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The World War I censorship of the Irish-American press

Mulcrone, Michael Patrick, Ph.D.

University of Washington, 1993

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THE WORLD WAR I CENSORSHIP
OF THE IRISH-AMERICAN PRESS

by


Michael P. Mulcrone

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

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(Chairperson of Supervisory Committee)

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Abstract

THE WORLD WAR I CENSORSHIP OF THE IRISH-AMERICAN PRESS

by Michael Patrick Mulcrone

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During World War I, editions of five Irish-American newspapers were banned from the mails by the United States Post Office. One newspaper and a magazine were forced out of business.

These actions were ostensibly taken in the name of national security. This dissertation suggests, however, that the postal censorships were the culmination of a larger debate about American identity and the limits of pluralism during wartime.

The dissertation examines two aspects of the press: First, how Irish-American newspapers gave voice to immigrant aspirations and helped sustain a sense of identity among the immigrant Irish and their offspring; second, how loyalty to Ireland and anger toward Great Britain produced a backlash against the Irish-American press once the U.S. entered the War.

The first part of the study discusses the role of Irish-American newspapers within the national Irish-American community. The Irish-American press served as an alternative to the mainstream press. Irish-American

newspapers offered an Irish interpretation of events and reinforced Irish identity, the central component of which was hatred of Britain. When the U.S. joined the War as Britain's ally, the unrelenting anglophobia of the Irish-American press came into conflict with mainstream opinion.

The next section discusses role of the mainstream press in fomenting anti-Irish sentiment. The commercial daily press--with the exception of the Hearst papers--looked with suspicion upon Irish-American agitation against England. After the U.S. entered the War, the mainstream press encouraged vigilante activity and gave credence to unsubstantiated rumors of Irish/German plots. Some papers equated Irish-American nationalism with treason to the U.S.

The final section examines the subsequent censorship of the Irish-American press. Postal documents reveal that officials and volunteers at the New York City Post Office were more often motivated by a desire to silence dissent than by a legitimate concern for national security. In the hysteria of the times, criticism of Great Britain and expressions of Irish-American support for national self-determination in Ireland became synonymous with disloyalty to the United States.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Ethnic Press

Sixteen years ago, in an essay which appeared in the inaugural issue of Journalism History, James Carey lamented the current state of American journalism history.¹ Carey complained, among other things, that the field was dominated by a single interpretive paradigm which wedded the notion of progress to the idea of history. This whig interpretation of journalism history proclaimed that the evolution of the American press was--apart from a few temporary halts and digressions--essentially a story of success marked by ever-expanding freedoms, knowledge and social responsibility. The reconstructed record of the past became, as a consequence, little more than a cartography of past achievements.

Much has changed in the intervening years. Some scholars are scrutinizing the development of the mainstream commercial press with a more critical eye. Others are reevaluating the contributions of the alternative and dissident presses. The whig paradigm is no longer ascendant: the field, to borrow a phrase from Carey, has

been somewhat ventilated by fresh perspectives and new interpretations.

Yet the task is far from complete. Hanno Hardt has charged in a recent essay that the immigrant press has received little attention. Press historians, Hardt contends, have ignored or undervalued the contributions ethnic newspapers have made to American political and social culture:

By ignoring people, including the working class, which was made up of immigrants and their cultural differences, and by omitting an assessment of the social and political contributions of immigrant cultures and their newspapers as supportive or oppositional forces in society, press historians have made a travesty of journalism history.²

Some scholars dispute the sweeping contention that the immigrant press has been ignored.³ Most early studies of the immigrant press owe a debt to Robert Park's seminal work which concluded that the immigrant press primarily serves a dual role: it either inhibits or accelerates the assimilation of ethnic groups into the mainstream of American life.⁴ A more recent generation of scholars suggest the need for fresh perspectives.⁵

Despite efforts to include the ethnic press, the fact remains that journalism history has focused mainly upon the institutional side of journalism--most often mainstream journalism--or upon the broad economic, technological and social forces which helped give rise to the modern press.⁶

Yet at its essence, journalism is an interactive social process, an extended conversation among people who are attempting to make sense out of the world at particular moments in time. As Carey writes:

Journalism is essentially a state of consciousness, a way of apprehending, of experiencing . . . When we study the history of journalism we are principally studying a way in which men in the past have grasped reality.⁷

The immigrant or ethnic press was and remains an expression of ethnic consciousness and it provides a window into the process by which an ethnic group defines and sustains itself.⁸ The ethnic press also played a central role in the debate over the future course of American civic culture during the early years of the 20th century.

The ethnic press was ubiquitous. A British commentator observed in 1915 that if an Eskimo were to land unexpectedly into New York, the first thing he'd find would be a newspaper written by Eskimos for Eskimos.⁹ In 1917--one of the years encompassed by this study--more than 1400 ethnic newspapers were published in more than 33 different languages.¹⁰ These papers provided vital forums through which ethnic aspirations could be articulated and resolved.

The ethnic press--in its broad curriculum--was at once an expression of ethnic distinctiveness and a site of struggle against (and at times acquiescence to) acculturation and domination by the mainstream native majority. Some understanding of the ethnic press as a site

of divergent or oppositional visions of America is central to a complete understanding of the formation of contemporary notions of cultural and political pluralism and the role of the mass media role in that process.

This study examines how these concerns were articulated in the Irish-American press during the years 1914-1918--a time of upheaval when issues of loyalty and national identity were in the forefront of national discourse. This case study examines the strategies by which the Irish-American press sought to reconcile both sides of the Irish-American hyphen. It also addresses issues concerning the nature of press freedoms and the limits of cultural and political pluralism during times of national stress.

Specifically, the study explores how the Irish-American press described the experiences, articulated the aspirations and defined the identity of the Irish-American community at a critical point in its evolution. The study also examines the role of the Irish-American press as a forum for oppositional ideas. The study attempts to answer a number of questions:

- How did Irish-American newspapers represent or give voice to insurgent or oppositional ideas?
- What were the limits to such ideas?
- Finally, what were the consequences for the Irish-American press when its persistent expressions of ethnic aspirations and identity brought it into conflict with the

attitudes of the dominant mainstream culture during World War One?

Immigration and the Debate About American Identity

Urban America teemed with immigrants in the first decades of the 20th century. Outside of the Deep South, most cities held substantial immigrant populations. Four in every ten inhabitants of New York City in 1910 were foreign-born. In San Francisco, one in three was an immigrant. In parts of New England, the percentage of the foreign-born population approached 50 percent.¹¹ Immigrants and their American-born offspring made up more than 75 percent of the population in major cities across the nation.¹²

Unlike earlier waves of immigrants, most now came from southern or eastern Europe. The flood of newcomers--with their old-world loyalties and their bewildering babble of tongues--chafed at accepted notions of American identity.¹³ A resurgent nativism based upon the inherent superiority of Anglo-Saxons was but one response.¹⁴ The rise of racial theories--which asserted the genetic superiority of old stock Anglo-Saxons--paralleled the growing mood of rapprochement with Great Britain and America's burgeoning imperial presence following the Spanish-American War.¹⁵

The very definition of American was under challenge.¹⁶ Debates raged within intellectual circles--and spilled out into the mainstream media--over the relative merits of

Anglo-conformity versus "melting pot" theories of assimilation.¹⁷

These concerns rose into high relief as the United States moved towards war as an ally of Great Britain. World War One provided a focus to the tensions that seethed within American society. The War shattered the myth of homogeneity on which American society rested.¹⁸ The years 1914-1918 witnessed unprecedented attacks upon marginal groups. Vigilante organizations prowled the country in search of dissenters.¹⁹ Slackers (draft dodgers) and spies were the first targets. Socialists, labor radicals and the foreign-born soon became objects of suspicion. Exhortations in behalf of the Anglo-Saxon character of American identity were quickly subsumed under demands for conformity to "100% Americanism."²⁰

The Espionage, Sedition, and Trading with the Enemy Acts were used to silence many immigrant, socialist, religious and radical publications. Postal authorities wielded broad discretionary powers to stifle dissent by withdrawing--or threatening to withdraw--mailing privileges.

By mid-1918, 75 newspapers as well as scores of magazines, books and pamphlets were interfered with by the United States Post Office.²¹ Yet not a single commercial daily newspaper was directly affected by the postal proscriptions although a few, such as the Hearst papers,

often carried reports similar to those for which immigrant newspapers were suppressed.²²

The War was a dark era for the immigrant press. Justice Department officials and civilian volunteers at the U.S. Post Office subjected immigrant newspapers to continuous harassment. The German-language press suffered most. But other ethnic publications--including the Irish--were also affected. Postal authorities barred editions of at least five Irish-American newspapers from the mails during 1918 as well as a number of magazines, books and pamphlets.

Six editions of the New York Irish World and three editions of the New York Advocate were withheld from the mails. The New York Gaelic-American was barred from the mails for more than a year (postal privileges were not restored until three months after armistice). The Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register of New York was forced to suspend publication permanently. The Irish Press of Philadelphia almost went under. Jeremiah O'Leary, publisher of Bull, an anti-British satirical magazine which was forced out of business in 1917, went on the run before being captured on a chicken ranch in Washington state and tried for treason in a case that garnered national attention.

The experience of the socialist, radical, and German-language presses has been documented.²³ The experience of the Irish-American press in the years prior to and during

World War One, however, remains largely untold.²⁴ The years 1914-1918 provide an appropriate period of study for a number of reasons. The years leading up to World War One marked the convergence of a myriad of political and social forces that led to the suppression of socialist, radical and foreign-language publications. The Irish-American press continued to promote an ethnic agenda at a time of rising xenophobia, when assertions of ethnic distinctiveness attracted increasing suspicion.

This study of the Irish-American press addresses important issues concerning the nature of press freedoms and the limits of political and cultural pluralism in a seminal juncture in American history. It also discusses the role of the immigrant or ethnic press as a site of divergent or oppositional visions of America.

Dimensions of the Study

The study has two basic dimensions: 1.) It analyzes the content of a sample of Irish-American newspapers as a manifestation of Irish-American aspirations at a crucial stage in the evolution of the Irish-American community--the years 1914-1918. 2.) It documents the subsequent suppression of the Irish-American press following the United States' entry into World War One. This in turn will have three dimensions: The response of the government, the mainstream press, and the general public to ethnic aspirations as expressed in a sample of Irish-American

newspapers. Irish-American newspapers were suppressed for reasons that went beyond legitimate concerns for national security. The suppressions came, rather, as a consequence of the press' persistent and often strident demands that Irish-American aspirations concerning the colonial status of Ireland be acknowledged.

The study attempts to answer four questions:

- First, what major themes/concerns were articulated in the Irish-American press? Evidence reveals that anglophobia--antipathy toward Great Britain and fear of Anglo-Saxon influence in the United States--was the central dimension of Irish-American identity as articulated by the press. The anglophobic tendency found expression through several recurring themes: obsession with past injustices, concerns about the group image of the Irish in America, attitudes concerning the War and the anti-colonial struggle in Ireland. This dimension of the study also investigates the strategies by which the Irish-American press attempted to reconcile anglophobia with loyalty to the United States at a time of resurgent Anglo/Saxonism and rapprochement with Great Britain.

- Second, what was the nature of the U.S. government's case against the Irish-American press? National security was used as justification for the postal suppressions. Yet postal records concerning Irish-American publications reveal that censors were more often motivated by a spirit of

vigilantism and jingoism than by legitimate concerns for wartime security.

- Third, what role did the mainstream press play in fomenting or encouraging anti-Irish sentiment? Research reveals that many large daily newspapers--especially in New York City--equated Irish-American nationalist aspirations with disloyalty to the United States. Many Irish-Americans and Irish-American newspapers favored Germany over Britain in the early days of the War or advocated American neutrality. Following America's entry into the hostilities, however, even the most stridently anglophobic elements within the Irish-American press supported the war effort. Yet the mainstream press continued to equate criticism of Great Britain and support for national self-determination in Ireland with disloyalty to the United States. Many Irish editors accused mainstream newspapers of anti-Irish sentiment before and during the War. The Leader, the Irish World, the Gaelic-American, the Chicago Citizen and the Western Watchman were vociferous in their attacks upon mainstream newspapers. Mainstream daily newspapers encouraged attacks upon the Irish by giving credence to unsubstantiated British claims of Irish-German collusion in subverting the American war effort.

- Finally, how did Irish-American editors respond to the threat--or the actual imposition--of postal restrictions? The Freeman's Journal of New York and Bull, a

monthly magazine, were forced out of business. The Gaelic-American, which remained defiant, was banned from the mails until well after the end of the War and survived only through donations from supporters. The Irish Press suffered repeated postal bannings. The Irish World used its political influence in an attempt to counter the postal restrictions until continuous harassments forced it to submit.

The Irish-American Press

In 1914, at least 25 newspapers devoted to Irish interests were published in the United States.²⁵ These papers were English-language weeklies and many enjoyed national and even international circulations.

The Irish-American press provided a vigorous and vocal forum within the Irish-American community. Although the Irish could read English and could turn--unlike most other immigrant groups--to the mainstream press, the Irish supported their own newspapers in most large cities outside of the Deep South. New York alone had as many as five Irish weeklies. Boston supported two.

The Irish-American press warrants study for a number of reasons. The Irish, in the first decades of the 20th century, served as arbitrators between immigrant America and the old guard, mainly Anglo-Saxon establishment. The Irish were a powerful presence in politics, labor, and the church. Yet despite their influence (or perhaps because of it), they

were still denied access to key positions in industry, banking, and academia. With some exceptions, Irish editors were voices in support for cultural and political pluralism. Irish advocacy of self-determination for Ireland also provided a model for other immigrant groups in support of independence for their own homelands.²⁶

The experience of the Irish-American press was in some ways unique. Robert Park placed great emphasis upon foreign-language as a factor in the function and survival of the immigrant press. For immigrants unable to read English, newspapers in their native tongue provided important information as well as reassurance in the alien environment of urban America.²⁷

Yet the Irish could read English and could turn to the mainstream press for such information as was necessary make their way in the new world--and they did. Evidence suggests that the Irish were regular readers of mainstream newspapers.²⁸ The survival of the Irish-American press depended not upon language loyalty--like its foreign-language counterparts--nor upon the need to be "all things to all people," like the commercial daily press.²⁹

The Irish-American press existed because it practiced a fundamentally different kind of journalism.³⁰ It satisfied needs that the mainstream press--in its appeal to the broad middle--was unable or unwilling to meet. Irish editors interpreted events from a distinctly Irish perspective which

often stood at odds with mainstream interpretations. They appealed to their readers not as potential consumers but as members of a far-flung community separated by geography, class, and levels of adjustment but united by commonalities of culture, religion, a set of shared experiences, and an all-encompassing antipathy towards the ancestral enemy-- Great Britain.³¹

Nationalism was the driving force behind the Irish-American press since the foundation of the first distinctly Irish-American weekly, The Shamrock, in 1810. In the 19th century, the press labored to secure a place for the Irish in America by reconciling loyalty to Ireland with loyalty to the United States. To that end, Irish-American newspapers employed one of two conflicting strategies: they appealed to the Catholic identities of their readers or promoted a strident strain of nationalism which called for the violent overthrow of British rule in Ireland.³²

These approaches were designed for American ends: good Catholics would make good American citizens; a free Ireland would confer credibility and status upon the Irish in America (the anti-colonial struggle was often framed in the language and mythology of America's own war of independence against Great Britain. The two strategies were largely reconciled by the turn of the century. The Irish-American press had proved a critical influence in transforming the

social identity of the Irish in America. Much of its work in helping the Irish to adjust was complete.³³

But adjustment did not confer acceptance by the host society. By 1900 the Irish in America had achieved a degree of economic and political success. Yet they continued to be haunted by nagging suspicions of their own inferiority. America remained in many ways a hostile Anglo-Protestant nation and the Irish attributed their second-class status to the insidious influence of "Perfidious Albion" and her fawning anglophile acolytes. Those few within the Irish community who had scrambled their way into the upper-middle class longed only to abandon these ancestral concerns and disappear into the anonymity of mainstream America. For most, however, nationalism served as a source of tribal identity and provided a means by which legitimacy and acceptance might be won. The Irish looked to their organizations--and to their press--to give shape and voice to these aspirations.

In the 19th century many Irish-American newspapers advocated radical social and economic changes in American society and physical force to free Ireland from Great Britain. By 1914, however, most Irish-American newspapers scorned socialism and espoused instead a moderate domestic agenda which advocated labor peace and upward mobility as proper strategies for securing the position of the Irish in America.³⁴ Yet the Irish-American press maintained its

vehement, if less violent, attacks upon British policies in Ireland and upon perceived Anglo-Saxon influence--both foreign and domestic--in America. ³⁵ Irish-American criticism of Great Britain and Anglo-Saxon influence eventually called down the wrath of postal censors.

Methods/Documentary Sources

The study is grounded upon three categories of primary source material as well as a number of secondary sources.

Primary sources will include:

1.) Irish-American newspapers--A sample of five Irish-American newspapers was drawn from the years 1914 through 1918. The sample includes three newspapers--the San Francisco Leader, the Gaelic-American, and the Irish World (both of New York City)--which suffered restrictions at the hands of the representatives of the federal government and two newspapers--the Chicago Citizen and the Western Watchman of St. Louis--which escaped censure.³⁶ These newspapers were all weeklies and enjoyed regional and often national circulations.

The sample is not designed as a completely representative cross section of the entire Irish-American press. It is intended to reflect geographical differences and differences in orientation. One paper was selected from the west coast, two from the east, two from the Midwest.

2.) Mainstream daily newspapers--The sample of newspapers included the New York Times, the New York World,

the Chicago Tribune, the San Francisco Chronicle, and two Hearst newspapers--the San Francisco Examiner and New York American--which were more sympathetic to the Irish. The Literary Digest was also consulted for a cross section of American press opinion.

3.) Postal records and Justice Department records relating to Irish-American activities and the Irish-American press during World War One. These records are held in the National Archives, Washington D.C.

Editions of the five Irish-American newspapers were consulted from the years 1914-1918. A clustered sample was constructed around salient dates including in part the beginning of World War One in 1914, the 1916 Dublin Rising and its aftermath, the April 1917 declaration of war by the United States, the September 1917 warning concerning newspaper content issued by the Post Office, the November 1917 New York mayoral election, the January 1918 withdrawal of mailing privileges, reports of Irish-German plots in 1917 and 1918, etc. The New York Times Index served as an invaluable guide in constructing a chronology of Irish and Irish-American activities during 1914-1918.

Mainstream daily newspapers were examined from the same time period. Attention was given to all relevant newspaper content, including news reports, editorials and letters-to-the-editor. The study does not employ a formal content analysis; it relies instead upon the descriptive-analytical

method that typifies most narrative historical work in this country.

In addition to primary source material, a wide range of secondary sources was consulted in an effort to reconstruct the material conditions and historical consciousness of Irish-Americans prior to and during the War. Events can only be understood in terms of the contexts from which they arise. To fully comprehend the past events it is necessary, as Carey observes, to:

. . . penetrate beyond mere appearance to the structure of imagination that gives them their significance. . . . The objective is not merely to recover articulate ideas . . . but rather the entire "structure of feeling" . . . to show, in short, how action made sense from the standpoint of the historical actors: how did it feel to live and act in a particular period in human history?³⁷

The Irish-American Newspapers

The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator, published in New York City since 1870, was for decades the largest and most successful newspaper of its kind in America. The Irish World was edited by founder Patrick Ford until his death in 1913. Born in Ireland, Ford came to the United States in 1844 as a child of seven. His experiences as a young man in Boston during the full fury of Yankee nativism--when signs advising "No Irish Need Apply" were everywhere in evidence--convinced Ford that the Irish were victimized by British tyranny even in America.

Ford broke into the newspaper business at age 15 as a printer's devil on William Lloyd Garrison's abolitionist paper, the Liberator, where he absorbed not only the basics of the trade, but also Garrison's passionate concern for social justice. Ford served for a time as editor of the Boston Tribune. Following the Civil War he edited the South Carolina Leader, which agitated for black rights. After a failed attempt at Irish journalism in South Carolina, he founded the Irish World.

The Irish World espoused a variety of radical domestic social agendas in the long course of its evolution and supported the anti-colonial struggle in Ireland. In the 1880's, the Irish World endorsed labor agitation in the United States and sponsored massive fund raising drives bankroll rent boycotts in Ireland and bombing campaigns in Britain.

By the turn of the century, however, the Irish World had embarked upon a more moderate course. Abandoning its radical social agenda, it promoted middle-class values and labor harmony as the proper strategies for achieving respectability and acceptance for the Irish in America. The Irish World also turned away from armed struggle in favor of parliamentary methods on behalf of Ireland's campaign for independence from Britain. Following Patrick Ford's death in 1913, his nephew Robert took over as editor until his death in 1920. The Ford family also published the Freeman's

Journal and Catholic Register in New York City. The Irish World was the premier Irish newspaper in America. Estimated circulation in 1914 was 60,000.³⁸

The Gaelic-American--also published in New York City--was the nearest rival to the Irish World in influence if not circulation. Edited by John Devoy, who was exiled to the United States in 1871 for revolutionary activities in Ireland, the Gaelic-American was the strident and uncompromising voice of Irish nationalism in America.

Devoy served for a time as foreign-editor at the New York Herald before turning to Irish journalism in the 1880's. He founded the Gaelic-American in 1903 to challenge the Irish World's decision to promote parliamentary methods to resolve the Irish question. The only Irish-born nationalist leader in New York, Devoy was the ideologue of Irish-American nationalism, the "guardian of revolutionary purity" who strove to protect the movement from the contaminations of social radicalism and compromise.³⁹

Devoy was also sensitive to the needs of the Irish in America. He lived most of his life in the United States and the Gaelic-American, like the Irish World and most Irish-American papers of the time, advocated social mobility as a means of achieving acceptance for Irish-Americans. But unlike the Irish World, the Gaelic-American continued to advocate armed struggle to achieve Ireland's independence. Respectability would only be won by the Irish in America,

the Gaelic-American insisted, when Ireland took its place among the independent nations of the earth. Devoy's efforts were largely responsible for funding the Easter 1916 Rising in Dublin which set off a chain of events culminating in the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1921.

The Gaelic-American was the unofficial organ of Clann-na-Gael, which represented the violent wing of Irish nationalism in the United States. The chief owner of the paper was New York Supreme Court Justice Daniel Cohalan, who often co-wrote editorials with Devoy. The Gaelic-American was the premier radical-nationalist Irish newspaper in the United States. Estimated circulation in 1914 was 30,000.⁴⁰

The San Francisco Leader was co-founded in 1902 by Peter Yorke, an Irish-born Catholic priest.⁴¹ Although not an official diocesan publication, the Leader represented a kind of nationalist/Catholic hybrid that was common in the Irish-American press.

Yorke served for a time (1894-1898) as editor of the diocesan paper of San Francisco, The Monitor. During his tenure there he led a successful campaign against the American Protective Association, a nativist organization which flourished for a time in California.

As editor of the Leader, Yorke championed the cause of organized labor even as he insisted upon conformity to conservative Catholic values. Yorke was a vocal critic of Britain and of Anglo-Saxon influence in the United States.

His war against real and perceived discrimination against the Irish became something of an obsession--despite the fact that the Irish who settled in San Francisco suffered little of the bigotry and social ostracism their fellow countrymen endured in other parts of the nation.⁴² The Leader's estimated circulation in 1914 was 27,000.⁴³

The Chicago Citizen, founded by John F. Finerty in 1882, claimed to be "The Only National Secular Newspaper West of New York Devoted to the Unity and Elevation of the Irish People." A one-time member of Congress (on an anti-British platform), Finerty had a career in the mainstream daily press before turning to Irish journalism. Following his death in 1912, the paper had a series of editors including John P. Sutton, W.H. Cahill, and James Conwell.

