which they found themselves during the war, and the opportunities diplomats had to sound out their colleagues, would suggest it is an area worthy of research.

Appendix A

Reproduced from NAI DFA 214/55, Michael Knightly (Chief Press Censor) to DEA, 16 September 1939.

EMERGENCY POWERS (NO. 5) ORDER 1939

To the proprietor of

the…….

I, MICHAEL KNIGHTLY, CHIEF PRESS CENSOR, an authorised person, in exercise of the powers conferred upon me by the Emergency Powers (No. 5) Order, 1939, hereby direct that there shall not be published (save and except at the request of or with the permission of the Government or of an authorised person) in the ……. or in any poster or placard issued in connection therewith any matter of the following classes, that is to say

DEFENCE FORCES.

(1) Matter relating to the Defence Forces or to aircraft or vessels belonging to the State and, in particular, matter relating to
    (a) The number, description, armament, equipment, disposition, movement or condition of the said Defence Forces, aircraft or vessels or their operations or intended operations;
    (b) The manufacture or storage or place of manufacture or storage of war material; or works or measures connected with the fortification or defence of any place on behalf of the State.
(2) Matter calculated to prejudice recruiting for, or to cause disaffection in, any of the Defence Forces.

FOREIGN AIR, NAVAL OR MILITARY FORCES.

(3) Matter relating to the presence or supposed presence within the State or in the vicinity of the State or its territorial waters of any Air, Naval or Military forces of any foreign State.

SAFEGUARDING NEUTRALITY

(4) Matter which would or might be calculated to endanger the policy of strict neutrality of the State and in particular
    (a) Statements or suggestions casting doubt on the reality of such neutrality or on the wisdom or practicability of maintaining neutrality.
    (b) Epithets or terms of a nature liable to cause offence to Governments of friendly states or the members thereof.

(c) Expressions likely to cause offence to the peoples of friendly states whether applied to individuals or to the method or system of Governments or to the culture of the people of such States.

WEATHER REPORTS

(5) Matter relating to weather reports and forecasts and any reference to meteorological conditions.

COMMERCIAL SHIPPING AND AIRCRAFT

(6) Matter relating to the whereabouts of commercial ships or aircraft within the State or the territorial waters thereof or to the movements of such ships or aircraft to or from the State.

SUPPLIES

(7) Unauthorised statements relating to the existence or dangers of shortage of essential supplies whether of a general nature or in respect of particular commodities.

FINANCIAL

(8) Matter which would or might be calculated to impair the financial stability of the State and in particular
   (a) Matter reflecting adversely on the solvency of the Exchequer and other public financial institutions or bodies, the standing of State securities or credit and the value of or security behind the national Currency.
   (b) Statements or suggestions tending to or likely to cause uneasiness or panic among depositors in banks including Post Office Savings Banks or amongst holders of State securities.
   (c) Reports or rumours of the intended imposition of new taxation or Customs and Excise duties or the internal revision of existing taxation or duties.

CIVIL SERVICE

(9) Matter likely to provoke discontent amongst servants of the State or that would be liable to cause a withdrawal of labour by any branch of the Civil Service.

Dated 16th day of September 1939.

Michael Knightly

……...
Chief Press Censor

Appendix B

Reproduced from NAI DFA P/12/18, External Affairs' report entitled: 'Irish Vessels Sunk Since The Commencement Of The War', n.d. (but after May 1943).

IRISH VESSELS SUNK SINCE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WAR.

	Vessel	Date of Loss	G.T. [Gross Tonnage]	Total Casualties
1.	M.V. "Munster" (SandI. Steampacket Co.)	07.02.40	4305	-
2.	S.T. "Leukos" (Dublin Traveling Co.)	12.03.40	216	11
3.	S.S. "City of Limerick" Continental Steamship Co.)	15.07.40	1359	2 (Saorstat and
4.	S.S. "Meath" (B and I Steampacket Co.)	16.08.40	1597	-
5.	S.S. "Luimneach" Steamship Co. Ltd.)	04.09.40	1074	-(Limerick
6.	S.S. "Kerry Head" and Sons)	22.10.40	825	12 (Mullock
7.	S.S. "Ardmore" (B and I Steampacket Co.)	12.11.40	1023	24
8.	S.S. "Isolda" (Irish Lights Vessel)	19.12.40	734	6
9.	M.V. "Innisfallen" (B and I Steampacket Co.)	21.12.40	3071	4
10.	S.S. "Saint Fintan" (Thos. Heiton and Co. Ltd.)	22.03.41	495	9
11.	S.S. "Clonlare" Steamship Co. Ltd.)	22.08.41	1203	11 (Limerick
12.	S.S. "City of Waterford" (Soarstát and Continental Steamship Co. Ltd.)	19.09.41	1071	5
13.	S.S. "City of Bremen" Continental Steamship Co. Ltd.)	02.06.42	903	-(Saorstát and
14.	S.S. "Kyleclare" Steamship Co. Ltd.)	--.02.43	700	18 (Limerick
15.	S.S. "Irish Pine" (Irish Shipping Ltd.)	--.11.42	5621	33
16.	S.S. "Irish Oak" (Irish Shipping Ltd.)	15.05.43	5589	-
			29,786	135

Appendix C

Madrid mail-bags (In/Out), reproduced based on 1942 ledger from NAI DFA 233/16A.