The Citizen had ties to the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), the largest Irish fraternal organization in the United States.⁴⁴ It was also closely allied with the United Irish League, the American branch of the Irish Parliamentary Party led by John Redmond. The Irish Party was the voice of Home Rule in Ireland and it held the balance of power in British Parliament in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The Citizen was virulently anti-socialist and promoted middle-class values. Despite its claims of secularism, the Citizen took a conservative Catholic perspective on such moral issues as sex education, divorce, and censorship of "indecent" literature. The Citizen was distributed in many

cities along the east coast. Estimated circulation in 1914 was 30,000.⁴⁵

The Western Watchman, established in 1865, was the official newspaper of the Catholic archdiocese of St. Louis. The Watchman's masthead noted that the paper was "Devoted to the Interests of the Catholic Church in America." Edited by Rev. D.S. Phelan, the Watchman focused mainly upon clerical and church news from around the nation. It also carried a substantial Irish content and regularly chastised mainstream daily newspapers for their editorial stands on Irish issues.

At 20 pages, the Watchman was substantially larger than the other papers which normally ran eight to twelve pages in length. It also carried a larger percentage of advertising than its counterparts.⁴⁶ The Western Watchman is representative of those Catholic papers which carried substantial Irish content. The church--along with machine politics and the labor movement--was one of the few areas of Irish predominance and Irish clerics--whether American-born or immigrant--often brought an Irish perspective to the Catholic newspapers they edited. Estimated circulation of the Western Watchman in 1914 was 8,000.⁴⁷

Chapter Organization

Chapter Two--Irish-America Before the War--This chapter discusses the material conditions and status of the Irish in America. The post-Famine emigration of the 1840's and the hostile reception that the Irish received upon landing in

America left an indelible mark upon the folk memory of Irish-Americans. By 1914, the Irish had achieved a measure of economic and political power that enabled them to serve as arbitrators between immigrant groups and the old guard establishment. But a tangle of conflicting aspirations remained, including the need to somehow harmonize loyalty to the old country with loyalty to the United States. Despite their common heritage, however, the Irish of 1914 were a heterogeneous community divided by class, geography and levels of adjustment.

Chapter Three--Anglophobia, Identity, and the Irish-American Press--This chapter discusses the Irish-American press' anglophobic response to the resurgent Anglo-Saxonism in the years leading up to America's entry into World War One. This chapter begins the thematic content analysis of the Irish-American newspapers.

Chapter Four--Irish Nationalism: The American Dilemma--This chapter describes Irish-American press support for Irish independence from Great Britain. The Irish in America saw themselves as a nation in exile, forced to emigrate because of British misrule in Ireland. Prior to 1914, Irish-American papers were divided on tactics concerning the Irish national question. Some papers supported constitutional efforts to achieve limited self-rule for Ireland while others espoused armed struggle as a means of achieving total independence from Britain. Britain's

decision in 1914 to suspend implementation of home rule legislation until after the end of the war eroded the position of the moderates. The summary execution of the leaders of the 1916 Dublin Rising further marginalized the moderates. For both wings, however, self-determination in Ireland was seen as a necessary precondition for achieving legitimacy for the Irish in America. This chapter examines the Irish-American press' position on the question of Ireland's relationship to Great Britain. It also examines the mainstream press' attitudes concerning the Irish national question. The goal of this chapter is to determine how the Irish-American press sought to harmonize its anglophobia with loyalty to the United States as those two imperatives came into conflict.

Chapter Five--The War: Loyalties in Collision--From the beginning of the War, most Irish-American papers advocated American neutrality and were strident in their condemnation of Britain. Some papers openly favored Germany. This chapter examines the ways in which the Irish-American press interpreted the War. As America's entry into the War approached, the Irish-American position became increasingly untenable. Irish papers scrambled for a strategy to reconcile anti-British sentiment with loyalty to America.

Chapter Six--The Treasonous Irish: Vigilantees, Conspiracies and the Mainstream Press--This chapter discusses the national mood of vigilantism that began to

gather strength prior to America's entry into the War. Sanctioned and encouraged by elected officials and powerful sectors of the mainstream press, the national mood of suppression coalesced in the anti-hyphen debate of 1915, the presidential campaign of 1916 and the New York mayoral race of 1917. Chapter six also examines the antipathy of much of the mainstream press towards Irish-American aspirations. Many mainstream newspapers condemned Irish-American support for Irish self-determination and independence from Great Britain. Despite the paucity of evidence, most leading mainstream newspapers gave credence to every rumored German/Irish plot which emanated from British propagandists. With the exception of the Hearst newspapers, the mainstream press equated Irish-American support for the anti-colonial struggle in Ireland with disloyalty to the United States. By the time the United States entered the War, agitation in support of the independence movement in Ireland had become synonymous in public consciousness with disloyalty to America.

Chapters Seven and Eight--The Postal Suppressions. The Suppressions Expand--These chapters discuss the passage and implementation of the Espionage and Trading with the Enemies Acts and the censorship and suppression of Irish-American publications by the U.S. Post Office and the U.S. Justice Department. These chapters detail the scope of the press bannings and discuss the reactions of various Irish-American

newspapers. Postal records reveal that censors employed arbitrary standards which--despite protestations to the contrary--forced two periodicals out of business and resulted in the pre-publication censorship of every edition of the Irish World during the latter months of 1918. These standards went beyond the mandate of the law and far exceeded any legitimate concern for national security during wartime.

Chapter Nine--Conclusions--This chapter summarizes the experience of the Irish-American press during 1914-1918 and discusses its implications. It also offers suggestions for future study.

Notes to Chapter I

¹James W. Carey, "The Problem of Journalism History," Journalism History Spring 1974.

²Hanno Hardt, "The Foreign-Language Press in American Press History," Journal of Communication Spring 1989: 129.

³Catherine Cassara, "The Foreign-Language Press in America: A Historiographic Analysis," unpublished paper delivered at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications convention, Boston, 1991. Cassara concludes that this perception exists because most research concerning the immigrant press has been published in journals other than those devoted to communications studies. Cassara 26.

⁴Robert Park, The Immigrant Press and It's Control (New York: Harper and Brothers: 1922). The Park study--which remains the only detailed study of the entire immigrant press--was part of a ten-volume series on immigrants and Americanization conducted by the University of Chicago on a grant from the Carnegie Foundation. The social scientists at Chicago sought to reappraise American attitudes towards the foreign-born following the nativist resurgence during World War One. One of the goals of the Park study was to determine how the foreign-language press could be enlisted to advance the Americanization of immigrant populations. Park also concluded that the foreign-language press was essentially opportunistic. Its first duty is to survive. According to Park's evolutionary model the immigrant press tends over time to move toward the middle of the socio-political spectrum, abandoning advocacy and opinion in favor of objective news and advertising. Park also placed great emphasis on the importance of foreign language as a factor in the function and survival of the immigrant press. He concluded that the foreign-language press provided vital information about the alien American environment for immigrants unable to read English. The very existence of the Irish-American press (which Park ignored) suggests that the immigrant press served other needs. Unlike other immigrant groups the Irish could read English and could, as a consequence, turn to the mainstream press for such information as was needed to order their lives.

Studies of the German-language press employ Park's dual role model to conclude, in agreement with Park, that assimilation was given higher priority by editors than separatism. Carl Wittke, who surveyed the entire German-language press, and Carl Knoche, who studies the press in Milwaukee, also agree that partisan publications were short-lived and that commercial papers were more widespread and

influential. Carl Wittke, The German Language Press in America (Louisville: U of Kentucky P, 1957) 217. Carl Heinz Knoche, The German Immigrant Press in Milwaukee diss., Ohio State U, 1969, (New York: Arno, 1980) 128.

Other studies from the assimilationist perspective include Mordecai Soltes, The Yiddish Press: An Americanizing Agency (New York: Columbia U Teachers College, 1923. Jan Kowalik, The Polish Press in America (San Francisco: R&E Research Associates: 1940. Arlow W. Anderson, The Immigrant Takes His Stand: The Norwegian-American Press and Public Affairs 1847-1872 (Northfield, Minn.: Norwegian-American Historical Foundation, 1951).

⁵George E. Pozetta, "The Italian Immigrant Press of New York City: The Early Years 1880-1915," Journal of Ethnic Studies (Fall 1973) suggests, in contradiction of Park, that the immigrant press was not always altruistic and sometimes worked against the interests of immigrants.

Jonas Bjork concludes that Park's dual role model is true but inadequate. He suggests that it is too tied to immigration and that scholars since Park have become prisoners of Park's perspective. Ulf Jonas Bjork, "The Swedish-American Press: Three Newspapers and Their Communities," diss., U of Washington, 1987, 18.

Hendrick Edelman argues that historians must acknowledge that press patterns and functions vary from one ethnic group to another. Hendrick Edelman, The Dutch Language Press in America (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1986) 1.

Sally Miller suggests the need for context; that different stages characterize the evolution of the ethnic press. Sally Miller, introduction, The Ethnic Press in the United States. A Historical Analysis and Handbook (New York: Greenwood, 1987) xvi.

Marion Marzolf argues that earlier analyses failed to acknowledge the evolutionary character of the ethnic press. Different obstacles and needs of each group determine the functions of its press at any given time. As the aspirations of a group change, so too does the role of the press. Marzolf suggests: "Descriptions of the ethnic press must take into account the immigrant group's experience and characteristics, the time period, the functions of the press. . . ." Marion Tuttle Marzolf, The Danish Language Press in America, diss., U of Michigan, 1972, (New York: Arno, 1979) 15.

⁶The most ubiquitous textbook history of the American press, Michael and Edwin Emery, The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1988, 6th edition), devotes less than three pages to the immigrant or foreign-language press. Jean Folkert and Dwight Teeter, Voices of a Nation (New York: MacMillan, 1989) contains three short references to the

foreign-language press.

⁷Carey 5.

⁸The term "ethnicity" is derived from the Greek "ethnos" meaning people or nation. The term "ethnic group" is used here to describe a group with a shared feeling of peoplehood based on nationality, language or place of common origin. The terms "ethnic" and "immigrant" are used interchangeably in reference to the press. This is based on the conclusion that the readership of the immigrant press was comprised not only of immigrants, but also their offspring.

⁹This observation is attributed to P.G. Wodehouse. Owen Dudley Edwards, "Conclusion: Some Counterthemes," America and Ireland 1776: The American Identity and the Irish Connection, eds. David Noel Doyle and Owen Dudley Edwards (Westport: Greenwood, 1980) 312.

¹⁰Emery notes that the number of foreign-language newspapers peaked at 1323 in 1917, the number of dailies peaked at 160 in 1914. Emery 265. The operative definition of ethnic newspapers also includes those which were published in the English language for distinct ethnic groups, including Irish-Americans. The true number of ethnic papers is difficult to assess because newspaper directories from the period--such as N.W. Ayer and Son's--did include English-language newspapers in any of the ethnic categories. The true number was probably well in excess of 1400.

¹¹Thirteenth Census of the United States, vol. 1 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1912).

¹²These cities included Chicago, New York, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Minneapolis and San Francisco. Nell Irvin Painter, Standing at Armageddon: The United States 1877-1919 (New York: Norton, 1987) introduction, xxxiv.

¹³Horace Kallen, a superintendent of New York City schools and a professor of philosophy at Harvard, observed that English had become like Latin in the Middle Ages: it was the language of the upper and dominant class and served as a kind of lingua franca in the economic life of the masses. Horace Kallen, "Democracy vs. the Melting Pot," Nation (25 Feb. 1915) 217.

¹⁴The "new" nativism that began to gather momentum after Haymarket massacre in 1886 was not limited to new immigrants. It had a distinct anti-Catholic character and it looked to England as the source of American cultural and

political traditions. John Higham, Strangers in the Land (New York: Atheneum, 1965) 137-138. One manifestation was the American Protective Association (APA) which appeared in the midwest in 1887 to combat alien influences. The APA admitted some foreign-born (Germans and Scandanavians were allowed), but no Catholics. By 1900 the APA had one million members. Higham 62. Edward Wakin, Enter the Irish-American (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976) 77. Carl Wittke, The Irish in America (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1956) 123. The re-birth of the Ku Klux Klan in 1915 also gave witness to rising anti-Catholic sentiment. Joseph E. Cuddy, Irish-America and National Isolation: 1914-1920, diss., State U of New York, 1965 (New York: Arno, 1976) 115. Bodnar attributes the rise of nativism to the class conflict of the 1880's and 1890's, the "psychological stress" of old Anglo-Saxon elites who feared the decline of their power and culture, and the persistence of cultural attitudes and perspectives on what the nation should be: non-Catholic, non-Jewish, and non-radical. John Bodnar, "Culture Without Power: A Review of John Higham's Strangers in the Land," Journal of Ethnic History (Fall-Winter 1991) 81.

¹⁵Josiah Strong, Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis (New York: American Home Ministry Society, 1885) advocated Anglo-Saxon imperialism. Strong, a Congregationalist minister and a pioneering social reformer, criticized Irish political machines for courting the immigrant vote. 176,000 copies of his book were in print by 1916. Charles E. Woodruff, M.D., Expansion of the Races (New York: Rebman, 1909) advocated closer ties between England and America based on their common Aryan superiority. Racial superiority and the idea of the white man's burden were used to justify the United States' incursion into the Phillipines.

The notion Anglo-Saxon dominance in the racial hierarchy was predicated on the assumption that culturally acquired characteristics were genetically transmitted. Fallows 6. Many expressed a fear of "race suicide" as a consequence of immigration. A University of Wisconsin professor of sociology complained: ". . . we now confront the melancholy spectacle of this pioneer breed being swamped and submerged by the overwhelming tide of latecomers from the old-world hive. . . . blood now being injected into the veins of our people is `sub-common' . . . (from) hirsute, low-browed, big-faced persons of obvious low mentality." Edward Alsworth Ross, Ph.D., The Old World in the New (New York: Century, 1914) 299, 282, 285. Another widely-read book was Madison Grant, The Passing of the Great Race (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916). Grant, a New York descendent of Yankee colonial stock, helped found and direct the New York Zoological Society. The genetic theories did not stand unchallenged in academic circles. Some emphasized

the importance of new blood in the creation of a new American type. John Higham, "European Immigration in American European Thought 1885-1925, diss., U of Wisconsin, 1948. See also Franz Boas, The Mind of Primitive Man (New York: MacMillan, 1916) 120-121. Boas was a German-Jewish immigrant and a professor of anthropology at Columbia University.

¹⁶Fuchs argues that the question of American identity was in almost continuous debate from 1880-1920. This debate centered around two conflicting ideas: 1.) the basis of American identity was based upon diversity bound by a Jeffersonian commitment to civic culture and democratic participation rather than cultural, racial, or religious conformity. 2.) American identity was a condition of character, birth, or ethnic heritage. Laurence H. Fuchs, The American Kaleidoscope: Race, Ethnicity and the Civic Culture (Hanover: UP of New England, 1990) 56-57.

¹⁷The term "melting pot" came from the 1908 play of the same name produced by Israel Zangwill. Zangwill's play celebrated the American libertarian mission and the fusion of all races. The theory of cultural pluralism was first articulated in the writings of Horace Kallen: Democracy vs. the Melting Pot," Nation (18, 25 Feb. 1915) Baltzell argues that that the structural exclusion of ethnics by the dominant majority and the persistence of ethnic associations such as newspapers, schools, etc. made for a de facto structural pluralism long before the theory of cultural pluralism was articulated. E. Digby Baltzell, Protestant Establishment Revisited (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1991) 221.

Critics of the melting pot theory claimed that the melting pot did not work. They warned that immigration threatened the survival of the Anglo-Saxon race and as well as American civic life and democratic institutions: "[Immigrants] not possessing the Anglo-Teutonic conception of law, order, and government . . . [have begun] to corrupt our civic life." Stanford Professor Edward Cubberly, founding member of the Immigration Restriction League, quoted in Fuchs 57. "In the city of New York, and elsewhere in the United States, there is a native American aristocracy resting upon layer after layer of immigrants of lower races. . . . the operation of universal suffrage tends toward the selection of the average man for public office rather than the man qualified by birth, education, and integrity. . . . from a racial point of view, it will inevitably increase the preponderance of the lower types and cause a corresponding loss of efficiency in the community as a whole. . . . If the Melting Pot is allowed to boil without control . . . and we continue to follow our national motto . . . the type of American of Colonial descent will become as extent as the

Athenian in the age of Pericles." Grant 5, 228. Others made veiled suggestions that the Constitution be changed to prevent that eventuality: "So long as present sociological conditions continue unchanged in the Republic and its political constitution remains unaltered, the nation must in due time be given over to those races who can turn up to heave the greatest number of befouled and stubby noses. The final passage of the American Republic into the control of other race approaches, and with it the Day of the Saxon draws to an end." Homer Lea, The Day of the Saxon (New York: Harper, 1912) 36.

Articles in the mainstream press, often based on scientific studies, helped popularize racial theories and the concern that the Anglo-Saxon character of American identity was endangered by the immigrant masses. See "Does the 'Melting Pot' Melt," Literary Digest 3 March 1917: 544-545. See also "Birth Control and Race Suicide," Literary Digest 3 February 1917: 244-245. John Higham suggests that "fears of an immigrant menace" grew more powerful and widespread after 1910. John Higham, *diss.*, 150.

¹⁸John P. Roche, The Quest for the Dream (New York: 1963) 38-40.

¹⁹Joan M. Jensen, Price of Vigilance. (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1968) 127, 146. H.C. Peterson and Gilbert C. Fite, Opponents of War 1917-1918. (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1957) 18.

²⁰Gordon argues: "Anglo-conformity received its fullest expression in the so-called Americanization movement which gripped the nation like a fever during World War One. . . . essentially it was a consciously articulated movement to strip the immigrant of his native attachments and make him over into an American along Anglo-Saxon lines." Milton Gordon, Assimilation in American Life (New York: Oxford UP, 1964) 98-99.

²¹"It was the little newspapers--the reform or radical publications--along with the foreign-language press, which were suppressed by the government." Peterson and Fite 95.

²²William H. Maxwell, a civilian volunteer at the New York Post Office appealed unsuccessfully on several occasions for permission to proceed against the New York Evening Post. See letters dated 16 March 1918 and 23 March 1918, W.A. Maxwell to Solicitor General William H. Lamar, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the United States Post Office Relating to the Enforcement of the Espionage and Trading With the Enemies Act During World War One. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

²³For general discussions of wartime repression, see Zachariah Chafee Jr., Freedom of Speech in the United States (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1942); James R. Mock, Censorship 1917 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1941); H.C. Peterson and Gilbert C. Fite, Opponents of War 1917-1918 (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1957); Joan M. Jensen, The Price of Vigilance (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1968).

For discussions of the German-language press, see Carl Wittke, The German Language Press in America (Louisville: U of Kentucky P, 1957); Carl Wittke, German-Americans and the World War (Columbus: Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society, 1936); Clifton J. Child, The German-Americans in Politics 1914-1917, (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1939).

²⁴Mock, Censorship 1917, Peterson and Fite, Opponents of War and Chafee, Free Speech in the United States briefly mention the Irish-American press ban. Alden Jamison, "Irish-Americans, the Irish Question and American Diplomacy, 1895-1921," diss., Harvard U, 1942, discusses the censorship of the Irish-American press in more detail. See pages 578-593.

A number of studies give at least some attention to Irish-American newspapers during World War One. Joseph P. O'Grady, ed., Immigrants Influence on Wilson's Peace Policies (Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1967) discusses the efforts of Irish-American editors to include Irish concerns at the post war peace conference. Edward Cuddy, "Irish-Americans and the 1916 Election," Edward Walsh, ed., The Irish: America's Political Class (New York: Arno, 1976) mentions press opposition toward Wilson. Edward Cuddy, "Irish-American Propagandists and American Neutrality, 1914-1917," Mid-America (October 1967) examines the efforts of the Irish-American press to keep the United States out of World War One. Francis M. Carroll, American Opinion and the Irish Question (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978) discusses Irish-American and mainstream press attitudes regarding the issue of Ireland's independence from Great Britain. Thomas R. Greene, "Shane Leslie and Ireland (1916-1917): "England's Little Irish

Organ In New York," Eire/Ireland (Winter 1987) discusses the appearance of a pro-British Irish newspaper in New York City. Charles C. Tansill, America and the Fight for Irish Freedom (New York: Devin-Adair, 1957) offers a one-sided account of Irish-American efforts to promote Irish independence during the war years.

The historiography on the Irish-American press in general is sketchy. The earliest efforts are broadly descriptive and often filiopietistic: Paul J. Foik, Pioneer Catholic Journalism (New York: United States Catholic Historical Society, 1930); Walter Luke Willigan, "A History of the Irish-American Press From 1691 to 1835," diss., Fordham U, 1934. Later works focus primarily on the 19th

century press.

Eileen McMahon, "The Irish-American Press," The Ethnic Press in the United States, Sally Miller, ed. (New York: Greenwood, 1987) suggests that immigrant editors of the 19th century sought to ease the process of assimilation and to shape and promote Irish-American nationalist opinion. She concludes that anti-British sentiment was the driving force behind the press.

William L. Joyce, Editors and Ethnicity. A History of the Irish-American Press 1848-1883, diss., U of Michigan, 1974, (New York: Arno, 1976) surveys 20 Irish-American newspapers. Joyce concludes that the immigrant press sought to reconcile immigrant loyalty to both Ireland and the United States. Newspapers appealed either to the Catholic identity of their readers or promoted the violent overthrow of British rule in Ireland. These two strategies, according to Joyce, tell the story of the 19th century Irish-American press.

James P. Rodenko, Patrick Ford and His Search for America. A Case Study in Irish-American Journalism 1870-1913 diss., U of Connecticut, 1967 (New York: Arno, 1976) concludes that the Irish World embraced a range of nationalist perspectives and domestic (U.S) reformist agendas during its long evolution. Throughout his career, Ford blamed Britain for the low status of the Irish in America. By the time of his death in 1913, Ford had abandoned his advocacy of social radicalism and revolutionary violence against Britain to embrace middle-class values and moderate constitutional nationalism.

²⁵N.W. Ayer & Son, American Newspaper Annual and Directory (Philadelphia: Ayer & Son, 1914. The actual number could be much greater because, as noted, the Ayer Newspaper Annual did not classify Irish-American periodicals in any consistent ethnic category. Newspapers and magazines devoted to Irish interests were classified according to a number of arbitrary designations including "Irish," "Irish-American," "Irish-Catholic," "Catholic," "Irish Interests," "Democratic," and "Anti-British." These designations can be a source of confusion. The Irish World, for example, the most successful and influential secular Irish publication in the United States, was labeled "Catholic." N.W. Ayer & Son, w1914 Newspaper Annual 653. Numerous ostensibly Catholic newspapers--most of which were edited by Irish clerics--also devoted substantial attention to Irish and Irish-American issues. Dean Esslinger, "American German and American Irish Attitudes Toward Neutrality, 1914-1917: A Study of Catholic Minorities," Catholic Historical Review 53 (July 1967): 200.

²⁶The Irish question was also a popular topic in the contemporary African-American press. See Frederick

Detweiler. The Negro Press in the United States (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1922).

²⁷Park claimed that the existence of the immigrant press was a function of foreign-language. He argued that without non-English speaking readers, the immigrant press had no constituency. Park 9, 326-327.

²⁸The Hearst newspapers, which were generally sympathetic to Irish causes, enjoyed a wide Irish readership. Two of the Hearst chain's most popular comic strips--"Happy Houligan" and "Maggié and Jigs"--were based on Irish characters. The Irish of New York were such faithful customers of Joseph Pulitzer's New York World that the Gaelic-American often called upon its readers to punish the World by withholding advertisements from its death notices section (known in common parlance as the "Irish sports page"). See "World's Audacious Impudence," editorial, Gaelic-American 21 March 1914: 4.

²⁹Gerald J. Baldasty and Jeffrey B. Rutenbeck, "Money, Politics and Newspapers: The Business Environment of Press Partisanship in the Late Nineteenth Century," Journalism History (Spring 1989) 19. Baldasty notes that the major goal of the mainstream press publishers by the end of the 19th century was the delivery of large numbers of consumers to advertisers 26. See also, Gerald J. Baldasty, The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1992).

³⁰Irish-American newspapers were less dependent on advertising than other weeklies in the United States. Marzolf notes that mainstream commercial weeklies devoted an average of 50 percent of their space to advertisements in the early 20th century. Danish-American weeklies carried an average of 18 to 30 percent ads. Marzolf 211.

Of the Irish-American newspapers analyzed in this study, only the San Francisco Leader had an advertising ratio approaching that of the Danish weekly press. The Leader promoted itself as an advertising medium and often ran contests to boost circulation. Advertising content of the other Irish-American papers often fell below ten percent.

Patrick Ford, founder of the Irish World, believed that Irish weekly newspapers could be supported by circulation alone. He also believed that because the chief function of the Irish press was editorial interpretation, there was no need for an Irish daily press. Joyce 176.

³¹Some word needs to be said about the "Scotch-Irish," as Protestants from the northern counties of Ireland came to be known in the United States. Not all Irish immigrants to

the United States were Catholic and not every Irish-American newspaper appealed to the Catholic identity of its readers. Because of historical circumstances, however, Catholicism and Irish nationalism became intimately interwoven. Irish Protestants were a notable presence in the United States particularly before the Irish potato famine of the mid 19th century which sent thousands of destitute Catholic peasants to the eastern seaboard. Moynihan suggests that Irish Protestants, in an attempt to separate themselves from the impoverished hordes, actively sought to become absorbed into the native Anglo-Saxon stock that had successfully absorbed the Scots. The strategy was reinforced by the appearance of anti-Catholic/anti-Irish nativism--the Know Nothing movement. Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Pot (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970) 239-240.

McCaffrey argues that efforts by northern Irish Protestants to identify with Anglo-American Protestants intensified the siege mentality of Irish-Catholics. Lawrence McCaffrey et al. The Irish in Chicago (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1987) 4.

Fallows characterizes the term "Scotch-Irish" as a social invention which was intended to distance the Protestant Irish of America from Irish-Catholics. Marjorie P. Fallows, Irish-Americans: Identity and Assimilation (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1979) 22. For an example of a contemporary effort to establish the Scotch-Irish as a separate racial group, see Henry Jones Ford, The Scotch-Irish in America (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1915). For a contemporary refutation of the Scotch-Irish claim, see G. O'Brien, "How the Descendants of Irish Settlers in America Were Called Anglo-Saxons and Scotch-Irish," American Catholic Historical Society (1919).

There was no identifiable Irish-Protestant press in the United States. Irish-Protestants, however, were prominent in the American alternative media: E.L. Godkin served as editor of the Nation during World War One. Another Irish-born Protestant, Shane Leslie, was associate editor of the short-lived newspaper, Ireland, which appeared in 1916 in New York to promote the cause of Irish constitutional nationalism as an alternative to the advocates of armed struggle.

³²William L. Joyce, Editors and Ethnicity. A History of the Irish-American Press 1843-1883, diss., U of Michigan, 1974, (New York: Arno, 1979) 12.

³³Joyce 184, 5.

³⁴Following the 1886 Haymarket massacre and its aftermath, many Irish-American leaders, including Patrick Ford of the Irish World, turned away from radical social agendas.

³⁵The success of the Home Rule movement--which promised to achieve a degree of legislative autonomy for Ireland--gave credibility to those nationalists who advocated non-violent, constitutional tactics.

³⁶These publications were chosen from among those generally acknowledged as being the leading Irish-American papers of the period. See Thomas N. Brown, "The Origins and Character of Irish-American Nationalism," Review of Politics, 18 (1956) 201. See also Arthur Link, Wilson and the Struggle for Neutrality 1914-1915 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1960) 22. The choice of newspapers was also determined in part by their availability on microfilm. Complete runs were available for the Leader, the Gaelic-American, and the Irish World for the years 1914-1918. Editions of the Chicago Citizen were available from January 1914 through May 1914, and February 1917 through December 1918. The Western Watchman was available only for the years 1917 and 1918. Although editions surrounding certain important events--most notably the 1916 Dublin Rising--are missing for the Citizen and the Watchman, complete runs were available for the critical years following the United States' entry into the War.

³⁷Carey 23.

³⁸N.W. Ayer & Son, 1914 Newspaper Annual 653.

³⁹Joyce 164.

⁴⁰N.W. Ayer & Son, 1914 Newspaper Annual 650.

⁴¹T.J. Mellot was co-founder and co-editor of the Leader. Joseph S. Brusher, Consecrated Thunderbolt: Father Yorke of San Francisco (Hawthorne: Wagner, 1973) 70.

⁴²Yorke was forced to resign as editor of the Monitor in 1898 when his anti-nativism became too strident for Archbishop Patrick Riordan.

⁴³N.W. Ayer & Son, 1914 Newspaper Annual 85.

⁴⁴The Hibernian, the monthly magazine published by the AOH, had a circulation of 175,000 in 1914. N.W. Ayer & Son, 1914 Newspaper Annual 1247.

⁴⁵Ayer & Son, 1914 Newspaper Annual 177.

⁴⁶The Watchman devoted up to 40 percent of its space to ads. The Leader sometimes approached 30 percent. The Gaelic-American and the Citizen averaged around ten percent. The Irish World fell somewhere in the Leader and the

Citizen.

⁴⁷N.W. Ayer & Son, 1914 Newspaper Annual 529.
Circulation in 1914 had declined, according to Ayer, from
37,000 in 1910. Ayer & Son, 1910 Newspaper Annual 1091.

CHAPTER II

IRISH-AMERICA BEFORE THE WAR

In 1914, at the eve of World War One, Irish-America was a nation in exile. Irish immigrants and their first generation American-born children numbered 4.5 million, surpassing even the population of Ireland. The Irish constituted the largest immigrant group in the United States other than the Germans. In Chicago and San Francisco, the Irish were the second largest immigrant group. In New York City, the Irish were fourth in numbers.¹

In all, between 15 and 20 million Americans could claim at least partial Irish ancestry. And although the Irish had scattered throughout the United States (mostly in urban areas) sixty per cent of the national Irish community was concentrated in the six states of the northeast where the legacy of anti-Irish nativism remained strongest.²

Immigration continued but the numbers were in decline. By the turn of the century, newcomers from southern and eastern Europe had largely replaced the swarms of Irish at the immigrant gates. The exodus from Ireland to the United States--one of the largest folk migrations in modern history--had fallen from a peak of 219,000 in the post-Famine year of 1851 to less than 50,000 by 1910. The

American-born now outnumbered their immigrant Irish parents two-to-one.³ The diaspora had begun to abate. Irish-America was coming of age.

The Irish could look to many examples of their rising status. They were a powerful presence in politics, organized labor, and the Catholic church. Their knowledge of English and their skill at organization enabled the Irish to rise to positions of the leadership in the labor movement. Irishmen were elected mayors of major cities.⁴ Irish clerics dominated the hierarchy of the Catholic church and edited the vast majority of Catholic newspapers. By the late nineteenth century the Irish had become a

strategic ethnic presence in the hub of urban America. . . . a core group about whom laboring immigrant Americans clustered.⁵

The Irish, by seizing control of urban political machines across the nation, became arbitrators between immigrant America and the old guard elite.⁶ In New York City--the capital of immigrant America--the Irish would run the Tammany machine, with its rich network of political influence and patronage, as an Irish fiefdom for more than half a century. The flood of newer immigrants after the 1890's--who unlike earlier immigrants were likely to be Democrat and often Catholic--further reinforced Irish political power.

At the national level, Joseph McKenna won appointment as Attorney General during the McKinley administration to

become the first Irish Catholic to hold a cabinet-level position.⁷ Another Irish Catholic, Joseph Tumulty, served as personal secretary to President Woodrow Wilson. Irish senators and congressmen represented states from every region of the country outside of the Deep South.

In the economic arena, the Irish had achieved relative occupational parity with native white Americans. The prospect of social mobility--denied in the old country--had awakened a hunger for achievement in the new. A higher proportion of Irish children were attending college than those of WASP parentage. In northern cities, one-fifth of all public school teachers were Irish Catholic. Irish women were prominent in nursing and in the secretarial trade. Irish pugilists would dominate professional boxing from the 1880's until 1937 when Joe Louis knocked out James J. Braddock to win the world heavyweight crown. And although most Irish were still members of the working class at the eve of World War One, they enjoyed--because of their dominance of the American Federation of Labor--a disproportionate share of the best paid union jobs.⁸ The achievements of second-generation Irish-Americans were so dramatic that one critic of the Irish was forced to conclude:

. . . the record of their children proves that there is nothing in their stock that dooms it forever to serve at the tail end of a wheelbarrow.⁹

But not everyone shared in the spoils of economic achievement. Despite advancements, many were left behind by the rising tide of upward mobility. In 1900, one-quarter of Irish-born males and one-seventh of American-born males of Irish descent still labored in low paying, unskilled occupations. Irish females continued to scrub clothes and scour floors in the homes of the urban elite, or labor in the sweat shops of the textile industry.¹⁰

As late as 1915, the death rate among the Irish was the highest in New York City and twice that of contemporary Ireland.¹¹ The Irish died in such numbers from tuberculosis that it was commonly known as "the Irish disease."¹² Schizophrenia and the ravages of chronic drinking sent a disproportionate number of Irish immigrants to public mental asylums.¹³

The level of Irish achievement was determined in part by local conditions. In San Francisco--where the Irish encountered an "almost negligible degree of discrimination, alienation and dislocation," they responded with confidence and quickly rose to positions of authority in all areas of public and private life.¹⁴

But San Francisco was unique. As America's first instant city, it provided an "exceptional environment" whose critical feature was

the lack of an established elite capable, by virtue of prior arrival and control of resources, of ascribing an inferior place to subsequent immigrants.¹⁵

Chicago, like other cities in the Midwest, represented a kind of hybrid. It offered more tolerance and social mobility than the cities of the east but less than San Francisco.¹⁶ The Irish encountered a hostile environment on the east coast.

On the eastern seaboard, Irish-Americans experienced nativist wrath and discrimination that inhibited economic and social mobility. Consequently the eastern Irish developed a defensive ghetto mentality dominated by an inferiority complex . . . a siege mentality. . . . The Irish of San Francisco and the west inhabited an environment that was characterized by a cosmopolitan ethos, competition and tolerance that engendered an Irish psychology of confidence and pride.¹⁷

Despite their contrasting experiences, the American Irish were united by a sense of common identity that transcended differences of geography, class, and levels of adjustment.¹⁸ Many who settled in the Midwest and the Far West had migrated there from the eastern seaboard where they had experienced first hand the realities of intolerance and discrimination.

The memory of past deprivations in both Ireland and America was kept alive in folk memory. The Irish-Catholic world view was molded by a pre-industrial, rural way of life which stressed the communal and the non-competitive and devalued individual initiative and responsibility.¹⁹ To the peasant Irish, fate was the product of powerful, implacable forces over which the individual could exercise little control. Emigration was a form of involuntary exile rather

than an opportunity for advancement. Those who sailed on immigrant ships blamed Britain for their leaving, even if objective circumstances proved otherwise.²⁰

This "culture of despair" was articulated throughout the 19th century in the popular press in Ireland, in folk traditions, and even in the very structure of the Irish language.²¹ And it survived in the Irish imagination on both sides of the Atlantic in many forms of popular expression until well into the 20th century.

The emigration experience generated an entire genre of ballads of which thousands survive in the living tradition. Most express anger and a sense of irreconcilable loss at having been forced to leave Ireland. Many--those most popular in the Irish-American press--end with ringing cries for revenge against the foreign tyrant, Britain.²²

The Irish language contributed to the mythos of immigration as involuntary exile. There is no word with neutral connotations in the Irish language for "emigrant." The words most commonly associated with emigration invoke images of homelessness, banishment, and exile.²³ Although the Irish language was in rapid decline by the turn of the century, one in every four immigrants to the United States in the years 1891-1900 came from an Irish-speaking district. An even higher percentage came from areas where the language had only recently fallen into disuse. Thus the symbolic

structure of the language still resonated through the Irish imagination in the new world as well as the old.²⁴

Another tradition--the "American wake"--evolved in Ireland in connection with the leave-taking of a son or daughter to the new world.²⁵ Although symbolic in nature, these "American wakes" infused the emigration experience with all the trauma and finality of death. The entire country, complained an Irish newspaper in 1901, was becoming "one vast `American Wake.'"²⁶ An observer in 1909 lamented, "the Irish immigrant is not the personification of national adventure, but of something that has the appearance of national doom."²⁷ The practice survived in parts of Ireland until the 1920's.

The mythos of emigration as involuntary exile was galvanized by the Great Famine of 1846-1848--an apocalyptic event which forever altered the character of Irish society and the course of modern Irish history (and in no small way American history). Potatoes were the primary and often sole source of nutrition for the peasant population. When blight destroyed successive harvests, one million people died from starvation and fever. Another 1.7 million fled from hunger and mass evictions to America.

The Famine had all the dimensions of a holocaust.

According to one newspaper account:

. . . horrors of war have seldom equalled
and certainly never succeeded those of the Irish
famine of 47. The babe suckling at the dead

mother's breast, whole families living on putrid carrion, hundreds dying and dead by the wayside.²⁸

Britain offered little assistance to the starving masses, most of whom were tenants of British absentee landlords. Sir Charles Trevelyan, the British official in charge of relief, blamed Ireland's agony not on the "physical evil of famine," but upon the "moral evil of the selfish, perverse and turbulent character of the people."²⁹ In the cosmology of the day, mass starvation was a manifestation of divine will.

Food was exported while hundreds of thousands starved. Those who took flight shared the ocean-side docks with tons of Irish livestock and grain bound for Britain in payment of rents. The London Times rejoiced that Irishmen would soon be as "rare on the banks of the Liffey as a red man on the banks of Manhattan."³⁰

That wish was in part fulfilled. Most who left would never return:

The enormity of that catastrophe guaranteed that Irish immigration would be more final than that of any other immigrant people. . . . Irish traffic was one way.³¹

The Famine set in motion a tradition of mass emigration to America that would last until well into the 20th century.³² In 1845--just prior to the Famine--the population of Ireland approached nine million. By 1914, it had shrunk to less than 4.5 million.³³

Those who survived the ocean crossing in cramped, fever-ridden "coffin ships," were cast exhausted and ill-equipped upon the shores of east coast America. The eastern cities afforded neither sympathy nor assistance to the destitute Irish.³⁴ To be poor in America, according to the Darwinian ethic of the time, was evidence of moral inferiority rather than social or economic injustice.³⁵ The hostile reception that greeted the Irish exacerbated their confusion and shame. One newspaper observed:

Our country is literally being overrun with the miserable, vicious, and unclean paupers of the old country.³⁶

The Irish were despised because they were poor, foreign, and Roman Catholic. To civic leaders, the hordes of ignorant Irish who swarmed into tenements or spilled out into shantytowns posed a threat to the social order.³⁷ One Bostonian complained of

. . . the ravenous dregs of anarchy and crime, the tainted swarms of pauperism and vice Europe shakes on our shores from her diseased robes.³⁸

Anti-Irish sentiment was not limited to the Northeast. The Chicago Tribune observed in 1855:

The great majority of members of the Roman Catholic Church in this country are Irishmen. . . . who does not know that the most depraved, debased, worthless and irredeemable drunkards and sots which curse the community are Irish Catholics. Who does not know that five-eighths of the cases brought up every day before the Mayor for drunkenness and consequent crime are Irish Catholic?³⁹

Among even the most liberal Protestant elements, Irish immigrants were deemed less worthy of assistance than

America's slave population.⁴⁰ Theodore Parker, abolitionist minister and grandson of a Minuteman commander, recommended that the Catholic Irish be quarantined for 31 years:

. . . it would take all this time to clean a paddy on the outside. . . . to clean him inwardly would be like picking all the sands of the Sahara.⁴¹

Nativist attacks lost some of their shrillness after the 1870's.⁴² By some accounts the Irish were "generally well-regarded" as they pulled themselves out of poverty and became more like native-born Americans in speech and manner.⁴³

But the memory of past indignities and present insecurities nourished a sense of unease. The horror of the "Great Hunger," as the Famine came to be known, and the shame and humiliation of its American aftermath, were seared into folk memory to survive down the generations. In the collective mythos, England "had crippled the Irish deliberately,' unfitting them for success abroad while obliging their exodus."⁴⁴

In many ways, Irish immigrants of the mid-19th century constituted America's first "group social problem." As "proletarian pioneers" of the urban ghetto, they were the first to challenge Anglo-Saxon political and cultural hegemony.⁴⁵

Insult seemed to follow achievement. When an upstart Irishman, Hugh O'Brien, was elected mayor of Boston in 1885, the Yankee-controlled state legislature responded by seizing

control of the city police department.⁴⁶ The Boston police force would remain under control of the state legislature until 1962, two years after John F. Kennedy, grandson of another Boston-Irish mayor, was elected president of the United States.

In 1888, the mayor of New York insulted Irish sensibilities by refusing to review the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. When the Irish of Boston built a grand cathedral a decade later, Yankee city planners showed their contempt by raising an elevated rail trestle a few yards away, casting a perpetual pall of darkness, clamor, and soot upon the city's most visible symbol of Irish achievement and subjecting the Mass and its celebrants to the regular roar of rail traffic.⁴⁷

Irish political successes attracted the ire of Progressive reformers.⁴⁸ According to one historian, the civil service reform movement, which sought to restrict political office to the educated elite, was "a nativist, class-bound reaction against the success of the Irish--foreign, Catholic, working class people--in urban politics."⁴⁹

Many urban Progressives were middle-class Protestant professionals. Most were motivated by a desire to return control over urban politics to the native Protestant elite. One contemporary observer complained that Irish political

machines had transformed American cities into "the worst governed cities in the civilized world:"

. . . these Irish immigrants had neither the temper nor the training to make a success of popular government. They were totally without experience of the kind Americans had acquired in the working of democratic institutions.⁵⁰

Another advocate of Anglo-Saxon superiority concluded that the Irish record in American politics offered proof of their inability to govern themselves in a post-colonial Ireland: "An independent Ireland worked out on the Tammany model is not a pleasing prospect."⁵¹

A few among the Anglo-Saxon elite championed Irish contributions to the American social fabric.⁵² Yet the cumulative weight of insults regarding Irish achievements coupled with the attacks upon Irish capacities to participate in American political institutional life bruised Irish sensibilities and heightened their sense of insecurity. And the most stinging rebukes were those that questioned Irish loyalty to the United States.

At the May, 1914, dedication of a memorial to the Irish-born American Revolutionary War hero, John Barry, President Woodrow Wilson delivered a reprimand that would serve as a harbinger of things to come. Before a crowd of Irish gathered in celebration, the President praised Barry as an Irishman whose "heart crossed the Atlantic with him," while castigating those who ". . . need hyphens in their names because only part of them has come over."⁵³ The

message was clear--the loyalty of Irish-Americans was suspect.

Thus the conflicting realities of their collective status offered mixed signals to the Irish. Irish-American newspapers and fraternal organizations reinforced the sense of connectedness to a larger national and international Irish community even as increasing numbers of Irish-Americans fought their way into the middle class. None were more aware of their insecurity nor more sensitive to snubs from Anglo-Saxon America than the rising middle class whose "influence in public life increased all out of proportion to their status in public life."⁵⁴

The Irish-American press responded to the rising but still insecure status of the Irish and to indignities both real and imagined by sounding the ancestral cry--often to the point of shrillness--and placing blame on the Anglo-Saxon. If some Irish were ill-equipped for life in urban America, it was due to past deprivations under British colonial rule. If they suffered discrimination and slander in some parts of the United States, it was because of Anglo-Saxon influence. Many factors contributed to Irish insecurity, but "most important, WASP non-recognition of Irish-American accomplishments embittered the Irish middle class and kept old inherited wounds fresh."⁵⁵

The primary role of the Irish-American press in the first decades of the 20th century was to make sense of the

conflicting aspirations and insecurities of the American Irish and to devise comprehensible strategies by which respectability and acceptance might be won. This impulse found secular expression in Irish-American nationalism.⁵⁶

But if the press was the primary agent of nationalist aspirations, it was also a product of those forces which gave rise to the nationalist impulse. The Irish-American press mirrored an Irish-Catholic mind shaped by a legacy of 700 years of colonial subjugation and tempered by the experience of immigration and the adjustment to the conditions of the new world.

The resurgence near the turn of the century of a nativism based upon the inherent superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race kept the old wounds festering. Despite their achievements, the Irish remained, by the measure of America's ruling elite, obstacles to all that was proper and progressive. The Atlantic Monthly warned:

The only hope for the Irish lies in the mingling of their blood with that of native Americans. Even those who move up, rise to the level of saloon keepers. When they enter politics, they leave honesty behind, perhaps because they have always thought of governments as oppressors. They pose a danger of turning the United States away from its friendly, close ties to the English.⁵⁷

The American-Irish, in the first decades of the 20th century, were in a state of transformation.⁵⁸ As the elite of immigrant America and role models for more recent immigrant groups, the burgeoning Irish middle class stood at the doors of acceptance into American society. But the

doors remained closed.⁵⁹ America was still a Protestant nation and the top positions in government, business, and intellectual life--the inner sanctums of true power--remained the domain of the WASP. The Irish in America were stuck in the ambiguous position of being "the group closest to being in while still being out."⁶⁰ Some still scrambled for a secure economic foothold. Others had made it. In either case, the pressures to assimilate came into increasing conflict with an urge to cling to a collective Irish identity and past.⁶¹

By 1914, most of the exiles of the Famine had passed on. But the legacy of the Famine continued, fed by fresh infusions of immigrants, folk memories, and rising rumblings of Anglo-Saxon ascendancy. Although the status of the Irish was much improved, the awareness of past indignities and present insecurities kept feelings of inferiority alive and nourished the ancestral hatred of all things Anglo-Saxon.

At the eve of World War One, Ireland was emerging from its long colonial past. In America, the immigrants and their offspring remained a nation of uneasy exiles in search of a secure definition of themselves. The Irish-American press provided that definition in an American context and served--as war descended upon Europe and rebellion stirred in Ireland--as a lightning rod for their collective discontent.

Notes to Chapter II

¹Thirteenth Census 879, 876, 827-828.

²A.J. Ward, "America and the Irish Problem, 1899-1921," Irish Historical Studies March 1968: 64. Joel Perlman, Ethnic Differences: Schooling and Social Structure Among Irish, Italians, Jews and Blacks in an American City 1880-1935 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988) 43.

³Arnold Schrier, Ireland and the American Emigration 1850-1900 (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1958) 9.

⁴By 1914, candidates with Irish names had served as mayors in New York City, Syracuse, Boston, San Francisco and Chicago.

⁵Moses Fischin, "Classic Ethnics," The San Francisco Irish 1850-1976, ed. James P. Walsh (San Francisco: Irish Literary and Historical Society, 1976) 2, 4.

⁶Scholars attribute Irish successes in urban politics to a number of factors: Most immigrant Irish were familiar with the English language and with the English political system; the lack of opportunities in the the private sector prompted the Irish to look to politics as a means of economic and social advancement; the Irish possessed a natural talent for organizing and for building ethnic coalitions. These factors also help to explain Irish domination of the labor movement. See Michael F. Funchion, Chicago's Irish Nationalists 1881-1890, diss., Loyola U, 1973, (New York: Arno, 1976) 92. William V. Shannon, The American Irish (New York: MacMillan) 137.

Several scholars have observed that the Irish served as role models for other immigrant groups. Fallows argues that the Irish were "urban pioneers." They were the first large group to challenge the Protestant establishment, the first to finance and institutionalize the steady migration of relatives from the old world, and the first to make the mass transition from folk society to an urban environment. Marjorie R. Fallows, Irish-Americans: Identity and Assimilation (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1979) 43-46.