Madrid-Dublin 1942	Despatch	Receipt		Dublin-Madrid 1942	Despatch	Receipt
1	16-Jan	24-Jan		1	21-Jan	27-Feb
2	24-Jan	16-Mar		2	02-Feb	13-Feb
3	05-Feb	23-Feb		3	04-Feb	17-Mar
4	11-Feb	23-Feb		4	14-Feb	26-Feb
5	16-Feb	02-Apr		5	18-Feb	18-Mar
6	19-Feb	04-Mar		6	21-Feb	10-Mar
7	20-Feb	18-Mar		7	04-Mar	23-Mar
8	02-Mar	18-Mar		8	04-Mar	27-Apr
9	16-Mar	27-Apr		9	18-Mar	27-Apr
10	24-Mar	07-Apr		10	01-Apr	29-Apr
11	28-Mar	21-May		11	29-Apr	21-Jun
12	10-Apr	27-Apr		12	29-Apr	21-Jun
13	22-Apr	26-Jun		13	30-Apr	27-Jun
14	04-May	16-May		14	05-May	21-Jun
15	11-May	26-May		15	15-May	27-Jun
16	16-May	12-Jun		16	19-May	27-Jun
17	12-Jun	25-Jun		17	03-Jun	27-Jun
18	13-Jun	06-Jul		18	12-Jun	23-Jul
19	18-Jun	04-Jul		19	12-Jun	23-Jul
20	07-Jul	21-Jul		20	12-Jun	23-Jul
21	20-Jul	05-Aug		21	13-Jun	23-Jul
22	29-Jul	17-Aug		22	26-Jun	21-Jul
23	02-Aug	12-Aug		23	04-Jul	21-Jul
24	14-Aug	19-Aug		24	17-Jul	03-Aug
25	17-Aug	21-Aug		25	29-Jul	11-Aug
26	21-Aug	12-Sep		26	14-Aug	02-Sep
27	25-Aug	12-Sep		27	14-Aug	02-Sep
28	03-Sep	15-Sep		28	14-Sep	29-Sep
29	05-Sep	15-Sep		29	14-Sep	29-Sep
30	11-Sep	18-Sep		30	14-Sep	29-Sep
31	15-Sep	05-Oct		31	14-Sep	29-Sep
32	25-Sep	10-Oct		32	14-Sep	29-Sep
33	03-Oct	15-Oct		33	14-Sep	29-Sep
34	05-Oct	15-Oct		34	22-Sep	15-Oct
35	08-Oct	26-Oct		35	12-Oct	03-Nov
36	16-Oct	08-Nov		36	12-Oct	03-Nov
37	19-Oct	28+8 Oct		37	12-Oct	03-Nov
38	24-Oct	16-Nov		38	27-Oct	10-Nov
39	31-Oct	16-Nov		39	27-Oct	10-Nov
40	11-Nov	27-Nov		40	17-Nov	15-Dec
41	16-Nov	23-Nov		41	30-Nov	23-Dec
42	24-Nov	04-Dec		42	10-Dec	07-Jan
43	07-Dec	28-Dec		43	10-Dec	07-Jan
44	23-Dec	06-Jan		44	30-Dec	22-Jan
45				45	30-Dec	22-Jan
46				46	30-Dec	22-Jan

Madrid mail-bags (In/Out), reproduced based on 1943 ledger from NAI DFA 233/16A.