The Irish often served as non-Anglo-Saxon alternatives for newer immigrants who were looking for role models. Farrell cites an educator in the New York City school system in 1913 who observed that some immigrant children went to great lengths to "Americanize" themselves. Often that meant modeling themselves after the Irish: ". . . they would begin to be ashamed . . . of their names and would revise its spelling. . . . Ester Oberhein in the entering class would changed to Ester O'Brien in the next grade." Quoted in John

Joseph Farrell, The Immigrant and the School in New York City (New York: Arno, 1980) 137.

Even in motion pictures, Irish characters functioned as non-Anglo-Saxon models of the quintessential American. An entire genre of films before and after World War One was dominated by a recurring assimilationist theme: The easiest way to become an American was to marry an Irish girl or go into business with an Irishman. See Lester D. Friedman, Hollywood's Image of the Jew (New York: Ungar, 1982) 28-34.

⁷Shannon 426.

⁸Kerby A. Miller, Emigrants and Exiles, Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America (New York: Oxford UP, 1985) 495-500. Perlman 61-63. Lawrence J. McCaffrey, "The Irish-American Dimension," The Irish in Chicago, ed. McCaffrey et. al. (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1987) 6, 14.

⁹Edward A. Ross, The Old World in the New (New York: Century, 1914) 35.

¹⁰Kerby Miller 499, 506.

¹¹Kerby Miller 506. Dangerfield notes that contemporary Dublin had the "worst slums in the world" and that living conditions among the urban poor were little changed from what he characterized as the "starved and savage" 18th century. George Dangerfield, The Strange Death of Liberal England (New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, 1935) 316.

¹²Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, The Rebel Girl (New York: International Publishers, 1955) 25. The rate of tuberculosis in Dublin during the same time period was the highest in Europe and 50 percent higher than England. Mark Tierney, Modern Ireland 1850-1950 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1972) 91.

¹³Kerby Miller 506.

¹⁴Timothy J. Sarbaugh, "Exiles of Confidence: The Irish-American Community of San Francisco 1880-1920," From Paddy to Studs. Irish-American Communities in the Turn of the Century Era 1880 to 1920, ed. Timothy J. Meagher (New York: Greenwood, 1987) 161-162. Sarbaugh notes that the Irish of San Francisco enjoyed political success two generations before their cousins on the east coast.

¹⁵Kerby Miller 497. James P. Walsh, "The Irish in America: 'Way Out West,'" America and Ireland 1776-1976, eds. David Doyle and Owen Dudley Edwards (Westport: Greenwood P, 1980) 169.

Brown also concludes that the Irish bore no social stigma in San Francisco. Thomas N. Brown, "Origins and Character of Irish-American Nationalism," Review of Politics 18 (1956): 337.

Other scholars observe that a spirit of mutual tolerance existed except in the case of the Chinese who were forced into the role of outsider as the Irish had been in the east. See R. A. Burchell, The San Francisco Irish 1848-1880 (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1979) 181. See also Sarbaugh 164.

Clark concludes that a number of "special conditions" in San Francisco contributed to the rapid rise of the Irish: The youth of the city; the lack of an established Anglo-Saxon upper class; a booming economy; and the presence of the Chinese which served to attract antagonisms that might otherwise have been directed toward the Irish. Dennis Clark, Hibernia America: The Irish and Regional Cultures (New York: Greenwood, 1986) 150-151. The experience of discrimination on the east coast did not prevent some Irish in San Francisco from discriminating against the Chinese. In the late 1870's, the Workingmen's Party led by an Irish-born sailor named Dennis Kearney rose to prominence on a platform which called for an end to Chinese immigration and a curtailment of rights for those Chinese already in California. The Workingmen's Party held the balance of power in California in 1877. Alan Kraut, Huddled Masses: The Immigrant in American Society 1880-1921 (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson: 1982) 160.

¹⁶McCaffrey, "The Irish Dimension" 7. McCaffrey also notes that Chicago combines the experiences of the two main varieties of Irish-Americans: those who came first and settled in the east and those who landed later and headed west to the "urban frontier." McCaffrey, "Conclusions," The Irish in Chicago 146.

Fallows notes that social and economic barriers were "more permeable" in Chicago than in the east but less than in the west. Fallows 43. Clark suggests that Chicago enjoyed a relatively pluralistic atmosphere: "(The) sense of being part of a broader multi-ethnic aggregation was stronger than elsewhere." Clark 129.

¹⁷Sarbaugh, "Exiles of Confidence" 173-174.

¹⁸Moynihan and Glazer identify a number of factors that contribute to ethnic identity: Culture; the pre-immigration character of the people; their time of arrival and the reception they received from the host society. Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Pot (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970) introduction xxxiii.

¹⁹Kerby Miller 429. Miller suggests that the Irish

mind was characterized at the turn of the century by a ". . . self-indulgent, communal morbidity." Miller 7.

²⁰The idea of immigration as involuntary exile is the theme of Kerby Miller's exhaustive study of Irish immigration to America, Emigrants and Exiles.

²¹Robert S. Fortner, "The Culture of Hope and the Culture of Despair: The Print Media and 19th century Irish Imagination," Eire/Ireland 13 (Fall 1978): 38

²²Schrier 94-100. Thomas Brown characterizes the Irish as the "most homesick of all immigrants" and he concludes that only the songs of the American blacks are their equal in pathos. Brown "Origins and Character" 330.

Charles Fanning notes that a distinct "Irish-American School" of poetry was discernible by the 1880's. These poems--few of which are memorable, according to Fanning--also provide examples of the exile mythos at work in the Irish-American imagination: an "endemic blight of programmatic melancholy that emerged from the experience of perception of forced exile." Fanning 4.

²³The word most commonly used in the Irish language to describe one who left Ireland was "deorai," meaning exile. Other words often employed to describe an emigrant were "dithreabhach," meaning one who is homeless, and "dibeartach," one who has suffered banishment. Kerby Miller 105.

²⁴According to the Whorf hypothesis, language is the repository of the collective perceptions of a culture--a kind of memory of a people--and as such provides a window into the psychology and world view of a people. Miller 105.

²⁵The practice of "waking" (or watching) the dead was a pre-burial custom rooted in antiquity and unique to Ireland. Friends and relatives would gather in the home of the deceased to mourn his or her passing. They would pass the night eating and drinking. Intervals of solemn mourning would be punctuated by manic periods of music and dance until the time of burial. Schrier 84.

²⁶Schrier 85.

²⁷Kerby Miller 558.

²⁸The Irish People 11 June 1864. Quoted in Fortner 37.

²⁹Quoted in Andrew M. Greeley, That Most Distressful Nation: The Taming of the American Irish (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1972) 36.

³⁰Quoted in Greeley 36.

³¹Walsh, San Francisco Irish 3

³²Emigration from Ireland to the new world was common since long before the Famine. With the Famine, however, emigration increased in both kind and scale. Never before had such impoverished immigrants descended upon American shores in such numbers.

³³The population of the 26 counties that make up the Republic of Ireland continued to decline until 1972 when a government census recorded the first increase in population in 126 years.

³⁴Many "coffin ships" were denied entry to among ports along the east coast of the United States because of the fear of fever. These ships were forced to travel to Grosse Isle, a Canadian quarantine station in the St. Lawrence River, which holds the graves of thousands of nameless victims of the Famine.

³⁵Brown, Irish-American Nationalism 20.

³⁶Bunker Hill Aurora 1848. Quoted in Lukas 77.

³⁷McCaffrey suggests that the Famine Irish were America's "first group social problem" who brought with them the problems of poverty, drink, schizophrenia and crime--manifestations of the difficult transition from the rural, communal society of Ireland to the individualistic, competitive society of urban America. McCaffrey, "The Irish Dimension" in The Irish in Chicago 2-4.

³⁸Boston school board member quoted in Lukas 121. Yankee Protestants were not entirely without sympathy for the immigrant Irish. Protestant doctors ministered among the victims of the 1849 cholera epidemic in New York City which claimed the lives of more than 500 Irish immigrants. Protestants also supported the the St. Vincent Female Orphan Asylum which gave refuge to girls orphaned by the epidemic. Lawrence H. Fuchs, The American Kaleidoscope: Race, Ethnicity and the Civic Culture (Hanover: UP of New England: 1990) 45.

³⁹Chicago Tribune 1855. Quoted in Ellen Skerrett, "The Catholic Dimension," in The Irish in Chicago, eds. McCaffrey et. al. p26.

⁴⁰According to the Protestant ethic, the remedy for pauperism (as distinct from poverty which was part of the natural order) was not reform by religious conversion. The

Catholic Irish were blamed for their condition and denied help. Abby Alcott, the abolitionist mother of novelist Louise Alcott, preferred to help Negroes: "They are far more interesting than the God-invoking Irish who choke you with benedictions and crush you with curses." Quoted in Lukas 342.

⁴¹Quoted in Lukas 91.

⁴²William L. Joyce, Editors and Ethnicity: A History of the Irish-American Press 1848-1883, diss., U of Michigan, 1974 (New York: Arno, 1976) 150.

⁴³John Higham, Strangers in the Land 1860-1925. Patterns of American Nativism (New York: Atheneum, 1963) 26. The expression, "lace-curtain," which was employed to describe those Irish who had made it into the middle class was in common use by the 1890's. Fanning 157.

⁴⁴Kerby Miller 550.

⁴⁵McCaffrey, "The Irish Dimension" 2, 4. McCaffrey also suggests that the Irish experience previewed the experiences of other non-Anglo-Protestants: "Their poverty, ignorance and the hostility of the host society and their successful quest for power and respectability . . . made the Irish the paradigm of the American ethnic experience." McCaffrey, "The Irish Dimension" 1.

⁴⁶Anthony J. Lukas, Common Ground (New York: Vintage Books, 1986) 459.

⁴⁷Lukas 377. Mary Ryan suggests that the St. Patrick's Day parade--which became widespread in the 1870's--was the first of many subsequent examples whereby distinctive social groups asserted their identity and presence: "The Irish, in a particularly obstinant way, forced Anglo-Saxon Protestants to acknowledge them as members of American culture as well as citizens." Mary Ryan, "The American Parade: Representations of 19th Century Public Order," The New Cultural History, ed. and intro. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: U of California P, 1989) 153.

⁴⁸Most urban Progressives came from old families which had membership in Protestant churches with a New England background. George Mowry, California Progressives (Berkeley: U of California P, 1951) 87-88. Cited in Paul Glad, The Trumpet Soundeth: William Jennings Bryan 1896-1912 (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1960) 114. The Progressives targeted immigrant voters and political machines. Electoral reforms promoted by Progressive reformers--new ballots, literacy tests, an end to universal

suffrage--led to a decline after 1900 in the percentage of eligible voters. Arthur S. Link and Richard L. McCormick, Progressivism (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson, 1983).

⁴⁹Nell Irvin Painter, Standing at Armageddon: The United States 1877-1919 (New York: Norton, 1987) xxxi. Urban political machines were often run as unofficial social welfare agencies for the immigrant poor. William L. Riordon, Plunkett of Tammany Hall (New York: Dutton, 1905) xix.

"Until well into the 20th century, Anglo-American reformism had more interest in institutional and moral improvement than in lightening the burdens of poverty." McCaffrey, "Conclusion," The Irish in Chicago, McCaffrey et. al. eds. 148.

⁵⁰Edward E. Ross, The Old World in the New (New York: Century, 1914) 261-262. James G. Blaine, the Republican presidential candidate who campaigned on an anti-"Rum, Romanism and Popery" platform in 1884, made this observation about the Irish of New York: ". . . it was a disgrace to permit the United States to be made a refuge for the scum of Europe. . . . although it (the Irish element) dominated the State and City of New York it was a foreign element and in no sense an American one. . . . it might become a very dangerous one to American institutions." Quoted in Charles C. Tansill, America and the Fight for Irish Freedom 1866-1922 (New York: Adair, 1957) 84.

⁵¹Grant 54-55.

⁵²New England Magazine, for example, argued that "it is no longer possible in America to refuse to take a man seriously because his ancestry hailed from the Emerald Isle and it is high time to efface the soical (sic) line of cleavage that has existed between the Irish-American and English-American stocks, particularly in the eastern states. Nor is the racial flavor of a man's patonymic an excuse for voting against him. . . . In the final make-up of the American race, the contribution of Irish stock will be important." F.W. Burrows, editor, New Englan Magazine XLVII.6 (August 1912): 255.

⁵³Gaelic-American 23 May 1914: 1.

⁵⁴Thomas N. Brown, Irish-American Nationalism 1870-1890 (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1966) 180.

⁵⁵Kerby Miller 498.

⁵⁶Catholicism was the other primary expression of Irish-American identity. Miller calls the Catholic church

"the central institution of Irish life. . . .the primary source and expression of Irish identity." Kirby Miller 526.

⁵⁷Atlantic Monthly March 1896. Quoted in Rita J. Simon, Public Opinion and the Immigrant. Print Media Coverage 1880-1980 (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1986) 140.

⁵⁸Fallows observes that the Irish as a group were in transition from their status as poor immigrants--labeled "shanty Irish" by mid-19th century Yankees--to the status of "lace-curtain," middle-class respectability. Fallows 45. The trauma of transition exacted a cost. Fanning notes the effect that the changing status of the Irish had on Irish-American fiction. After the turn of the century, Irish-American fiction turned from escapist fiction to a harsher realism in an attempt to assess the psychological and cultural costs of having "made it." Fanning 177.

⁵⁹Kelleher fixes the date of the rise of the Irish-American middle class at 7 September 1892, when "Gentleman Jim" Corbett beat John L. Sullivan, the "Boston Strong Boy," for the world heavyweight boxing championship of the world. Both men were archetypes, according to Kelleher. Sullivan represented the hard drinking, working class brawler. Corbett was a "prophetic figure" who looked like a "proto-Ivy Leaguer . . . a paradigm of all those young Irish-Americans about to make the grade." John V. Kelleher, "Irishness in America," Atlantic Monthly 208 (July 1961): 38-40. Quoted in Charles Fanning, The Irish Voice in America: Irish-American Fiction from the 1760's to the 1980's (Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1990) 156.

⁶⁰Shannon 132.

⁶¹Miller suggests that the American-Irish and their institutions at this stage were "Janus-faced, divided between bourgeois aspirations and proletarian realities, torn by conflicting loyalties to the United States and Ireland." Kirby Miller 524.

CHAPTER III

ANGLOPHOBIA, IDENTITY, AND THE IRISH-AMERICAN PRESS

Introduction

Anglophobia was the cornerstone of the Irish-American experience.¹ A combination of ancestral hatred of Britain that survived from the old country and a fear of Anglo-Saxon influence in the new, anglophobia provided a framework through which attitudes could be defined and events made comprehensible. The anglophobic imperative overwhelmed differences based on class, region, and levels of adjustment. It was the social glue which bound the scattered Irish together in a sense of community and common purpose.

Anglophobia was the product of two historical forces: the pre-migration experience in Ireland, with its long legacy of British colonial domination; and the post-Famine experience in America where an unwelcome reception awaited the immigrant Irish. Antipathy toward the Anglo-Saxon reverberated through all forms of political and cultural expression--from fraternal organizations and political agendas to cultural rituals such as parades and mass gatherings.² Anglophobia found its most coherent expression

in a number of recurring themes which resounded across a broad spectrum of the Irish-American press.

Collective Memory and Historical Consciousness

The obsession with all things English was sustained by a collective memory and an oral tradition that nourished a profoundly telescoped sense of historical time.³ In the Irish psyche, the past held mythic power over the present, informing not only contemporary events and attitudes but also the very core of Irish-American identity. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a labor organizer who grew up in New England in the 1890's, recalled:

The awareness of being Irish came to us as small children, through plaintive song and heroic story. . . . As children we drew in a burning hatred of British rule with our mother's milk. Until my father died, at over 80, he never said "England" without adding, "God damn her!"⁴

Thomas Flynn bequeathed his hatred of England to his daughter despite the fact that he was born in America and never laid eyes on Ireland. The power of collective memory to obliterate the tempering influence of time prompted British Consul Frederick Leahy to complain of Irish-Americans in 1916: "Their minds hark back to the past, and their mental picture is based upon an Ireland of 75 to 100 years ago."⁵

The press served as a kind of repository for the race memory of the American-Irish. At a time when most Irish and American history was written by Anglo-Saxons and formal

alternative institutions such as the Irish-American Historical Society were in their infancy, serialized features in the Irish-American press offered alternative and oppositional interpretations of the Irish experience-- interpretations that both drew upon and helped sustain the collective memory of oral tradition. In the Leader, "Duffy's Irish History" presented a weekly litany of English atrocities against the Irish people over 700 years.⁶ Similar features appeared in other Irish-American papers. This attention to the past served two purposes--it reinforced a sense of common identity by depicting the Irish in America as a nation of exiles who were forced to flee Ireland because of British oppression; and it cast suspicion upon present Anglo-Saxon intentions in the United States as well as Ireland.

The notion of the Irish as involuntary exiles was the defining feature of the emigrant experience, according to the press. The Leader complained that because of British misrule, ". . . the Irish race [had] scattered all over the world."⁷ The Irish World argued that the Irish diaspora was a direct consequence of British policy:

Irish exiles did not leave their land of birth of their own free will. They were forced to do so. A vicious economic system backed up by all the power of the British Empire . . . rendered it impossible . . . to earn a decent livelihood in the land they loved with all the ardor of their Celtic souls. The emigrant ship was their only refuge. . . . They who should have enriched the land of their birth . . . have contributed to the upbuilding of the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand.⁸

Even the moderate Chicago Citizen subscribed to the exile myth: "The great majority of the Irish race have been compelled to leave their native shores. . . ."9

The press blamed England for the depopulation of Ireland, the dissolute state of Irish industry, and the impoverishment of the Irish people:

A depopulated Ireland is England's stern accuser. . . . Ireland alone, among all the nations of the world, is a land whose population has been more than cut in two: whose industries have been killed; whose cities and towns are dying of dry rot and whose fertile fields have been turned into grazing grounds for bullocks. . . . [in the cities] 20,000 families are living in single room tenements in buildings which, in the days of the Irish Parliament, once housed the intellect and wealth of Ireland.¹⁰

Irish-American newspapers offered a sustained chorus of past British outrages against the Irish people.¹¹ But no one event garnered more attention than the Great Famine of the 1840's. Famine tales were retold in the language of a shared nightmare:

. . . an appalling picture springs up from memory. . . . ghosts walk the land. . . . great giant figures reduced to skeletons by hunger, shake in their clothes. [There are] no graves, but pits are dug. . . . those who have managed to escape this dread visitation are flying panic-stricken to the seaports. . . . to famine ships and fever.¹²

Disease and the ocean crossing claimed thousands more, leaving an "unbroken chain of graves wherever the tide of emigration extended."¹³ The post-Famine emigration was the determining event in the history of the American-Irish--a enduring presence that held such sway over the collective

memory that T.P. O'Connor, a moderate nationalist leader in Ireland, warned the British Parliament:

The Irish in America live in 1846. The things they heard from their mothers or grandmothers of the reactionary policy in Ireland send these Americans of Irish blood back to 1846, and when they get there is no reasoning but the frenzied and justifiable resentment against the treatment to which their forefathers had been subjected. . . . there is only one permanent factor in the minds of men of Irish blood and that is the famine and emigration of 1846.¹⁴

The press enlisted the post-Famine experience in America as further evidence of British injustice and as justification for continued Irish resentment.¹⁵ And if the Irish press was guardian of the collective memory and rage, the exiled Irish would be agents of its revenge. The legacy of British colonial policies provoked, according to the Chicago Citizen,

. . . a legitimate anger which shall never be calmed until our common enemy shall have made reparations for the sufferings, the extinction and the massacre of the unoffending children of the Gael.¹⁶

The "prejudice of centuries" was thus both logical and inevitable--and subject to continual renewal in collective memory through constant reminders in the press.¹⁷ "It's hard to forget," the Leader advised. "Is it possible to forgive?"¹⁸ For the Gaelic-American, the answer was clear:

The exiles who were driven out everywhere on the lone highways of the world have everywhere risen up like armed avengers to demand an accounting. . . . Empire building does not pay.¹⁹

Contending Visions of America

Anglo/conformity--a well-orchestrated movement to advance the Anglo-Saxon dimension of American identity--was a dominant social force in the United States at the turn of the century.²⁰ In essence, the movement was a response by established elites to the perceived threat of continuing immigration. The communal nature, persistent old-world loyalties, and alien cultural habits of immigrant groups were viewed as incompatible with American traditions. Edward P. Cubberly, a Stanford professor and a founder of the Immigrant Restriction League, outlined the goals of Anglo-conformity in 1909:

Our task is to break up their groups . . . to assimilate and amalgamate these peoples as a part of the American race, to implant in their children, so far as can be done, Anglo-Saxon conception of righteousness, law, and order.²¹

The impending prospect of U.S. involvement in World War One as an ally of Great Britain gave further impetus to the push for conformity to an Anglo-Saxon conception of American identity. Advocates of assimilation jettisoned any lingering hopes that the melting pot could forge the divergent immigrant cultures into a new and better American hybrid. In both the heartland and the sanctums of the elite, many began to view immigrant groups as indigestible elements within the American national mix.²²

The push for Anglo-conformity became the "Americanization" movement of the war years and persuasion

gave way to coercion.²³ The Anglo-Saxon dimension of the campaign to Americanize the immigrant was unmistakable.²⁴ The rationale in support of Anglo-conformity was based upon the assumption of Anglo-Saxon genetic and cultural superiority and upon the belief that Americans--despite the swelling tide of immigration--were still overwhelmingly of English stock.²⁵

The Irish-American press challenged these assumptions.²⁶ The Gaelic-American insisted:

[the idea] . . . that the American people are overwhelmingly of English blood will soon have to be dropped. . . . [it is] . . . an impudent claim, repeated at every opportunity by Anglomaniacs and echoed by fools who know no better.²⁷

Boston Mayor James Curley, in a speech reported in the San Francisco Leader, assailed the ascendant position of old-stock Americans and derided the assertion that the descendants of the Mayflower made better citizens:

The so-called Anglo-Saxon is a negligible citizen. . . . He is not a good American. It has not occurred to him that he is not American nor is the dwindling provincial personnel he speaks of the nation. The Puritan has passed; the Anglo-Saxon is a joke. A new and better American is here.²⁸

Irish newspapers offered alternative definitions of American national identity. The Leader suggested that the "Celtic spirit" supplemented that of the Saxon and--with the melting pot simmering for two generations--it was "not improbable" that one-third of all Americans had Irish blood flowing in their veins.²⁹ The Irish World promoted a more

pluralistic if only slightly less hierarchical conception of American identity:

We are not Anglo-Saxons. Four-fifths of the people of this country do not belong to the Anglo-Saxon race. . . . They are Celts, Teutons, Scandinavians . . . and other bloods.³⁰

The Chicago Citizen scoffed at assertions that the United States was an Anglo-Saxon country and insisted upon a hybrid conception of America's racial identity:

[The United States] is not Anglo-Saxon, never was, never will be! . . . The newsboy on the street corner could inform our dons that we are a people of very mixed blood."³¹

The Anglo-American Conspiracy

The movement in favor of closer ties with Great Britain, which had begun to gather momentum before the turn of the century, was a source of concern to many Americans of immigrant stock. For the insecure Irish, the growing Anglo-American friendship was a threat to their own tenuous status and additional evidence of British influence in America.

Many Irish-American newspapers attributed America's burgeoning imperial program to British influence.³² The Irish World saw American military adventures in Cuba and the Phillipines as part of an Anglo-Saxon campaign against Catholic countries.³³ The Chicago Citizen condemned American designs on Mexico as ". . . tempting bait to our greedy, though not needy, Americans of a certain descent."³⁴ The Gaelic-American made constant attacks upon the British

Empire and rejoiced at every intimation of anti-colonial rebellion.³⁵

Irish commentators heaped derision upon the Anglo-American rapprochement. When Teddy Roosevelt's successful campaign for the Presidency in 1904 was hailed as an Anglo-Saxon triumph, Finley Peter Dunne, the Chicago-born humorist, assailed the resulting profusion of anglophilia. Dunne, who wrote in a mock-Irish dialect and whose "Mr. Dooley" was the single most influential pro-Irish voice in the syndicated mainstream press, depicted Roosevelt's ambassador to Britain, Joseph Choate, as hurrying to the King of England ". . . as fast as his hands and knees wud [sic] carry him."³⁶ The Irish World dismissed the advocates of Anglo-American cooperation as "Anglomaniacs:"

These denationalized Americans would have us forget the American revolution and all it accomplished. In their opinion it was a huge mistake . . . a blunder committed by Washington and his compatriots.³⁷

The mood of rapprochement pervaded many areas of American thought. An emergent imperial school of history sought to rewrite American history from an Anglo-Saxon perspective. Revisionist historians glorified the role of English Puritans in shaping American ideals while ignoring or undervaluing the contributions of other national groups.³⁸ Steel-baron turned philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, himself an immigrant from Scotland, predicted that

the ". . . reunion of the Anglo-American would dominate the world."³⁹

Fired by ancestral loyalties and emboldened by their rising if insecure status, Irish-Americans challenged the Anglo-onslaught in every available forum. The Irish constructed a Celtic interpretation of history as a "defensive weapon against anglophile historians."⁴⁰ Representative government, trial-by-jury--the trappings of modern democracy--were claimed for ancient Ireland as precursors to American political traditions. The Irish Historical Society, founded in 1897, praised--and often exaggerated--Irish contributions to the United States. The resulting "literature of justification"--a mark of rising respectability and continued insecurity--became a staple of the Irish-American press.⁴¹

The Irish "hated England for the good of the United States."⁴² America, by their conception, was but the latest battlefield in the epic conflict between Saxon and Celt. In the legislative arena, Irish lobbyists in the Senate helped defeat three of four arbitration treaties negotiated with Britain between 1897-1911.⁴³ In 1907 the Ancient Order of Hibernians joined forces with the National German-American Alliance--the largest racial or ethnic organization in the country--to lobby against immigration restrictions and foreign entanglements, both of which were seen as part of the Anglo-conspiracy.⁴⁴ Irish-American newspapers condemned

the repeal of free tolls for U.S. shipping through the Panama canal as a capitulation to British interests.⁴⁵ Irish leaders even damned Rhodes scholarships as part of a British plot to reconquer America.⁴⁶ The Chicago Citizen argued that the scholarship program was

. . . begotten under very corrupt auspices, through the plunder of South Africa, for the purpose of Anglifying this country and eventually absorbing it into the British Empire.⁴⁷

Evidence of the Anglo-infestation was everywhere. Minor incidents swelled into portents of great alarm. A student performance of the English national anthem at a New York convent school became an act of betrayal: girls of Irish descent were being ". . . taught to reverence the traditions of the hereditary enemy of their race and religion."⁴⁸ A proposal to reorganize the United States Army in regional regiments like the British Army was ridiculed as an attempt by "Anglomaniac toadies" to anglicize the American armed forces.⁴⁹

The growing fascination with all things Anglo-Saxon was dismissed as a betrayal of American traditions. A Carnegie-sponsored campaign to commemorate a century of peace with Great Britain inspired particular scorn. The American Truth Society, founded by Jeremiah O'Leary in 1912 to protest the proposed "100 Years of Peace," railed against the threat posed by British sea power to American shipping. O'Leary toured the nation with a satirical stereopticon show entitled, "The Fable of John Bull."⁵⁰ The Irish World

criticized a decision to issue two special U.S. postage stamps to commemorate Anglo/American friendship as tantamount to ". . . placing our country in the false and humiliating position of being junior partner in the firm of John Bull and Company." The World suggested that the burning of the nation's Capitol in 1812--"an act of wanton and unprovoked savagery unparalleled in the annals of modern history"--was an event more worthy of official attention.⁵¹ The Leader was even more dismissive of the "100 Years of Peace:"

Feeble editorials have appeared . . . urging their readers to get in line and whoop things up for the dear, old "step-mother" country. . . . the celebration will be a failure. Americans are not to be fooled even by Carnegie millions. They recognize Britain as their bitterest enemy and this cant about a general jollification because Britain didn't put herself in the way of getting another walloping during the past 100 years is not fooling them at all.⁵²

The Leader urged its readers to offer the nation an alternative, non-anglophile form of patriotism:

Fly the flag . . . show that on this far-off western shore the spirit of patriotism yet lives, untarnished and undimmed by the Anglomaniacs.⁵³

Irish-American newspapers framed their arguments against closer ties with Great Britain in hyper-patriotic terms in attempt to equate Irish anglophobia with American interests. "Anglomaniacs" who advocated Anglo/American friendship were dismissed as the moral descendants of the Tories of the Revolutionary War.⁵⁴ The Irish-American press often constructed elaborate and unlikely comparisons in an

attempt to equate Irish and American interests. The Irish World, for example, denounced Irish-American politicians who exhibited insufficient resolve in condemning pro-British tendencies as:

. . . worse than renegades in Ireland, for not only do they betray Ireland, but the U.S. as well.
 . . . Judas, who went and hanged himself, was noble in comparison to this rotten crew.⁵⁵

The Gaelic-American stretched even further in its vilification of church leaders in Ireland--those "mitred imperialists"--who failed to denounce British colonial policies:

. . . those who are taking their stand on the side of the Scarlet Harlet will be placed in the same category as the Tories of the American revolution
 . . . the stain of national treachery will follow their kindred to the seventh generation.⁵⁶

By this tortured logic, every manifestation of sympathy toward Britain--whether in Ireland or in the United States--constituted an act disloyalty to both countries. Thus Irish devotion to both Ireland and the United States could be perfectly reconciled: if anti-British sentiment was the hallmark of American patriotism then Irish and American interests were one and the same.

Inferiority and Pride

The assertive self-confidence of Irish-American anglophobia was tempered by a nagging undercurrent of insecurity. The Irish-American experience, as Thomas Brown observed, was characterized by "a pervasive sense of

inferiority, an intense longing for acceptance and respect, and an acute sensitivity to criticism."⁵⁷ The competing components of Irish-American group consciousness--the tension between post-colonial inferiority and immigrant pride--found voice in the Irish-American press. Irish-American newspapers attacked real and imagined slanders and labored to instill a sense of pride and confidence among the Irish in America.

In the 1880's, the Irish were generally regarded as the most disruptive element in the nation. The mainstream press reinforced and promoted a stereotypical image of the Irish as "socially troublesome and inferior--a lower order of mankind."⁵⁸ A New York Times editorial which praised the qualities of German and Scandinavian immigrants, also observed that "a bad Irish-American boy is about as unwholesome a product as was ever reared in any body politic."⁵⁹ The negative depiction of the Irish carried strong Anglo-Saxon overtones. A British historian suggested that America's social problems would be solved if "every Irishman [were to] kill a Negro and be hanged for it."⁶⁰

Negative portrayals of the Irish were also a regular feature of 19th century graphic humor.⁶¹ The popular stereotype of Irish "Paddy," a drunken, childlike, often truculent oaf, was a creation of early Victorian imagination. "Paddy" made his first appearance in American periodicals after the Civil War and became a staple figure

in Puck and Harper's Weekly until well after the turn of the century.⁶²

The Anglo-Saxon dimension was unmistakable.⁶³ In many caricatures, "Paddy" is a riotous, reckless fanatic, "eternally hostile to Great Britain."⁶⁴ In others, he is a drunken, priest-ridden fool, more content to wallow in squalor and indolence than to embrace the more proper Yankee (i.e. Anglo-Saxon) virtues of sobriety and thrift. An 1884 Puck cartoon, for example, depicted St. Patrick, the patron saint of the Irish, as a bearded, simian-faced Catholic bishop with a tangle of snakes at his feet, a crooked miter upon his head, and a jug of whiskey in his fist.⁶⁵

Irish women fared little better. The stereotype Irish-American female was "Queen of the Kitchen," a "funny, disorderly, hardworking but unpredictable servant girl" who squandered her hard-earned wages in support of squalling children, dissolute husbands, and lazy, feckless relatives.⁶⁶ Most of the traits attributed to Irish-Americans mirror those which whites ascribed to blacks in 1930's-1960's America.⁶⁷

By the turn of the century, the image of the Irish in graphic humor was in transition. "Paddy," the bomb-wielding fanatic and booze-gorged gorilla, was giving way to less strident portrayals. In the Hearst papers, "Happy Houligan," a whimsical shanty Irishman, began to share the

comic pages with "Jiggs" and "Maggie," an upwardly mobile lace-curtain couple.⁶⁸

But an element of condescension remained. Houligan, along with Mickey Dugan and his gang of Irish street urchins of "Hogan's Alley," stood as prototypical urban slum dwellers. Jiggs and Maggie, who had escaped the slums, were objects of bemused contempt: Jiggs because of his pugnacity, his fondness for drink, and his lingering attachment--despite his wife's objections--to the saloon and his old working-class pals; Maggie for her social pretensions and her relentlessly unsuccessful efforts to ingratiate herself with the native-born elite.⁶⁹

By the eve of World War One, the days of "No Irish Need Apply" had passed. Yet discrimination survived in more subtle ways and Irish-American newspapers railed at its every manifestation. One area of concern--often to the point of hypersensitivity--continued to be the image of the Irish in popular culture. Despite Irish political and economic successes, the stereotypes of the 19th century continued to taunt the Irish well into the 20th.⁷⁰

Many of old stereotypes gained new life in an emerging medium--motion pictures.⁷¹ The Irish World condemned motion pictures--a popular form of mass entertainment among immigrants--for distorted portrayals of the Irish. The so-called Hogan movies, which were filled with Irish gangsters, prompted real-life hoodlums to adopt Irish names, according

to the Irish World, thereby heaping a double slander upon the Irish race.⁷² Other movies defamed Irish women by depicting them as frequenting dances and partaking in other equally dubious "debaucheries."⁷³ The Irish World argued:

We have succeeded in driving the stage Irish from the theatres. We should not permit moving picture shows to perpetuate the foul anti-Irish calumnies the defunct 'stage Irishman' sought to perpetuate.⁷⁴

The campaign against the "stage Irishman" became at times a philistine descent into reaction and self-loathing. When John Millington Synge's "Playboy of the Western World" first toured America in 1911-1912, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the United Irish Societies, and the Irish-American press orchestrated a national campaign of public protests and legal injunctions in an attempt to drive the play from the stage.⁷⁵

The campaign also targeted the "vile so-called Irish plays" of Lady Gregory.⁷⁶ Ironically, Synge and Gregory were two of the guiding lights of the Celtic renaissance, a sudden flowering of the arts which arose out of Ireland around the turn of the century to win world-wide critical acclaim. Synge and Gregory drew upon Irish folk ways and the lyrical cadences of Irish peasant speech as sources of inspiration.

For the Irish press, however, theatrical celebrations of Irish rural life inspired more shame and indignation than pride. This willingness to engage in symbolic self-annihilation as a means of securing status gave testament to

the conflicting aspirations and post-colonial insecurities of the American-Irish. When the "Playboy of the Western World" returned for a second U.S. tour in 1914, the Chicago Citizen boasted:

Not even the enemy [i.e. Anglo-Saxons], who delighted in our humiliation, can find much pleasure now in looking at a caricature which has had its day.⁷⁷

Irish-American newspapers also found sources of humiliation much closer to home. Finley Peter Dunne, an Irish-American newspaper columnist who wrote about working-class life in the poor, Bridgeport section of Chicago, was a frequent target. The centerpiece of Dunne's columns was a fictional saloon-keeper named Dooley whose philosophical musings in a rich Irish brogue won national attention and praise. Irish-American newspapers claimed that the Dooley series promoted a negative stereotype of the Irish. The Chicago Citizen often lambasted Dooley. Patrick Ford of the Irish World refused to accept advertisements for a collection of Dooley columns.⁷⁸

Irish papers also stood the line against anti-Catholic discrimination. The Chicago Citizen called the governor of Florida a "bigoted barbarian" for allegedly barring Catholics from teaching in public schools.⁷⁹ The Leader charged that a wartime proposal to ration meat on Tuesdays was an attempt to double the sacrifice of Catholics who already refrained from eating meat on Fridays.⁸⁰

Even as it challenged negative depictions, the Irish-American press labored to instill a sense of racial pride among the American-Irish. Newspapers regularly featured examples of Irish-American success stories and promoted social mobility as a strategy to achieve respectability.⁸¹ The Irish World advocated education and cooperation with other racial groups.⁸² Socio-economic advancement would achieve two goals: it would confer status upon the Irish in America and aid in the effort to free Ireland:

Those Irish out here who forget or want to forget they are Irish or of Irish extraction forget a great deal more, the remembrance of which would ennoble them among their peers. You have nothing to be ashamed of in the history of your country or your race. . . . [carry] yourselves in this land . . . as equals of any and all the various races. . . . Why should the Irish accept a position in society . . . inferior to other peoples?⁸³

The Irish press tried to buttress the self-confidence of its readers by glorifying Irish culture and accomplishments while disparaging those of the English. The press challenged the underlying premise of Britain's imperial mission--that Anglo-Saxon superiority gave Britain a mandate to rule--and civilize--the less-advanced peoples of the earth.

Irish newspapers, much like African-American newspapers of a later period, sought to invert the relationship between colonizer and colonized by insisting that Irish civilization pre-dated that of the English. The Chicago Citizen claimed that "1500 years ago" Irish scholars brought religion and

culture to English "cave-men . . . [who] subsisted on wild berries and dwelt under the ground in dug-outs."⁸⁴ The Leader also depicted the English as aboriginal hunter-gatherers at a time when poetry and high culture flourished in Ireland. The Irish, according to the Leader, "were a civilized race when the English were digging acorns in the forested wilds."⁸⁵

Another strategy was to portray Irish racial characteristics as superior to those of the English. Celtic "spirituality" and "love of justice" stood in contrast to English "hypocrisy" and "blind, stupid materialism."⁸⁶ This tactic challenged one of the staple justifications of British colonial rule--that the Irish were unfit to govern themselves. In America, the Progressive campaign against urban political machines carried equally powerful implications of Anglo-Saxon superiority. The Irish press challenged the assumption that old-guard elites were better equipped to run American cities than Irish ward healers.⁸⁷ Attacks upon Anglo-Saxon racial characteristics thus conferred status to the Irish on both sides of the Atlantic.⁸⁸

Irish-American support for racial and social equality, however, did not always translate into support for other subordinate groups. The contradictions articulated in Irish-American press gave testament to the contending insecurities that festered within the Irish-American psyche.

The Chicago Citizen, for example, attacked the Guardians of Liberty for refusing to endorse any Irish-Catholics or Jews in a judicial election.⁸⁹ Yet the Citizen also condemned bolsheviks as anti-Christian Jews who possessed little talent for government.⁹⁰ The Citizen promoted social mobility for the Irish but expressed alarm when upwardly mobile blacks began to move into white neighborhoods in Chicago.⁹¹

On the west coast, the Leader lambasted anti-Catholic and anti-Irish discrimination often to the point of shrillness. Yet for all its proclaimed belief in tolerance, it lobbied against Chinese and Japanese immigration and decried "the utter uselessness of the Protestant religion."⁹² The Gaelic-American, which called for the freedom of Egypt and India and condemned the persecution of Jews in other countries, could also insist that "Anglo-Semitic gold" was responsible for pro-British proclivities of the "U.S. Jew-owned press."⁹³ Ironically, the inconsistencies and vacillations of the Irish-American press on the issue of race gave implicit endorsement to the Anglo-Saxon racial hierarchy it claimed to abhor.

The Irish-American press blamed Britain not only for the despoilation of Ireland and the scattering of her people, but also for the low self-esteem of the Irish or what the press called the "slave mind." If the Irish peasant was lazy and unproductive, it was because of British

policies "which would have destroyed industry among the Dutch or the Chinese."⁹⁴ If the Irish were ashamed of their language--the oldest written vernacular north of the Alps-- it was because Britain had characterized the Celts as "barbarous and illiterate from the beginning of time."⁹⁵

The "slave mind," according to the Irish-American press, was a debilitating affliction of the spirit, a vestige of colonialism which robbed the Irish of their self-confidence, dignity, and direction. The Gaelic-American feared that the "slave mind" had destroyed the "moral courage" of the Irish people.⁹⁶ Manifestations of the slave mind included Irish doubts about their ability to govern themselves, the lingering desire to be "lorded over" by the English, and the belief that Britain was innocent of any special wrong against the Irish people.⁹⁷

The Irish press condemned those who exhibited shame of their heritage or tried to curry favor from apologists of Anglo-Saxonism. The Leader observed:

The most frequently repeated slander about the Irish is their want of unity. The Irish can never agree about anything. They are always fighting between themselves. If you want to roast an Irishman you can always find another Irishman to light the fire. . . . This marks the ultimate triumph of the English campaign that Irishmen take themselves at England's valuation. . . .⁹⁸

The Leader once assailed a Bostonian named Hogan who tried to change his name because it was "suggestive of Irish origins."⁹⁹ The Gaelic-American repeatedly chastised "blatherskites" who displayed "Anglomaniac" tendencies. The

Irish World despaired because the affliction of the spirit lingered in America despite Irish successes:

What then is the source of the racial weakness which torments us. . . . We have retained our physical courage, but long subjugation to foreign rule . . . sapped our moral vitality. . . . Here in this free land the restoration to perfect moral health should have begun earlier and should have progressed further than in Ireland.¹⁰⁰

The Irish-American press offered two mutually reinforcing strategies to resolve the crisis of the spirit: social mobility in America and freedom for Ireland through the dissolution of the British Empire. Socio-economic success would confer status upon the Irish in America and enable them to forge coalitions with other nationalities to lobby on Ireland's behalf. The defeat of Great Britain-- "the harlot of nations, the modern Babylon"--and Ireland's consequent entry into the community of nations would vindicate the Irish in America. The demise of Britain, the press insisted, would benefit all of mankind. The Irish World promised, the "world will be sweeter when the British Empire is burned up."¹⁰¹ The Leader declared: "Forever blessed be the boot that administers that glorious kick."¹⁰²

The Mainstream Press

The chief agents of anti-Irish sentiment in the United States, according to the Irish-American press, were mass circulation daily newspapers--the mainstream press. Despite their other differences, Irish newspapers universally cast themselves in an adversarial role, assailing the alleged

anti-Irish slanders and pro-British tendencies of the "anglomaniac" or "trust" press.¹⁰³ The Gaelic-American in New York and the Leader in San Francisco were the most unrestrained in their attacks, followed by the Chicago Citizen. The Irish World took a more restrained approach until rising war fever and events in Ireland forced it too into action.

The Gaelic-American accused the New York press of plotting to distort the news to Britain's advantage.¹⁰⁴ Joseph Pulitzer's New York World was a frequent target. The World, according to the Gaelic-American, was "the worst enemy of the Irish race in America."¹⁰⁵ When the World suggested in a St. Patrick's Day editorial that the Irish should throw their support behind the Panama canal treaty with Britain, the Gaelic-American replied:

The New York World is the lowest, dirtiest, most corrupt, dishonest and unprincipled newspaper in the United States. . . . its impudence is unparalleled in the annals of journalism. . . . The men who run the World hate all the Irish. . . . Irish citizens will estimate the World's advice at its true value-- as they would a harlot preaching chastity in the market place.¹⁰⁶

The World's most unpardonable sin was its failure to support Ireland's struggle against Britain.¹⁰⁷ Gaelic-American editor John Devoy called upon the New York Irish to boycott the World, which enjoyed a large Irish readership.

Other New York papers felt the Gaelic-American's lash. The Gaelic-American condemned the New York Evening Post for depicting the Irish as "happy-go-lucky Celts."¹⁰⁸ Oswald

Garrison Villard, the Anglo-Irish editor of the Evening Post, was singled out for committing the most unpardonable of sins for an Irishman--criticizing agitation in support of the Irish national struggle:

[Villard is] . . . an anti-Irish Irishman attacking his own people for the applause of Anglomaniacs. He works himself up into a white heat, froths at the mouth and dips his pen in the froth.¹⁰⁹

The Gaelic-American accused the New York Tribune of "doing England's dirty work" by printing false reports about the activities of Irish labor radical James Larkin. "The Tribune," the Gaelic-American observed, "is run by a man whose sister is married to King George's Chief Stable Boy."¹¹⁰ The Gaelic-American charged that the New York Times unjustly questioned the loyalty of Irish-Americans and other non-Anglo-Saxon racial groups even before America entered World War One.¹¹¹

The Gaelic-American found comfort only in the Hearst papers. "Mr. Hearst," the newspaper observed, "means well to the Irish." The Gaelic-American expressed the hope that the Hearst papers would break "the boycott of the New York papers" on news against the campaign to align the U.S. with Britain in war against Germany.¹¹²

In the Midwest, the Chicago Citizen echoed the Gaelic-American's attacks on the "Anglomaniac" press. The Citizen accused the "leading daily newspapers" of being part of

an insidious attempt . . . to falsify American history as part of an apparent movement to Anglitize the United States.¹¹³

The Citizen also condemned caricatures in the mainstream press. It characterized a Chicago Daily News piece on Irish policemen, which alluded to "Celtic brogues" and "big feet," as a "dirty little spew of venomous bigotry."¹¹⁴ The Citizen, however, was not above praising mainstream newspapers when it saw fit. It lauded a report about Ireland in the notoriously anti-British Chicago Tribune for its fairness even as it tempered its praise with the observation:

We are aware that the word has gone forth that the American press must not be as friendly to Ireland as it has been in the past.¹¹⁵

Farther west, the Catholic Western Watchman defended the St. Louis Irish from charges of divided loyalty that appeared in the mainstream press.¹¹⁶ The Watchman also condemned press proposals for a long term Anglo-American alliance.¹¹⁷

In California, the Leader exceeded its New York and Chicago counterparts in both the ferocity and the scope of its attacks. The Sacramento Bee was a favorite target. The Leader attacked the Bee and its publisher, Charles McClatchy, for questioning the loyalty of Irish-Americans. The Bee, according to the Leader,

. . . spoils with printer's ink a certain amount of perfectly good paper that could be used much more profitably for sanitary purposes.

The B is so-called because it is the initial letter of blackmailer, blackguard and blackleg, of brute, beast, bully, blowhard and bigot, of bluster, blab and bilk, of bogus, bore, bughouse and bull . . . Chump McClatchy is the original human gas bag.¹¹⁸

The Leader called the San Francisco Chronicle a "subsidized sheet . . . a tail of the London Times," because of its alleged pro-British tendencies.¹¹⁹ It accused the Associated Press of stirring up anti-Catholic bigotry by "giving prominence" to a violent attack in Denver upon a man named Spurgeon. Spurgeon, according to the Leader, was

. . . a low-brow bigot . . . a money-mad wretch
 . . . [who] openly charged that every priest has
 concubines among the members of their
 congregation.¹²⁰

Rather than condemn the beating, however, the Leader inferred that it was deserved.

The Leader accused Scripps' San Francisco Daily News of Anglo-Saxon sympathies because of its portrayal of Irish immigrants. In reaction to a Daily News serial entitled, "Confessions of a Wife," the Leader observed:

This Alexandrine indecency written by some anonymous hack with the mind of a slut and the pen of a pander portrays the Irish servant girl before her high-brow employer as the usual soft, slushy, ignorant, untidy and half-witted slattern of the anti-Irish stage, her impossible brogue of "kape" and "indade," and her blasphemous references to the "blissid son of the holy virgin."¹²¹

The Leader sometimes exhibited an almost puritanical sensitivity to the portrayal of Irish immigrants in the west coast press. The Leader once chastized the Daily News for characterizing the Irish as "Pats" and called for a boycott of the paper:

[The Daily News] . . . shows its pro John Bull preferences by its sneers at the people of Irish descent. . . . the bigoted sewer-rat weaklings that

turn out the Daily News should be made to answer for this gratuitous insult.¹²²

The Leader criticized not only the mainstream daily press, but also Catholic newspapers. For the Leader, Catholicism and anglophobia were inseparable components of Irish-American identity. Rev. Peter Yorke, publisher and chief editorialist at the Leader, attacked those Catholic newspapers which in his estimation failed to condemn Britain with sufficient ardor or exhort the Irish to greater levels of self-confidence.¹²³

Conclusions

Anglophobia was a central feature of the Irish-American press. A product of collective memory and immigrant adjustment in America, anglophobia gave the Irish a sense of identity and provided an interpretive framework for the Irish-American experience as well as a strategy by which acceptance might be won in America.