Madrid-Dublin 1943		Despatch	Receipt		Dublin-Madrid 1943		Despatch	Receipt
1		04-Jan	08-Jan		1		27-Jan	23-Feb
2		14-Jan	23-Jan		2		27-Jan	23-Feb
3		12-Jan	23-Jan		3		16-Feb	13-Mar
4		19-Jan	12-Feb		4		16-Feb	13-Mar
5		25-Jan	29-Jan		5		02-Mar	14-Apr
6		30-Jan	12-Feb		6		02-Mar	14-Apr
7		06-Feb	27-Feb		7		22-Mar	14-Apr
8		12-Feb	27-Feb		8		22-Mar	14-Apr
9		12-Feb	27-Feb		9		22-Mar	14-Apr
10		15-Feb	27-Feb		10		22-Mar	14-Apr
11		26-Feb	18-Mar		11		07-Apr	29-Apr
12		26-Mar	17-Apr		12		07-Apr	29-Apr
13		14-Apr	18-May		13		22-Apr	10-May
14		25-Apr	18-May		14		22-Apr	10-May
15		27-Apr	18-May		15		13-May	26-May
16		14-May	02-Jun		16		13-May	26-May
17		22-May	02-Jun		17		22-May	07-Jun
18		29-May	15-Jun		18		22-May	07-Jun
19		07-Jun	15-Jun		19		08-Jun	18-Jun
20		12-Jun	02-Jul		20		08-Jun	18-Jun
21		18-Jun	02-Jul		21		18-Jun	13-Jul
22		28-Jun	21-Jul		22		18-Jun	13-Jul
23		10-Jul	23-Jul		23		13-Jul	26-Jul
24		13-Jul	07-Aug		24		13-Jul	26-Jul
25		19-Jul	07-Aug		25		13-Jul	26-Jul
26		26-Jul	07-Aug		26		24-Jul	28-Aug
27		02-Aug	02-Sep		27		24-Jul	28-Aug
28		16-Aug	07-Sep		28		31-Aug	14-Sep
29		24-Aug	02-Sep		29		31-Aug	14-Sep
30		28-Aug	07-Sep		30		31-Aug	14-Sep
31		02-Sep	29-Sep		31		8(6) Sep	14-Oct
32		11-Sep	29-Sep		32		8 (6) Sep	14-Oct
33		22-Sep	16-Oct		33		30-Sep	23-Oct
34		09-Oct	05-Nov		34		30-Sep	23-Oct
35		11-Oct	05-Nov		35		08-Oct	26-Oct
36		18-Oct	22-Oct		36		19-Oct	15-Nov
37		02-Nov	19-Nov		37		19-Oct	15-Nov
38		12-Nov	27-Nov		38		19-Oct	15-Nov
39		24-Nov	11-Dec		39		02-Nov	15-Nov
40		07-Dec	24-Dec		40		02-Nov	15-Nov
41		21-Dec	05-Jan		41		16-Nov	02-Dec
42					42		16-Nov	02-Dec
43					43		30-Nov	20-Dec
44					44		30-Nov	20-Dec
45					45		30-Nov	20-Dec
46					46		13-Dec	04-Jan
47					47		13-Dec	04-Jan
					48		13-Dec	04-Jan
					49		29-Dec	17-Jan

Madrid mail-bags (In/Out), reproduced based on 1944 ledger from NAI DFA 233/16A.

Madrid-Dublin 1944		Despatch	Receipt		Dublin-Madrid 1944		Despatch	Receipt
1		08-Jan	24-Jan		1		18-Jan	31-Jan
2		05-Feb	23-Feb		2		04-Feb	28-Feb
3		20-Feb	13-Mar		3		04-Feb	28-Feb
4		07-Mar	18-Mar		4		25-Feb	06-Mar
5		07-Mar	18-Mar		5		18-Mar	05-Apr
6		28-Mar	17-Apr		6		18-Mar	05-Apr
7		12-Apr	05-May		7		26-Apr	16-May
8		17-Apr	05-May		8		26-Apr	16-May
9		27-Apr	22-May		9		26-Apr	16-May
10		19-May	27-May		10		26-Apr	16-May
11		06-Jun	14-Jun		11		04-May	16-May
12		21-Jun	05-Jul		12		11-May	22-May
13		27-Jun	05-Jul		13		11-May	22-May
14		08-Jul	17-Jul		14		11-May	22-May
15		21-Jul	02-Aug		15		11-May	22-May
16		08-Aug	23-Aug		16		18-May	30-May
17		30-Aug	15-Sep		17		25-May	09-Jun
18		11-Sep	20-Sep		18		01-Jun	14-Jun
19		28-Sep	13-Oct		19		08-Jun	19-Jun
20		13-Oct	26-Oct		20		08-Jun	19-Jun
21		26-Oct	06-Nov		21		15-Jun	26-Jun
22		10-Nov	25-Nov		22		15-Jun	26-Jun
23		23-Nov	08-Dec		23		15-Jun	26-Jun
24		06-Dec	22-Dec		24		22-Jun	03-Jul
25		16-Dec	27-Dec		25		27-Jun	10-Jul
26					26		06-Jul	17-Jul
27					27		13-Jul	24-Jul
28					28		20-Jul	02-Aug
29					29		20-Jul	02-Aug
30					30		27-Jul	09-Aug
31					31		03-Aug	17-Aug
32					32		17-Aug	29-Aug
33					33		24-Aug	05-Sep
34					34		31-Aug	11-Sep
35					35		07-Sep	19-Sep
36					36		14-Sep	23-Sep
37					37		21-Sep	03-Oct
38					38		28-Sep	11-Oct
39					39		05-Oct	16-Oct
40					40		12-Oct	23-Oct
41					41		19-Oct	30-Oct
42					42		26-Oct	10-Nov
43					43		02-Nov	15-Nov
44					44		09-Nov	24-Nov
45					45		16-Nov	27-Nov
46					46		23-Nov	07-Dec
47					47		30-Nov	13-Dec
					48		07-Dec	21-Dec
					49		14-Dec	27-Dec
					50		21-Dec	03-Jan
					51		28-Dec	09-Jan

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