Two cataclysmic events, however, would challenge the utility and logic of Irish-American anglophobia. The Easter 1916 Rising in Dublin would inflame anti-British sentiment to new heights; the United States' entry into World War One as Britain's ally would compel the Irish-American press to search for a strategy by which anglophobia could be kept compatible with loyalty to America.

Notes to Chapter III

¹Anglophobia suffused the three pillars of Irish-American group identity--Catholicism, Irish nationalism and, in a more diffuse sense, allegiance to the Democratic Party. Each of these served as a source of tribal cohesion and provided a line of defense against an often hostile environment. It is beyond the scope of this study to fully explore all three dimensions of Irish-American group identity. Primary attention will focus upon Irish nationalism. It is important to note, however, that the three expressions or manifestations of Irish-American identity were inextricably linked.

The tenacious allegiance of the Irish to Catholicism as a form of cultural and political--as well as religious--expression is rooted in the long domination of Ireland by Great Britain. The Cromwellian and Williamite wars of the 17th and 18th centuries were largely wars against Catholicism. The Penal codes of the late 17th established Catholicism as a formal badge of political and economic disenfranchisement by barring Catholics from the right to practise their religion, receive an education, vote, hold public office or lease, buy, or inherit land from a Protestant, or own a horse worth more than five pounds sterling. Religious discrimination continued in Ireland until 1922. Edward M. Levine, The Irish and Irish Politicians: A Study of Cultural and Social Alienation (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 1966): 16-17.

The anti-Catholic nativist campaigns in the 19th and early 20th century America reinforced the link between Catholicism and Irish identity: "The strength of American resistance to Catholicism intensified its importance to Irish-Americans who saw themselves surrounded by hostility." Fallows 144.

Irish allegiance to the Democratic Party dates back to 1798 when the Federalists implemented the Alien and Sedition Acts for use against anti-British Irish in the United States. The anti-Federalist Jeffersonian party, which eventually evolved into the Democratic Party, actively opposed the Alien and Sedition Acts. Although powerful and longstanding, Irish loyalty to the Democratic Party was not absolute. Both Patrick Ford of the Irish World and John Devoy of the Gaelic-American argued that the Irish could barter their votes more effectively if their allegiance to the Democrats was not so automatic. Ford and Devoy competed for Republican patronage in the late 19th century.

²Mary Ryan, "The American Parade: Representations of 19th Century Public Order," The New Cultural History ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: U of California P, 1989) concludes that the Irish used parades to assert their identity and

challenge Anglo-Saxon hegemony in mid-19th century urban America. Anti-British sentiment was a characteristic of Irish parades and mass gatherings well into the 20th century. On St. Patrick's Day in 1900, for example, Irish parade participants across the United States carried Boer flags in solidarity with the revolt against British control of South Africa. Wittke, The Irish in America 163, cited in Painter 158.

³This study employs Michael Schudson's conception of collective memory, specifically "the ways in which group, institutional, and cultural recollections of the past shape people's actions in the present." Michael Schudson, Watergate in American Memory (New York: Basic Books, 1992) 3.

⁴Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, The Rebel Girl (New York: International Publishers, 1955) 23.

⁵Quoted in Kirby Miller 551.

⁶By presenting other regular features such as immigrant ballads, nationalistic poetry, and reprints of speeches, the press appropriated oral forms of expression while at the same time (most certainly in the case of ballads) facilitating their introduction into the oral tradition.

⁷"Nearly 300 Irish Martyrs to be Canonized," Leader 17 April 1915: 1.

⁸"Recruiting for Irish Industries," editorial, Irish World 3 Oct. 1914: 4.

⁹"Sizing Up the Situation," editorial, Chicago Citizen 26 July 1918: 4.

¹⁰"Resolutions," editorial, Irish World 11 March 1916: 4. See also Irish World editorials on 21 Feb. 1914, 20 March 1915, and 27 Nov. 1915.

¹¹More recent and rather mundane events became opportunities to condemn past British transgressions. A report about a bill in Congress to declare Commodore John Barry, a hero of the American Revolutionary War, as "Father of the American Navy" recalled the so-called "penal days" of 18th century Ireland when "Priests were hunted like beasts of prey. Teachers were outlawed. . . ." "Author of Barry Bill Writes to Leader," Leader 21 Feb. 1914: 1. An report about the re-burial of a priest in Australia recounted the story of the priest's forced exile to Australia chained to the corpse of a black man. "Days of '98 Recalled," Chicago Citizen 17 Jan. 1914: 1.

¹²"An Irish Famine," Irish World 10 July 1915: 2.

¹³"Famine," (a serialized feature) Irish World 23 May 1914: 10.

¹⁴"T.P. O'Connor Speech to England," Chicago Citizen 4 Oct. 1918: 2.

¹⁵The collective memory, as articulated in the press and elsewhere, sometimes suffered an occasional bout of amnesia in its recollections of the American aftermath of the Famine. The Chicago Citizen insisted, for example, that "America threw open the portals of her hospitality and welcomed the exile." "America-Ireland Orange and Green," Chicago Citizen 3 May 1918: 1. In actual fact, the Irish famine refugees were greeted with hostility and often violence along the eastern seaboard of the United States.

¹⁶"Finerty Memorial Fund," Chicago Citizen 31 Jan. 1914: 1.

¹⁷"The Prejudice of Centuries," editorial, Gaelic-American 31 Oct. 1914.

¹⁸"An Irish Famine," Leader 10 July 1915: 2.

¹⁹"To Future Empire Builders," editorial, Gaelic-American 12 Jan. 1918: 4.

²⁰Baltzell suggests that the push for Anglo-conformity was stronger in the older cities of the eastern seaboard where old-stock Americans encountered concentrated numbers of immigrants. Digby E. Baltzell, The Protestant Establishment Revisited (New Brunswick, U.S.A.: Transaction Publishers): 222.

²¹Quoted in Farrell 15. Barrett Wendell, a Harvard professor of Puritan ancestry, suggested in 1913 that immigrants, "however worthy," could only become Americans when they lost all memory of where their families came from--a process that "generally takes 100 years." Quoted in Henry May, The End of American Innocence: 1912-1917 (New York: Knopf, 1959): 38. This argument was directed at all immigrant groups including the Irish who, by virtue of their long presence in America, their ability to speak English, and their success in politics were generally recognized as being more capable of adjusting to American institutions than newer immigrants from eastern and southern Europe: "The word 'brilliant' is oftener used for Irish than for any other aliens among us save the Hebrews. Yet those of Irish blood are far from manning their share of the responsible non-political posts in American society. Their contribution

by no means matches that of an equal number of the old American breed. . .it is too soon to show what it can do. Despite their schooling, the children of immigrants from Ireland often become infected with the parental slackness, unthrift and irresponsibility. . . . They in turn communicate some of their heritage to their children. . . . We shall have to wait until the fourth generation before we shall learn how Hibernian stock compares with stocks that have had a happier social history." Ross 44-45.

²²In her survey of print coverage of immigrants, Rita Simon notes a shift around 1910. In the Saturday Evening Post, the "most anti-immigration magazine," most reports between 1900-1909 concerning immigrants were favorable. Some accounts actually praised the virtues of Irish and German immigrants. In the following decade the majority of reports were anti-immigrant. Simon detected a similar pattern in the elite Atlantic Monthly. A 1908 editorial entitled "Races in America," for example, expressed a non-hostile if patriarchal attitude to non-Anglo-Saxon groups in the U.S. As a kind of domestic variation of the "white man's burden," the editorial argued that it was the "Anglo-Saxon burden" to "nourish, uplift and inspire." A 1915 editorial, by contrast, argued that it was hopeless to expect immigrants to assimilate American (Anglo-Saxon) values, manners, and behaviour. Immigrants posed a "threat to the American way of life." Rita J. Simon, Public Opinion and the Immigrant: Print Media Coverage 1880-1980 (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1986): 79, 140, 212.

²³Higham suggests that there were two contending tendencies within the Americanization movement--one which drew upon the nativist tradition and coercive methods to force immigrants to abandon their old world ties; another which rejected nativist perspectives and employed more benevolent methods such as settlement houses to assimilate immigrants. Higham diss. 212. The Chicago Citizen was suspicious of the efforts of middle-class reformers to Americanize Chicago's immigrants. It dismissed such groups as "gatherings of leisurely women unhampered by babies . . . busily destroying the social fabric." "On Quicksands Now," editorial, Chicago Citizen 9 May 1914: 4.

²⁴Lichtman suggests that Americanization "demanded total adherence to visions of American culture free of old world contaminants." Allan J. Lichtman, Prejudice and Old Politics (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1979): 100. Carol Aronovici, a post-World War One sociologist, labeled Americanization a "nationalistic movement patterned upon the traditions of Anglo-Saxon and Puritan culture." Carol Aronovici, "Americanization: Its Meaning and Function," American Journal of Sociology May 1920, quoted in

Farrell 15.

²⁵The notion of inherent Anglo-Saxon superiority was supported by the results of so-called genetic studies which were popularized in the mainstream media. The results of an American Genetic Association study, for example, which claimed that Americans of Anglo-Saxon ancestry were more likely to succeed, were reported in Popular Science Weekly in April 1914. Cited in Higham diss. 177. The Literary Digest also published scientific accounts regarding the genetic qualities of old-stock Anglo-Saxon Americans. For examples, see "Birth Control and Race Suicide," Literary Digest 3 Feb. 1917: 244-245, and "Does the Melting Pot Melt?" Literary Digest 3 March 1917: 544-545.

²⁶A number of books were published in the pre-war years which promoted the record of past Irish contributions to the United States and disputed the various claims of anglophiles. For example, Thomas Hobbs Maginnis, The Irish Contribution to America's Independence (Philadelphia: Doire, 1913), argued that America derived more of its national character from Celts than from Anglo-Saxons. Maginnis dismissed the notion of Anglo-Saxon superiority as a "pernicious falsehood." Maginnis 3.

²⁷"Americans Are Not Anglo-Saxons," editorial, Gaelic-American 16 May 1914: 4.

²⁸"Mayor and Anglo-Saxons," Leader 11 March 1916: 11.

²⁹"The Irish Race in America," editorial, Leader 13 Oct. 1917: 4. This Leader editorial also included some rather wild and improbable claims: that Irish immigration to the U.S. helped end slavery; and that the hordes of Irish that flocked to America's cities somehow helped improve living conditions and made Americanization more feasible. The Leader's arguments also occasionally reflected the religious dimension of the debate about American identity. The Leader suggested that Catholics made "the best type of American." "Catholic Schools Model," editorial, Leader 11 July 1914: 4. America, the Jesuit weekly magazine, also repeatedly insisted that America's national identity was not Anglo-Saxon in character by rather the product of many races. America 20 April 1918: 40, 12 Oct. 1918: 18. Cited in Higham, "European Immigration" 227.

³⁰"Butte's Protest," Irish World 21 Feb. 1914: 1.

³¹"Call 'Im' 'Ome," "Policing the World," editorials, Chicago Citizen 21 Sept. 1917: 4, 2 May 1914: 4.

³²Carl Meyerhuber, "U.S. Imperialism and Ethnic

Imperialism: The New Manifest Destiny as Reflected in Boston's Irish-American Press," 1890-1900," Eire/Ireland 9 (Winter 1974): 24. The Chicago Citizen challenged Dr. Abram Harris, president of Northwestern University, who advocated an American imperial program as part of a larger Anglo-Saxon responsibility to police the world. The Citizen dismissed Harris' suggestion that the English Empire offered a model of law and order for the world: "It's purpose has always been to see that conquered and subject peoples should behave themselves while being robbed." "Policing the World," editorial, Chicago Citizen 2 May 1914: 4.

³³Irish World 17 Feb. 1900. Cited in Rodechko 151.

³⁴"Notes By Way," editorial, Chicago Citizen 16 May 1914: 4.

³⁵In response to news of anti-British guerilla activity in South Africa, the Gaelic-American observed: "We wish success . . . [in order to] show that the vaunted British Empire is only a hollow shell that may go to pieces at any time. And the sooner the better for mankind." "War Course," editorial, Gaelic-American 31 Oct. 1914: 4. The Irish World, the Gaelic-American, and the Chicago Citizen also supported the establishment of a Jewish state in British-occupied Palestine. For example, see "Zionism," editorial, Chicago Citizen 10 Jan. 1914: 4. None of the major Irish-American papers, however, supported radical efforts to promote social change in the United States. Despite its willingness to embrace a radical domestic agenda in the 1870's and early 1880's, by 1914 the Irish World, for example, denounced socialism and condemned the goals and tactics of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) as being "supported by recent immigrants who haven't acquired the 'spirit of American life.'" "Labor and Socialism," Irish World 28 Nov. 1914: 5.

³⁶Quoted in Finley Peter Dunne, Mr. Dooley on Ivrything and Ivrybody Robert Hutchinson, ed., (New York: Dover, 1963) 18. Hutchinson claims that Dunne's satirical wit had such influence upon public opinion that Roosevelt actively sought his friendship and wrote him long letters of self-defense if he thought Dunne disapproved of his actions. Hutchinson v.

³⁷"Anglomaniacs Urge War," editorial, Irish World 11 March 1914: 4. The terms "Anglomaniac" was used by many Irish-American newspapers to describe American anglophiles and advocates of what were perceived as pro-British positions. The term was most commonly applied to the mainstream press.

³⁸Joseph Cuddy, Irish-America and National Isolation:

1914-1920, diss., State U of New York, 1965, (New York: Arno, 1976) 12. For a fuller discussion, see Michael Kraus, The Writing of American History (Oklahoma: Oklahoma UP, 1953) 242-270. Kraut suggests that prior to 1920, most American historians were old-stock Anglo-Saxons who were generally unsympathetic to immigrants. Alan Kraut, Huddled Masses: The Immigrant in American Society, 1880-1921 (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson, 1982) 187. May notes that in the 1907 National Ideals Historically Traced, the final volume of Albert Bushnell Hart's The American Nation, the most ambitious survey of American history hitherto attempted, Hart claims that Puritan ideals served as the "leaven" of American cultural ideals and questioned whether those ideals could survive the onslaught of immigration. Henry May, The End of American Innocence: 1912-1917 (New York: Knopf, 1959) 42-43.

³⁹Eoin McKiernan, "Focal Scoir," Irish America June 1988: 50.

⁴⁰Thomas Brown, "Origins of Irish Nationalism" 343-345.

⁴¹Edward Wakin, Enter the Irish-American (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1976): 164. One recurring historical theme in the Irish-American press concerned the Irish contributions during the American Revolutionary War. For examples, see "The Real Father of the American Navy," Irish World 16 May 1914: 1, "Major John Kelly, the Man Who Saved Washington's Army," Gaelic-American 2 May 1914: 8. Such hyperpatriotic historical features would become more ubiquitous in an attempt to diffuse charges of Irish-American disloyalty following the United States entry into World War One. In another recurring theme, Irish civilization was depicted as older and more highly evolved than English civilization. for example, see "Irish Civilization Anti-Dates England," Chicago Citizen 7 Sept. 1917: 1.

⁴²Wittke, The Irish in America 22.

⁴³Ward 70.

⁴⁴Child 6. Fuchs notes that the German-Irish alliance was in part a reaction to 1894 appearance of the Immigration Restriction League, which was formed by five Boston Brahmins at Harvard to combat immigrant contamination of American ideals. Fuchs also suggests that the German-Irish alliance was an example of "voluntary ethnic pluralism" at a time before the concept of ethnic pluralism was formally articulated. Fuchs 58.

The Irish newspapers lobbied against proposals to restrict immigration. The Irish World condemned proposed

legislation to exclude illiterate immigrants. "Illiterate Immigrants," editorial, Irish World 8 April 1916: 4. The Gaelic-American condemned an earlier similar measure as a violation of American traditions. "That Literary Test," Gaelic-American 7 Feb. 1914: 2. The Chicago Citizen once called for a boycott of Century magazine for a series on immigration by Professor Edward A. Ross which promoted Anglo-Saxon racial purity. "Why Protest," editorial, Chicago Citizen 31 Jan. 1914: 4. Between 1910 and 1917 Congress debated four bills to restrict immigration. Three passed but were vetoed. The 1917 Immigration Act, however, was passed despite President Wilson's veto. According to the Literary Digest, a broad cross section of mainstream newspapers supported the 1917 bill. Rita Simon 13, 214.

⁴⁵"Restoration of Our Commerce," Irish World 3 Oct. 1914: 1. Irish-American papers reacted defensively to accusations in the mainstream press that the Irish were against repeal more out of antipathy toward Britain than loyalty toward the U.S. The Citizen attacked the Chicago "trust press," specifically the Record-Herald, for suggesting that Irish opposition to the repeal of tolls was based more upon "animosity" than upon "broad statesmanship. . . . we regard this hectoring . . . as un-American, unfair, and altogether in harmony with the character of a trust press." "Canal Tolls," editorial, Chicago Citizen 18 April 1914: 4. The Irish World attacked the New York World for making similar assertions. "Would Desecrate St. Patrick's Day," editorial, Irish World 21 March 1914: 4. See also, "John Crimmins Condemns Self," editorial, Gaelic-American 18 April 1914: 4. The Gaelic-American gave the most extensive editorial attention to the issue through the first months of 1914.

⁴⁶Wittke, Irish in America 163.

⁴⁷The Citizen called the secretary of Rhodes scholarship fund, "the latest of these putrescent warts." "Call 'Im' 'Ome," editorial, Chicago Citizen 21 Sept 1914: 4.

⁴⁸The editorial also raised the seldom articulated question of class differences within the Irish-American community by chastizing the wealthy parents of the girls for mimicing English manners. "Anglicizing Sisters," Gaelic-American 25 April 1914: 8. The Leader also condemned public performances of British national tunes: "If the Park Commissioners are in favor of bands playing 'God Save the Queen' then let the Germans, Russians, Japanese, French. . . . This truckling to English sentiment should cease. We have but one national air in this country, the Star-Spangled banner." "Why This Except," editorial, Leader

⁴⁹"English Flunkeyism in U.S. Army," editorial, Gaelic-American 23 Sept 1916: 4.

⁵⁰O'Leary later published an anti-British monthly, Bull, which was suppressed by the U.S. Post Office in 1917.

⁵¹"Post Office Pro-British Agencies," editorial, Irish World 8 Aug. 1914: 4.

⁵²"That Peace Fiasco," editorial, Leader 21 BFeb. 1914: 4.

⁵³"Bunker Hill Day," editorial, Leader 13 June 1914: 4.

⁵⁴Gaelic-American 6 April 1918: 4.

⁵⁵"FOIF Meets," Irish World 21 Oct. 1916: 2. The denunciation of Irish-American politicians who strayed from the path of ideological purity was also a standard feature of the Gaelic-American. When Boston's Mayor Curley expressed support for limited Home Rule in Ireland, he was labeled "a contemptible cur" who had become an "Anglo-Saxon." Gaelic-American 1 Aug. 1914: 4.

⁵⁶"Mitred Imperialists in Ireland," editorial, Gaelic-American 20 March 1915: 4.

⁵⁷Thomas Brown, Irish-American Nationalism 23.

⁵⁸Fallows 35.

⁵⁹New York Times 15 May 1880, quoted in Simon 186.

⁶⁰Edward A. Freeman quoted in Paul Carter, The Twenties in America (New York: Crowell, 1968): 89.

⁶¹Ethnic stereotypes "hastened and intensified the growth of national and ethnic consciousness among those who became the targets of the cartoonists pen." John J. Appel, "From Shanties to Lace Curtains: The Irish Image in Puck, 1876-1910." Comparative Studies in Sociology and History 13 (1971): 375.

⁶²Appel 372. Puck's circulation peaked in the late 1890's. The average readers of Puck were middle or lower-middle class whites of Anglo-Saxon ancestry. Appel 365, 374.

⁶³Appel concludes that the stereotype of "Paddy" was rooted in eugenic and social Darwinian assumptions: the inherent superiority of some races--such as the Anglo-Saxon--and the inferiority of others--such as the Irish; and

that there was a direct correlation between social status and race, nationality, and religion. Appel 373.

⁶⁴Appel 367.

⁶⁵Appel 371.

⁶⁶Appel 367.

⁶⁷Appel 369.

⁶⁸Shannon 144.

⁶⁹In many ways Jiggs and Maggie (of the comic strip "Bringing Up Father" by George McManus) represented the dilemma of ascendant middle-class Irish-America. Jiggs and Maggie had successfully worked their way out of the ghetto but were unable--despite Maggie's tireless efforts at emulation--to gain acceptance from the established elites. Jiggs' constant wish to return to the working-class haunts of his former life and his reticence concerning his wife's efforts at social mobility exemplify the ambivalent state of the Irish middle class in the early 20th century.

⁷⁰One widely circulated book on immigration published in 1914 echoed the 19th century Irish stereotypes (and foretold mid-twentieth century black stereotypes). The Irish were described as profligate, improvident, hot-tempered, in weak control of their impulses, prone to abuse drink and likely to have too many children. Edward A. Ross, The Old World in the New (New York: Century, 1914): 24-45.

⁷¹"Brigid" the clumsy maid, "Tim" the dumb cop, "Paddy" the burly laborer, the drunken "boyo," and the bragging "greenhorn" were standard characters in early motion pictures. Dennis Clark, Hibernia America: The Irish and Regional Cultures (New York: Greenwood, 1986): 153.

⁷²"Defaming Irish Race," editorial, Irish World 24 Jan. 1914: 4.

⁷³"Anti-Irish Moving Pictures," editorial, Irish World 18 April 1914: 4.

⁷⁴"Defaming the Irish Race," editorial, Irish World 24 Jan. 1914: 4.

⁷⁵Fanning 176.

⁷⁶Mary McWhorter, Ladies Auziliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, "Gross Libel to the Irish Race," letter-to-the-editor, Irish World 25 Dec. 1915: 5.

⁷⁷"We Are In For It," editorial, Chicago Citizen 7 Feb. 1914: 4.

⁷⁸Fanning 224. Ellis contends that the only real objection to Dunne's Dooley columns came from a "small contingent of Irish." Ellis, however, also quotes a negative review which attacks the Dooley series for presenting slum dwellers and saloon keepers in an affectionate and humane way: "Their needs entitle them to great missionary efforts from educators and philanthropists but not to apotheosize as 'delightful' humorists or seers. . . . If Mr Dooley will leave the environment of Archey Road, and write in decent English, he may yet deserve a wreath of unwithering smiles." Literary Review Dec. 1899, quoted in Elmer Ellis, Mr. Dooley's America (New York: Knopf, 1941): 182, 136.

⁷⁹"Is Catts a By-Product of An African Semi-Feline Tribe?" editorial, Chicago Citizen 4 Oct. 1918: 4.

⁸⁰"Meatless Tuesday," editorial, Leader 17 Nov. 1917: 4. The Leader also regularly condemned the anti-alcohol crusade as anti-Catholic because wine was required at the mass.

⁸¹For examples of success stories, see "Death of an Irishman Who Made Good in America," and "Shaughnessy, McGrath, and Ahearn," editorial, Chicago Citizen 29 March 1917: 4, 27 Sept, 1918: 4.

⁸²"FOIF," Irish World 13 Jan. 17: 5.

⁸³J.L. Fawsitt, "Irish Prosperity," Irish World 7 Aug. 1915: 7.

⁸⁴The editorial was in response to a speech by English priests at Chicago's Fellowship Club in which the Irish were allegedly characterized as "ignorant." "Obiter Dicta on 'Ignorance' from Visiting Catholic Prelates of England," editorial, Chicago Citizen 22 Nov. 1918: 4.

⁸⁵"Stage Irishman Booster," editorial, Leader 24 May 1913: 4.

⁸⁶"Latest Martyr," editorial, Irish World 12 Aug. 1916: 4. "Ireland's Past and Future," editorial, Irish World 24 Jan. 1914: 4. "Acme of Hypocrisy," editorial, Gaelic-American 31 Oct. 1914: 4.

⁸⁷The Chicago Citizen, for example, attacked the "high-brow reformers" and "moribund bigots" who argued against proposed pay raises for city sanitation workers, many of

whom were apparently Irish: "That a man with an Irish name should hold a job anywhere that does not confine the workman to a ditch or carrying a hod does not suit the taste of nebulous reformers. . . . Is there going to be a raising of the old cry, 'No Irish Need Apply?'" "Is This an Anti-Irish Plot?" Chicago Citizen 1 Feb. 1918: 1. The Leader also regularly condemned the good-government movement as a conspiracy to undermine Irish successes in urban politics.

⁸⁸The Irish-American press also accused the British of shortcomings more commonly associated with the Irish. To counter the reputed Irish weakness for strong drink, the Leader observed, "If there is any nation that can furnish a more disgusting spectacle of the booze habit than Great Britain, there are multitudes from Missouri . . . who are willing to be shown." "Sober Sovereigns," editorial, Leader 17 April 1915: 4.

⁸⁹"Rampant Bigotry Meets Rebuke," editorial, Chicago Citizen 16 Nov. 1918: 4.

⁹⁰"Bolsheviki in Mad Stage," editorial, Chicago Citizen 15 Feb. 1918: 4.

⁹¹"A Grave Economy," editorial, Chicago Citizen 28 Feb. 1914: 4. Of the Irish-American newspapers examined in this study, the Irish-World, whose founder learned the newspaper trade on the staff of the abolitionist Liberator, offered the most sympathetic line on the issue of race: "A democracy that makes a distinction on account of the color of a person's skin is not a true democracy." "The Negro and Democracy," editorial, Irish World 16 Nov. 1918: 4.

⁹²"Asiatic Labor," editorial, Leader 2 June 1917: 4. "Going to Church," editorial, Leader 16 May 1914: 4.

⁹³"English-Imperial Gombeen Shop," editorial, Gaelic-American 26 Dec. 1914: 4. "Pulitzer's Colossal Impudence," editorial, Gaelic-American 14 Feb. 1914: 4.

⁹⁴"Duffy's Irish History," Leader 24 Jan. 1914: 4.

⁹⁵"England Against Revival," Irish World 8 April 1916: 7.

⁹⁶"Slave Mind," reprint from Sinn Fein, Gaelic-American 3 Oct. 1914: 8.

⁹⁷"Asquith's Admission," editorial, Irish World 3 June 1916: 4. "Woodrow Wilson Wins Pyrrhic Victory," Gaelic-American 18 Nov. 1916: 8. "John Stuart Mill on Ireland," editorial, Irish World 1 July 1916: 1.

1916: 4. "Woodrow Wilson Wins Pyrrhic Victory," Gaelic-American 18 Nov. 1916: 8. "John Stuart Mill on Ireland," editorial, Irish World 1 July 1916: 1.

⁹⁸"The Milwaukee Copperhead," editorial, Leader 11 March 1916: 4.

⁹⁹"Not To Be Ashamed Of," editorial, Leader 6 February 1915: 4.

¹⁰⁰"An Irish Deficiency," editorial, Irish World 10 March 1917: 4.

¹⁰¹"Asquith's Admission," editorial, Irish World 3 June 1916: 4.

¹⁰²"Fund For Volunteers Growing," Leader 7 Aug. 1915: 1.

¹⁰³The term "anglomaniac" was most commonly used by the Gaelic-American to describe the large commercial daily newspapers of New York. The Chicago Citizen employed the term "trust press" to describe the large dailies of Chicago.

¹⁰⁴"Newspapers Conspire to Provoke Riots," Gaelic-American 26 Dec. 14: 1. "O'Leary Arraigns Anglomaniac Press," Gaelic-American 16 Jan. 1915: 1.

¹⁰⁵"World Losing Ground Day By Day," Gaelic-American 25 April 1914: 1.

¹⁰⁶"World's Audacious Impudence," editorial, Gaelic-American 21 March 1914: 4.

¹⁰⁷Editorial, Gaelic-American 21 March 1914: 4.

¹⁰⁸"Post's Slurs Resented," Gaelic-American 28 Nov. 1914: 7.

¹⁰⁹"villard," editorial, Gaelic-American 30 Oct. 1915: 4.

¹¹⁰"Tribune's Vile Lie About Larkin," editorial, Gaelic-American 5 Dec. 1914: 4.

¹¹¹"Newspapers Conspire To Provoke Riot," Gaelic-American 26 Dec. 1914: 1.

¹¹²"A Century of Enmity," Gaelic-American 24 Jan. 1914: 1.

¹¹³"Stand By American History," editorial, Chicago

115 "Tribune On Ulster," editorial, Chicago Citizen 28 March 1914: 4.

116 "The Reason," editorial, Western Watchman 15 March 1917: 10.

117 The Watchman condemned a Globe-Democrat columnist for proposing a post-war Anglo-American alliance and for suggesting that the American Revolution was a mistake. "Flathead Driveling Again," editorial, Western Watchman 13 Dec. 1918: 10. Because the Western Watchman is unavailable on microfilm for the years 1914-1916, it is impossible to assess its editorial positions for that period.

118 "A Hyphen Examined Home," editorial, Leader 27 May 1916: 4.

119 "Daily Dapple," editorial, Leader 6 May 1916: 4.

120 "Spurgeon Affair," editorial, Leader 18 April 1914: 4.

121 "The 'Dirty' Daily News, editorial, Leader 13 Feb. 1915: 4.

122 "The Dirty News," editorial, Leader 23 Jan. 1915: 4.

123 The Leader criticized the Omaha True Voice and the Milwaukee Catholic Citizen for exhibiting the "slave mind" by failing to take a united front on the question of Ireland's independence. "The Milwaukee Copperhead," editorial, Leader 11 March 1916: 4. The Leader also attacked the Western Watchman endorsing the possibility of an English/Irish rapprochement over the issue of Home Rule in Ireland. "Our London Letter," editorial, Leader 10 March 1917: 4.

CHAPTER IV

IRISH NATIONALISM: THE AMERICAN DILEMMA

Introduction

The movement to free Ireland gave focus to the anglophobic instincts of the American-Irish. The nationalist impulse infused all forms of social and cultural expression and gave meaning and purpose to a multitude of national organizations and publications. Irish-American nationalism became the touchstone of tribal loyalty and identity. Its chief instrument was the Irish-American press.¹

Irish-American nationalism was a broad-based movement in support of an end to British colonial rule in Ireland. Yet at another level, it also represented a quest for dignity and self-respect for the Irish in America. The two goals were inseparable. The self-proclaimed purpose of the Irish World, the premier Irish paper in America, was to advance the cause of Ireland and prove that the Irish in America were not "strangers within the gates."

As the likelihood of American involvement in the European war increased in 1915-1917, agitation on behalf of Ireland would bring down accusations of disloyalty to the United States and lead to the censorship of a number of

Irish-American publications.² The dilemma in an increasingly hostile climate for the Irish-American press--and the Irish-American community at large--was to somehow reconcile loyalty to Ireland with loyalty to the United States.

The Origins and Character of Irish-American Nationalism

Modern Irish nationalism was forged in the crucible of the American immigrant experience.³ For the peasant Irish, most of whom had never traveled beyond the narrow confines of their own townlands, the act of immigration gave birth to a sense of national consciousness. Those who thought of themselves only as Mayomen or Kerry men (or women) were transformed into Irishmen the moment they passed through the immigrant gates. Nationality was an artifact of immigration.

The forced exodus of the Famine years and the harrowing adjustment to America--where contempt rained down upon the indigent Irish--gave rise to a sense of fury and shame that became part of the collective inheritance of the American-Irish. Even as Britain became the focus of Irish rage, mother Ireland became an object of intense and sometimes maudlin adoration.⁴

This obsessive devotion to homeland--seldom rivaled by other immigrant groups--was central to the mythos of Irish-America as a nation in exile. Its most intense expression often arose from those who never set foot upon Irish soil--

first and second generation Irish-Americans, the children of the Irish diaspora.

The immigrant Irish and their offspring outnumbered those left behind in Ireland. The most committed nationalists were often the children of immigrants.⁵ In New York City--an international center of Irish nationalist agitation--the majority of nationalist leaders and editors were American-born. Of the major figures, only John Devoy of the Gaelic-American came from Ireland.

For all the blustering exhortations on behalf of Ireland, Irish-American nationalism was largely directed toward American ends.⁶ It was the "cement" rather than the purpose of Irish American organization.⁷ Irish nationalism satisfied a myriad of needs. It provided a sense of identity, a shield against Anglo-Saxon religious and racial prejudice, and a route to respectability that would serve as a model for other national groups.⁸

The status of the Irish on both sides of the Atlantic was inexorably linked. For immigrants and their offspring, the liberation of Ireland was an essential prerequisite to the vindication of the Irish in America. A free homeland would confer dignity upon the Irish of both shores.⁹ An independent, self-governing Ireland would refute the contention that the Irish were incapable of fair and honest governance. Michael Davitt articulated the appeal of Irish-American nationalism in a speech at Cooper Union in 1880:

You want to be honored among the elements that constitute this nation, as a people not coming from a paupered land; and in order that no sneers be cast on you when you stand for any position . . . you want to be regarded with the respect due you. . . . aid us in Ireland to remove the stain of degradation and in America you will get the respect you deserve.¹⁰

Nationalism satisfied another need. Social and economic differences within the Irish-American community often precluded consensus on domestic issues. To a people divided by class, geography, and levels of adjustment, nationalism provided a standard around which all could rally.¹¹ Irish-Americans could unite in their contempt for Britain and in their desire for some form of self-government for Ireland. Irish-American politicians and other so-called "professional" Irishmen were often quick to exploit nationalist sentiments for their own ends. Finley Peter Dunne made this observation in an 1895 newspaper column about the link between Irish nationalism and political opportunism:

Did ye iver see a man that wanted to free
Ireland th' day after to-morra that didn't run
f'r alderman soon or late?¹²

The Two Strategies of Nationalism

There existed a long history of Irish-American support for the anti-colonial struggle in Ireland. Irish-American involvement was so pervasive that the London Times concluded in 1885: "The Irish question is mainly an Irish-American question."¹³ The Irish-American press kept the issue alive.

Prime Minister William Gladstone observed in the 1890's:
"But for the work the Irish World is doing and the money it is sending across the ocean, there would be no agitation in Ireland."¹⁴

Although they might agree on nationalist goals, Irish-Americans quarreled over tactics. Two modes or strategies of nationalism competed for Irish-American support since the 1840's.¹⁵ Constitutionalists advocated parliamentary reforms to achieve self-government for Ireland. Radicals espoused armed struggle.

Opinions often split along class lines.¹⁶ Unskilled relative newcomers and members of the working class--the "shanty" Irish of popular imagination--were more likely to embrace radical nationalism. The middle-class and established older immigrants--the "lace-curtain Irish"--were inclined to support the more respectable methods of constitutional nationalism.¹⁷

Until the Anglo-American rapprochement of the late 19th century, radical nationalism was often compatible with American interests and the U.S. government sometimes gave tacit approval to Irish schemes against Britain. In 1776, George Washington embraced Irish nationalists in America as fellow patriots. In 1798, Jeffersonian democrats championed the cause of the United Irishmen.¹⁸ Following the American Civil War, successive administrations used the threat of

Irish-American nationalism as leverage in negotiations with Great Britain.¹⁹

In 1866, the Fenian Brotherhood, a self-proclaimed Irish government-in-exile, launched a two-pronged invasion of Canada from New York and Vermont.²⁰ The Fenians, in their wildly improbable scheme, hoped to establish an Irish government-in-exile in Canada. President Andrew Johnson knew of the campaign but did little to stop it. Fenian soldiers--most of whom were Civil War veterans--were even allowed to keep their weapons when they returned to the U.S. after their failed assault. After a second unsuccessful invasion attempt in 1870, the Fenians disbanded.²¹

In the 1870's and 1880's, the Irish World supported social agitation in Ireland and bombing campaigns in Britain. Land League collections raised \$353,000 to finance rent strikes and agrarian agitation in 1879-1882. The Irish World also sponsored an "Emergency Fund" to bankroll dynamite attacks in Britain.²²

But a series of episodes began to erode support for violence. The Molly Maguires' affair of 1877 attracted national attention. The Mollies were a secret society of Irish miners in the anthracite regions of Pennsylvania. After a flurry of violent labor incidents, 19 members of the Mollies were tried, convicted, and executed in the biggest mass hanging in American history. The name Molly Maguires

became synonymous with labor radicalism and Irish extremism.²³

Explosions rocked London in 1883-1885. Members of Clan-na-Gael, the radical successor to the Fenians, tried to blow up the House of Commons, London Bridge, and a number of other London landmarks in a sustained campaign of "bloodless terrorism" (dynamite had recently been invented).

The attacks, however, fell short of their goal. By the end of 1885, 27 bombers were locked away in British prisons and American revulsion against dynamite terrorism was on the rise.²⁴

The romance with dynamite finally ended in 1886 when a bomb exploded at a Chicago labor rally killing six policemen. The Haymarket massacre set off a clamor of nativist reaction that would reverberate well into the 20th century. Although the incident had nothing to do with the Irish question and the identity of the bombers was never firmly established, the British press claimed Irish-American involvement.²⁵ Bishop McQuaid of Rochester publicly compared the Haymarket bombers to the men of Clan-na-Gael.²⁶

After Haymarket, Irish-American leaders and editors distanced themselves from the advocates of violence. The Irish World began to embrace a more moderate agenda.²⁷ Radical policies on the Irish question became increasingly incompatible with the social objectives of upwardly mobile and well-to-do Irish-Americans. The end came in 1889 when

the battered body of Dr. Patrick Cronin, leader of a Clan-na-Gael faction, was discovered in a Chicago sewer. The victim of a Mafia-style execution, Cronin was murdered in a Clan-na-Gael power struggle. Irish-Americans and native Americans reacted with horror.²⁸

The Clan's failed bombing campaigns and the backlash following Haymarket and the Cronin murder marginalized the advocates of radical nationalism. The emergence of the constitutional Home Rule movement in the late 1880's offered an avenue for nationalist impulses.²⁹ Irish-American nationalism under the guise of Home Rule was more compatible with the search for acceptance in America. Home Rule also served as a bridge between rich and poor: wealthy Irish-Americans could unite with their poorer countrymen under a banner of bourgeois respectability.³⁰

Home Rule

Home Rule was a legislative campaign to grant Ireland limited self-government. Under Home Rule, Ireland would have its own parliament with some control over domestic affairs. But the link with Britain would be maintained.

Home Rule made Irish-American nationalism respectable and political circumstances in Britain made passage of Home Rule appear likely.³¹ A reinvigorated Irish Party under the leadership of John Redmond held the balance of power between Liberals and Conservatives following the 1900 parliamentary election.³² Redmond's critical presence in the Liberal

coalition government in the years leading up to World War One kept the Irish question to the fore. The Irish question would also contribute to the demise of the Liberal Party in Great Britain.³³

Home Rule seemed inevitable until the constitutional impasse of February, 1914. The Conservative Party and its loyalist Irish allies threatened to block an annual army bill unless Ulster, the northernmost of the four provinces of Ireland, was excluded from Home Rule legislation.

The loyalist Ulster Volunteers, who were willing to fight to remain part of Britain, began to smuggle guns into Ulster. In an attempted show of force, Liberal Prime Minister Herbert Asquith ordered British troops to take up garrisons in four locations in Ulster, the northernmost province in Ireland. On March 19, 1914, Brigadier-General Hubert Gough and 57 other officers at the Curragh camp in southern Ireland refused to obey the order and resigned.

The incident threw the British government into crisis. The Curragh mutiny marked the first time since 1688 that the King lost the allegiance of his army. In the ensuing stand-off, Prime Minister Asquith backed down and General Gough was reinstated. The Curragh mutiny, according to one scholar, marked "the precise moment of Liberal England's death."³⁴ The impotence of the Liberal Party over Home Rule had been clearly demonstrated. The failure of British resolve when faced with loyalist intransigence established a

pattern that would plague Britain--and Ireland--far into the future.³⁵

Redmond and the Irish Party enjoyed wide support among Irish-Americans. By 1910, the vast majority of Irish-Americans favored Home Rule.³⁶ Donations from great fund raising drives led by the United Irish League (U.I.L.), Redmond's organization in America, supported Irish members of Parliament until government salaries were introduced in 1911.³⁷ As the forces of constitutional nationalism gathered strength, the advocates of physical force languished in the political wilderness.

For a time, the Irish-American press was generally supportive of Home Rule. The Irish World was an early and committed champion.³⁸ The Chicago Citizen remained loyal to Home Rule and the Irish Party long after all other Irish-American newspapers had abandoned Redmond. The Leader ignored Home Rule for the most part, preferring to focus its energies on more domestic concerns such as attacks on British and Anglo-Saxon influence in the United States. Only the Gaelic-American, the guardian of ideological purity, stood steadfast and consistent in its dismissal of Home Rule as merely the latest example of British subterfuge.

Home Rule, according to the Irish World, would return Ireland to a kind of pre-Famine arcadia. Emigration would

cease, prosperity would return, and dignity and self-confidence would once again be restored to the Irish race.³⁹

Poverty ever brings contempt, amongst nations as among individuals and the increased prosperity of our little island will enable her to hold up her head amongst the nations of the world. Her people, proud of her country and its prosperity, will be on an equal footing with those of other nations.⁴⁰

The Irish World was ecstatic when the House of Commons voted in favor of Home Rule in May 1914, thus assuring its eventual passage. The pages of the Irish World overflowed with reprints of pro-Home Rule editorials from mainstream daily newspapers and congratulatory letters from politicians, judges, and editors.⁴¹ The World's celebratory mood betrayed an element of self-congratulation. But the hallelujahs of mainstream elites carried a more significant message--the conferral of respect for Irish-American aspirations and recognition of Irish contributions to America:

It is no wonder, then, that . . . Americans rejoice. . . . In prosperity as in adversity, in peace as in war, men of our blood have displayed their devotion to the Republic they have so loyally served from the day of its birth down to the present hour.⁴²

The proposed exclusion of Ulster, however, dampened the euphoria surrounding Home Rule. The Irish World warned that Redmond and the Irish Party "would be guilty of treason to Ireland if they voted in favor of the mutilation of the motherland."⁴³ The Gaelic-American condemned Home Rule as an "atrocious and devilish proposal to dismember Ireland along religious lines."⁴⁴ The Gaelic-American, which was

founded in 1903 by John Devoy as an alternative to the Irish World, chastised the Irish World for supporting Redmond and warned that Irish-Americans who aided or abetted the partition of Ireland would be condemned as "traitors."⁴⁵

The mainstream daily press generally supported Home Rule.⁴⁶ Even the usually hostile New York Times endorsed the plan for limited self-government in Ireland. The New York Times, however, attributed the Ulster impasse to "racial and religious" factors, an attitude that reflected middle-class American biases in favor of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority and Protestantism.⁴⁷ A news analysis in the New York Times by British press baron, Lord Northcliffe (who would later become chief of British propaganda in the United States), also reduced the Ulster issue to "racial" differences: "The Southern Irish are easy, charming . . . but impractical. The Northerners are shrewd and industrious."⁴⁸ Another source cited by the New York Times claimed that Home Rule was an Irish-American plot hatched in Tammany:

If there is ever a government set up in Belfast by Home Rulers, it will be a government with Charles F. Murphy at its head and with Rinky Dink and Bathhouse John forming the cabinet. . . . Redmond will be office boy. . . . If we could get rid of Irish-Americans and then banish the priests, we'd settle the whole Home Rule question in a day.⁴⁹

The Hearst papers, which alone among the major daily newspapers echoed Irish-American press positions, blamed the

Ulster problem on centuries of English sectarian rule rather than Irish racial characteristics.⁵⁰

Mainstream newspapers favored Home Rule primarily because it offered few fundamental challenges to the status quo. Ireland would not become independent but would remain part of the British Empire and have no control of its own foreign policy. Britain favored Home Rule. And the supporters of Home Rule also represented voices of moderation within the Irish-American community. Implementation of Home Rule would silence troublesome Irish elements by removing the Irish question once and for all from the American public agenda. Resolution of the Irish question would clear away a major stumbling block to closer relations between The United States and Great Britain and it would improve the prospects of "Americanizing" a leading-- and wearingly contentious--sector of America's immigrant population.

Irish-America rejoiced when royal assent was given to Home Rule on September 18, 1914. The Irish World observed: "The struggle of more than a century bequeathed from bleeding sire to son is ended."⁵¹ The mood of celebration soon soured, however, when on September 20 Redmond pledged Irish manpower in support of the British war effort. The Irish World warned of "wholesale slaughter" and expressed horror at the thought that "Irish blood shall be poured out like water in defense of the British Empire." The Irish

World feared that the sons of an already depopulated Ireland would be "exterminated on the fields of France like an invading horde of locusts."⁵²

Redmond's pledge of support to Britain caused a wholesale defection of Irish-Americans from the ranks of the moderate nationalism.⁵³ Prominent figures resigned from the pro-Redmond United Irish League. Many turned to the hard-line Clan-na-Gael.⁵⁴ No longer a solitary voice crying out in the political wilderness, Devoy's Gaelic-American experienced a sudden surge in popularity.

Redmond's commitment to Britain inspired an outpouring of letters to the Irish World. Most spoke of Redmond's action in terms of the exile mythos and in language of shame and betrayal.⁵⁵

The Irish World soon abandoned Home Rule and the Irish Party in favor of "revolutionary movement."⁵⁶ Redmond, the one-time beacon of nationalist respectability, was damned for his willingness to barter Irish blood for Irish rights, a policy the Irish World labeled "black treason."⁵⁷

The Gaelic-American and the Leader also condemned Redmond. The Gaelic-American dismissed Redmond as a paid lackey whose decision to support the British war effort was a "wanton act of treachery" which destroyed Ireland's greatest opportunity for freedom since the American Revolution.⁵⁸ The Leader was even more derisive. Redmond's capitulation was the work of a "debauched fool" which

brought shame down upon the memory of past struggles.⁵⁹ Redmond's ultimate crime, according to the Irish-American press, was his subservience to Britain. In the Leader's pantheon of deadly sins, the "slave mentality" was the cardinal offense and Redmond and the Irish Party numbered among the damned:

Treacherous to those who trusted them . . .
cowardly to those who betrayed them, the Irish
Party goes down the gutters of degradation and
decay. . . .⁶⁰

Irish-American support for moderate nationalism began to fall away. By 1915, the Chicago Citizen stood alone in its support to Redmond.⁶¹ The U.I.L. declined in influence and popularity. The Irish Party, which once survived on U.I.L. contributions, was forced to send money to America to keep the U.I.L. alive.⁶²

Events would soon conspire to ensure the demise of the U.I.L. The Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916 dramatically altered the nationalist landscape and severely diminished the prospects of moderate nationalism in the United States. By 1918, on the eve of the postal suppressions, the voices of moderation were few. In 1918, Arthur Willert, chief New York correspondent for the London Times, advised in a January, 1918 confidential report to the British War Mission in Washington, D.C. that the U.I.L., the bastion of moderate nationalism in America, was "virtually dead."⁶³

Dual Loyalty

The campaign for Ireland's independence, as articulated in the Irish-American press, represented more than the displacement of British colonial control. It was part of a larger restorative process for the Irish on both sides of the Atlantic, a final chapter in the epic battle between Saxon and Celt.

The American-Irish were bound to the old country by ties of blood, sentiment, and responsibility. The attachment to "mother Ireland" was all-consuming and had power to transcend temporal and geographical boundaries. John Devoy claimed that Irish-Americans were often more "Irish" and more loyal to Ireland than the Irish themselves.⁶⁴ Ireland's plight could evoke a maudlin sense of duty among the American-born who, despite never having seen Ireland, saw themselves as exiles:

Are we, Irishmen in America, are we not going to harken [sic] back to the sweet voice of mother Erin to us her wandering sons, `Come back to Erin, Mavourneen, Mavourneen, Come back aroon to the land of thy birth. . . . we are blessed in this country with privileges and opportunities which are denied to our own at home. . . . we must do what we can to the last effort.⁶⁵

Irish-American newspapers reflected and inflamed the attachment to Ireland. Support for the struggle was not a matter of "charity," but rather a "duty everyone of Irish blood owes to the land of his inheritance."⁶⁶ Exhortations in the press ranged from the practical to the wildly implausible. Newspapers regularly solicited money for the

cause. In occasional flights of rhetoric, they called for the exiles return to repopulate Ireland and take part in the final struggle.⁶⁷ The Irish in America were all that stood between "liberation and annihilation."⁶⁸ By aiding Ireland, the exiles would vindicate themselves in America:

Today Ireland is calling. . . . They appeal to us to emancipate them, and by doing so we will emancipate ourselves and take our place in the life of America as children of a free race.⁶⁹

An Irish Race Convention--the first of its kind in the United States--convened in New York City in March 1916 to marshal support for the independence movement and create a new organization to displace the moribund U.I.L. There were new opportunities to exploit. The postponement of Home Rule until the end of the war, the prospect of mass Irish deaths on the fields of France and the possibility of Irish independence through German intervention prompted renewed interest in the Irish question.⁷⁰

2300 Irish delegates from across the nation met for two days at Madison Square Garden. The gathering was organized by Devoy and Daniel Cohalan and numerous Irish organizations were represented.

The convention came at a delicate time. The climate of American opinion was shifting in favor of the Allies and the United States was engaged in serious exchanges with Germany regarding that country's submarine warfare. Convention speakers condemned Great Britain, praised Germany and urged

American neutrality in the war. The convention also demanded Ireland's independence at war's end.⁷¹

But the primary purpose of the Irish Race Convention was to reconcile support for Ireland with loyalty to the United States. The delegates tried to achieve this by promoting an alternative and distinctly non-Anglo-Saxon definition of American identity.

Speakers hailed Ireland as the "cradle of Americanism." Joseph Smith, a Lowell, Massachusetts newspaper editor, argued that Americanism was a consequence of choice rather than a circumstance of birth.⁷² In his keynote address John Goff, a New York State Supreme Court Justice, cited the American Declaration of Independence as moral justification for Irish armed struggle against Great Britain. Goff warned of "sinister propaganda" in the mainstream press and insisted that Irish-American antipathy toward Great Britain was as natural and inevitable as Irish loyalty to both Ireland and the United States:

. . . there is not a single instance of citizens of Irish blood, who because of love . . . for the old land, failed in the performance of their full duty to America as a soldier, sailor or civilian.⁷³

The convention issued a formal declaration of loyalty to the United States:

We solemnly declare that we owe no allegiance and we share no loyalty which in any manner or to any degree lessens our devotion to American ideals or impairs our faith in American institutions.⁷⁴

The Irish-American press applauded the Irish Race Convention. The New York daily press condemned it. The Irish World declared that the convention demonstrated the strength of Irish-American loyalty to the United States and the legitimacy of anti-English sentiment.⁷⁵ The Leader emphasized Irish contributions to the American Revolution. It was Irish immigrants, "driven by English tyranny from their native land," who formed the backbone of Washington's army.⁷⁶ The Gaelic-American insisted that Irishmen, whether "soldier, sailor, or civilian," were constant in their devotion to the United States.⁷⁷ The Gaelic-American called the convention the "most orderly and best managed gathering ever held in New York City." The convention would open up a "new epoch in American and Irish history."⁷⁸ The Leader praised the convention as

the most momentous gathering that has ever taken place in the United States. It is not only momentous for the Ireland, but for America and for the world.⁷⁹

The Irish-American community, however, was less than unanimous in its support the Irish Race Convention. Several prominent Irish-Americans declined to attend for fear of attracting accusations of disloyalty.⁸⁰ A handful openly criticized the organizers and sponsors of the event. Patrick Egan, former business manager of the Irish World, complained that the convention was supported by

. . . certain pro-German renegade Irish printers and had the affrontery [sic] to adopt what some of its mouthpieces described as "a Declaration of

American rights and Irish independence."⁸¹
Ireland, the recently established New York newspaper, suggested that "there ought not to have been such a convention at all."⁸² But these critics were few in number.

The mainstream daily press generally ridiculed the Irish Race Convention or questioned the loyalty of its participants. The New York Times condemned the dual loyalty of Irish-Americans and argued that the convention did not represent legitimate Irish-American opinion:

At this time this movement is particularly unfortunate. It has an alien smack. . . . It is the time for every good citizen to be just an American. It is the worst of times for hyphens or the display of old blind resentments.⁸³

The New York Tribune was more openly contemptuous:

The clownish performance we have lately witnessed . . . has been a cause of humiliation to many Irishmen in this country who are not unnaturally pained to see their native land held up to derision and ridicule by an impudent set of upstarts who have no authority whatever to express the sentiments of Irishmen at home.⁸⁴

Only the Hearst papers seemed to offer any support.⁸⁵

The Easter Rising

On Easter 1916 a combined force of Irish Volunteers led by Patrick Pearse and members of the Citizen's Army under the command of James Connolly occupied strategic buildings throughout Dublin. The Easter Proclamation, read outside the General Post Office in the city center, announced the creation of a provisional government and called for support from Ireland's "exiled children in America." The rebels

held out for several days against vastly superior British forces before surrendering on April 30.

Initial reports in the American press were sketchy. American attention had been focused upon diplomatic exchanges between the United States and Germany following the sinking of the *Sussex* and with rising tensions with Mexico. American opinion generally followed that of the mainstream newspapers. Most condemned the rebellion but were shocked by Britain's summary execution of rebel leaders.⁸⁶ Irish-Americans had mixed reactions at first. The executions, however, galvanized Irish-American opinion and ensured the demise of moderate nationalism.

For several days, mainstream newspapers across the nation devoted banner headlines to the Rising. Early reports dismissed the Rising, one of the first major anti-colonial insurrections of the 20th century, as "riots."⁸⁷ The New York Times called the rebellion "an act of madness" and concluded that it was an inevitable consequence of Irish racial characteristics.⁸⁸ Strife, New York Times insisted, was endemic in Ireland. The Irish displayed a predisposition toward irrational behavior and lacked the maturity to govern themselves without British oversight:

There can be no independence for Ireland. . . .
The story of the Dublin revolt is pathetic, because it is the recital of men who act like forward children, causing untold annoyance to others.⁸⁹

The New York World dismissed both the Rising and the notion of Irish independence as folly:

The separatist dream of an independent Ireland is not even good nonsense. . . . A man can be forgiven for being a traitor . . . but he can never be forgiven for being a fool.⁹⁰

The San Francisco Chronicle called the Rising a "colossal blunder" and the rebels, a "mob."⁹¹ The Chronicle conceded that past British ineptitude contributed to the rebellion but concluded that the British government had been "paternally beneficent" towards Ireland "for a full generation."⁹² An atavistic and irrational hatred of England was alone responsible for the insurrection and the English, beleaguered and frustrated in their efforts to mollify the troublesome Irish, were justified in their response.⁹³ The Rising deserved condemnation, according to the Chronicle, because it threatened the integrity of the British Empire and, more significantly, because it was equivalent of a revolt in Puerto Rico while the U.S. was at war.⁹⁴ The Chicago Tribune acknowledged the legitimacy of Irish complaints against Britain but questioned the judgment of the rebels.⁹⁵

Several papers portrayed the rebellion as a pro-German conspiracy hatched in America.⁹⁶ The New York World accused Irish-American members of Clan-na-Gael of fomenting the revolt.⁹⁷ The New York Times attacked the Gaelic-American and accused editor John Devoy for making "scurrilous references" about President Woodrow Wilson. Devoy claimed

that Wilson had betraying the Rising by furnishing information to the British.⁹⁸ The New York Times reported that Devoy was under investigation by federal authorities for alleged involvement in pro-German "and other alien" conspiracies.⁹⁹ Hearst's San Francisco Examiner also reported that Irish-American newspapers were under scrutiny by the Justice Department.¹⁰⁰

The Hearst papers--alone among the mainstream daily press--expressed unconditional support for the Rising.¹⁰¹ The New York American echoed the sentiments of most Irish-American papers in defending Ireland's right to revolt. The American compared Germany's role to that of France during the American Revolution and chastised the New York press for its pro-British sympathies:

If we have not misunderstood the remarks of our morning and evening contemporaries in this town, the majority of them regard Irishmen who have taken up arms against England as ungrateful rebels who deserve to be hanged. . . . British and American Tory publications of that day [the American Revolution] regarded those who had taken up arms against England as ungrateful rebels who deserve to be hanged. . . .

The Irish revolution was not made in Germany.

Neither was it made in America.

The Irish revolution was made in Ireland.

And it was made by more than 700 years of harsh misgovernment. . . .¹⁰²

Irish-American newspapers rejoiced at news of the Rising. The Gaelic-American was quick to compare the Rising to the American Revolution.¹⁰³ The Gaelic-American also attacked the New York mainstream press for suggesting that plans for the revolt were conceived in Germany and the

United States.¹⁰⁴ Editor John Devoy defended the right of Irish-Americans to provide material assistance to the rebels and scoffed at threats of federal investigation:

. . . let them prosecute. Irish people here have as good a right to collect money and supply arms to their countrymen in Ireland as J.P. Morgan and the munition manufacturers have to send money. . . and munitions to England. And they will not be terrorized by the petty czar who is now King George's viceroy in the White House.¹⁰⁵

The Gaelic-American embraced the Rising as part of a larger restorative process affecting the global community of exiled Irish. The Gaelic-American cast the revolt in terms which contrasted English and Irish racial attributes. The Dublin rebels--dismissed as "children" and "fools" by the New York mainstream press--were portrayed as visionaries:

Materialistic Englishmen cannot understand . . . Anglomaniacs who control the pro-British press in America are of the same type. But the Irish are a race of idealists, and idealists who challenged British power in Dublin have made an appeal to pride of race.¹⁰⁶

The Irish World also attributed the Rising to conflicting racial characteristics. The difference between Saxon and Celt was as idealized as it was irreconcilable:

It is blind stupid materialism versus the refined sentiments of a highly intellectual and spiritualized race.¹⁰⁷

The Irish World enthroned the Dublin rebels as Irish equivalents of the heroes of the American Revolutionary War:

Irish patriots . . . were fighting for the same principles for which Americans fought at Lexington Bunker Hill. . . Degenerate indeed would be the American who would not feel stirred to sympathy and admiration by a sight that forcibly reminded him of

the beginnings of a revolution out of which his country emerged as a nation.¹⁰⁸

The San Francisco Leader interpreted the Rising as a kind of sacramental rite of passage. In the Leader's Catholic world view--a potent mix of morbid fatalism and an obsessive devotion to the past--religion and national identity were inseparable. For the Leader, the union of England and Ireland was as unthinkable as "the union of Moloch and the God of Truth." Armed revolt was a prerequisite to a redemptive process, a "resurrection," through which Irish dignity and manhood might be reclaimed. The past lay claim to the present. The Rising was articulated in the language of blood sacrifice in which ancestral duty required an offering in lives:

The procession of pale ghosts, whose mutilated bodies are a witness to Ireland's holy cause, have marched up to our times and demanded that their ranks be augmented by newer victims and newer heroes--there is revolution in the streets of Dublin.¹⁰⁹

Support for the Rising, according to the Leader, was the essence of true Americanism:

Our first and last allegiance is to America, but we are truest Americans when our sympathy and . . . help goes out to nations rightly struggling to be free.¹¹⁰

The Leader rationalized the seeming futility of the Rising by comparing it to early days of the American Revolution and accepted with joyful fatalism the price that the ritual sacrifice of the Rising required:

Ireland laughs; she has taught her young men how to die, and that is the best guarantee of the existence of a nation.¹¹¹

With Easter Week came the first real victory of nationality. . . . it was largely a victory of negation on the physical plane.¹¹²

The Irish World and the Gaelic-American described the Rising in more secular terms although their references to sacrifice and "sacred duty" also carried obvious religious connotations.¹¹³

Mass meetings convened in cities across the United States to express support for the Dublin insurgents. Speakers denounced Britain and advocated a brand of "Americanism" that harmonized with Irish-American support for the Rising.¹¹⁴

The rallies also served as forums to demonstrate support for Germany. Many Germans were reported in attendance at an April 30 mass meeting in New York.¹¹⁵ Both the German and the American national anthems were played at a subsequent gathering of 3000 at Carnegie Hall.¹¹⁶ At a rally at George M. Cohan Theatre, the crowd reportedly cheered at every mention of Germany.¹¹⁷ Representatives of a broad cross section of Irish-American organizations compared the Rising to the American Revolution and equated German aid to Ireland with French aid to the American colonies.¹¹⁸

Irish editors and publishers were featured speakers at many mass gatherings. In New York, John Devoy of the Gaelic-American, Patrick Ford of the Irish World and

Jeremiah O'Leary, publisher of Bull, were acknowledged leaders whose opinions were sought out and quoted by the mainstream daily press as barometers of nationalist sentiment. On the west coast, Peter York of the Leader served the same function.¹¹⁹

Yet despite the seeming consensus, Irish-American support for the Rising was divided. A minority of newspapers and elites initially condemned the Easter insurrection. Ireland, the only constitutionalist Irish paper in New York, called the Rising as a "riot."¹²⁰ Joseph C. Walsh, editor of Ireland, expressed "regrets" at news of the rebellion.¹²¹ Patrick Egan, who resigned as business editor of the Irish World when the paper turned away from constitutional nationalism, called the Rising "criminally insane . . . a useless and bloody riot."¹²² Egan accused John Devoy of planning the Rising and financing it with German money.¹²³

The Chicago Tribune claimed that the Chicago Irish were divided over the Dublin revolt. The Tribune quoted five local elites, four of whom condemned the Rising. Charles Ffrench, former president of the elite Fellowship Club, called the insurrection "utter madness." P.T. Barry, editor of the Redmondite Chicago Citizen, stated:

It is not a revolution but a bulition [sic]
. . . [these] brawlers . . . do not represent the
great majority of loyal Irish people.¹²⁴

Two publishers from opposite ends of the Irish-American nationalist spectrum--Jeremiah O'Leary of Bull and Joseph C. Walsh of Ireland--correctly predicted that the execution of the leaders of the Rising would spark a war of revolution in Ireland.¹²⁵ What they failed to predict was that the executions would galvanize opinion in the United States among both Irish-Americans and the mainstream press.

The Executions

Britain treated the Rising as an act of treason.¹²⁶ After secret perfunctory military trials, the leaders of the Easter rising were condemned to death by firing squad. The executions--which dragged on over the first two weeks of May--radicalized even the moderates.¹²⁷ The conservative Catholic press lost all restraint in its attacks on Great Britain.¹²⁸ Even Ireland conceded that the executions would be "interpreted as having been inspired by racial antipathy."¹²⁹ The Gaelic-American, the Irish World and the Leader were predictably outraged. Mass meetings were once again held throughout the nation. Resolutions condemning the executions were introduced in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.¹³⁰ Irish-American opinion was more closely united on the Irish question than any time since the 1880's.¹³¹

The mainstream press condemned the executions in a sustained flurry of editorial comment.¹³² The New York World labeled the executions a "blunder" and "an

unnecessarily savage reprisal."¹³³ The New York Times called the initial executions "justified" but "unfortunate."¹³⁴ But as the deaths continued, the New York Times condemned the British government as "incredibly stupid."¹³⁵

The San Francisco Chronicle reacted in similar fashion. The Chronicle called the initial executions a "colossal blunder" and criticized Britain for squandering a chance to create good will by showing leniency. Yet the Chronicle also insisted that British rule was beneficial and that Ireland was "less able. . .to stand alone."¹³⁶ But as the death toll mounted, the Chronicle accused Britain of using the war as an excuse to delay Home Rule:

Ireland fighting for freedom arouses a sympathy as world wide as that which was extended to Kosciusko and the Poles.¹³⁷

The reaction of the Hearst papers was indistinguishable from that of the Irish-American press. The San Francisco Examiner called the executions

. . . the most cruelly stupid blunder committed by a government which has never yet exhibited anything but cruelty or stupidity . . . in its dealings with Ireland. . . it will yet be written in the chronicles of times to come that [the rebels] won Ireland's final independence.¹³⁸

The New York American's editorial response--shot through with imagery of blood sacrifice, redemptive transmutation, and allusions to the American Revolution--could have come from the pen of Peter Yorke of the Leader:

The blood that flowed from the gaping wounds of the slain will water and will make to blossom and to fruit the tree of Irish liberty as surely as the blood which flowed at Lexington and Concord from the hearts of our glorious rebel forefathers watered and made to blossom and to fruit the tree of American liberty.¹³⁹

Attention surrounding the Rising culminated with the execution of Sir Roger Casement on August 3, 1916. Casement had been captured after returning to Ireland aboard a German U-boat to stop the Rising and sacrifice himself for the cause of Irish freedom.¹⁴⁰ In the U.S., there was widespread revulsion at the prospect of another execution. Even the New York Times suggested that Casement's life be spared.¹⁴¹ The U.S. Senate urged British government to exercise clemency.¹⁴²

The Irish-American press quickly anointed Casement as the latest martyr. The New York World condemned his hanging.¹⁴³ The New York Times expressed regret but observed that Britain had every right to execute Casement as a traitor.¹⁴⁴ At Casement's death, the Chicago Tribune compared the Rising to the American Civil War and insisted, "the right of rebellion is . . . fundamental." The Tribune, however, stopped short of supporting Irish independence, and concluded that Ireland's best hope was to become a "contented and self-governed part of the British Empire."¹⁴⁵

The San Francisco Examiner offered no such qualifications to its support. In a page one editorial prior to Casement's execution, Hearst himself observed:

England has not learned that she cannot treat Ireland with brutal selfishness and injustice, even with stupid race hatred and religious prejudice and expect loyalty there. England can probably never learn the lesson of Ireland until there has been a wholly successful rebellion there.¹⁴⁶

Apart from the Hearst papers, the commercial daily press condemned the executions less out of sympathy for the leaders and goals of the Rising than out of the pragmatic realization that the executions would further inflame Irish-America and would place a potentially insurmountable obstacle in the way of closer ties with Great Britain. The United States was moving to a war footing--largely at the urging of the mainstream daily press--and any additional impediments to that process were viewed with alarm. Most of the mainstream press opposed the Rising and the idea of Irish independence. But there was genuine consensus that Britain had "blundered" in its handling of the Dublin revolt. Britain's failure, however, was the result of flawed tactics rather than failed policy. Britain's mistake was not that it put down the rebellion, but that in executing the rebels, it transformed them into martyrs.

The Dublin Rising raised the issue of German involvement. By 1916, American public opinion concerning the war was shifting in favor of Britain and the Allies. Although the United States was a year away from entering the European conflict, sectors of the Irish-American press had already been tarnished by accusations of pro-German conspiracies. The mainstream daily press--particularly the

New York Times--had branded the nation's leading Irish editors as the chief agitators of radical nationalism.¹⁴⁷ As America descended toward war, the Irish-American press would scramble for a strategy by which loyalty to the cause of Irish independence might be somehow be kept in harmony loyalty to the United States.

Notes to Chapter IV

¹Thomas Brown, Irish-American Nationalism 1870-1890 (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1966) 37.

²Carroll concludes that anti-Irish sentiment in the U.S. "was a direct reaction to Irish-American agitation and corresponded in intensity to the periods of most blatant Irish nationalism." Carroll 191.

³Brown, Irish-American Nationalism 20.

⁴Cuddy, National Isolation 21.

⁵Thomas Brown, "Origins of Irish Nationalism" 331. William Mackey Lomasney, born in Ohio (and vaporized in 1883 while trying to blow up London Bridge), was the most committed of Clan-na-Gaels' century dynamite terrorists. Jeremiah O'Leary, a native of New York, was the foremost anti-British agitator in the United States during World War One.

⁶Thomas Brown, "Origins and Character of Irish-American Nationalism" 357-358.

⁷Thomas Brown, "Social Discrimination Against the Irish in the United States" (mimeo), American Jewish Committee, November 1958: 23, Quoted in Moynihan 241.

⁸McCaffrey observes: "Nationalism provided Irish immigrants and their children with an identity, a hope for American respectability, a hate for the hereditary enemy, and a heritage." McCaffrey, "The Irish in Chicago" 11.

⁹Brown suggests that Irish-American nationalism was characterized by a sense of inferiority, a longing for acceptance and respectability, and a sensitivity toward criticism. Brown, Irish-American Nationalism 23. Sarbaugh argues that these traits do not explain Irish nationalism on the west coast of the United States, where the Irish encountered less discrimination and less entrenched Anglo-Saxonism: ". . . sensitivity to Irish nationalism sprang not from weakness but from strength, not from a posture of inferiority but from self-respect. Consequently they were convinced that Ireland should be given the same opportunities that they had been given in California." Sarbaugh 172.

¹⁰Quoted in Brown, "Origins of Irish Nationalism" 334.

¹¹Kerby Miller 494.

¹²Quoted in Elmer Ellis, Mr. Dooley's America (New York: Knopf, 1941) 88. Dunne also leveled his satiric wit at Irish-American editors. In another of his Dooley columns, Dunne made this observation about John Finerty, who edited the Chicago Citizen until his death in 1913: ". . . the times has changed since me friend Jawn Finerty come out iv th' House iv Riprisintatives; an, whin some wan ast him what was going on, he says, 'Oh, nawthin at all but some damned American business.'" Quoted in Hutchinson 98.

¹³Quoted in Brown, "Origins of Irish Nationalism" 327.

¹⁴Quoted in Irish World 22 Sept. 1917: 4.

¹⁵Joyce 163.

¹⁶Brown claims that except in San Francisco, financially successful "lace-curtain" Irish kept aloof from organizations of the Irish poor. Brown, "Origins of Irish Nationalism" 337.

¹⁷Doyle in David Doyle and Owen Dudley Edwards, eds., America and Ireland 1776-1976 (Westport: Greenwood P, 1980) 323. Moynihan concludes that nationalism "gave a structure to working class resentments that in other groups produced political radicalism." Moynihan 241. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn recalls that she had strained relations with many American-born Irish because of her membership in the IWW. Old country Irish were not so "narrow minded." Flynn 269.

Evidence from Irish-American newspapers also suggests that nationalist opinion was split along class lines. The Chicago Citizen, the leading constitutionalist newspaper after 1914, boasted that "millionaires and multi-millionaires" competed for the attentions of a visiting Irish constitutionalist: "A chic millionaire of Irish ancestry, on hearing him . . . exclaimed, 'Never before was I so proud of being Irish.'" "TP Captures Chic," editorial, Chicago Citizen 2 Nov. 1917: 4. By contrast, the Gaelic-American, the leading radical-nationalist paper, attacked a successful New York restaurateur for being "too busy looking after his own material advancement to give any time . . . to advancement of the interests of Ireland." "Tom Shanley's Silly Blather," editorial, Gaelic-American 3 Oct. 1914: 4. The Leader complained of a "lack professional men who have responded to the call. Those men, who like vampires, fatten mainly on their compatriots, lack patriotism when the crisis comes. . . . In a few years [they] will be shouting their empty vaporism, but we will know them for what they are worth." "Sinews of War," Leader 27 Nov. 1915: 1.

¹⁸The Federalists, however, passed the 1798 Alien and

Sedition Acts for use against Irish agitators and refugees from the United Irishmen revolt in Ireland.

¹⁹Brown, Irish Nationalism 40.

²⁰The Fenians enjoyed vast support among working-class Irish-Americans. Wakin 141.

²¹Brown, Irish Nationalism 38-40. Wittke, Irish in America 166.

²²Rodenko 184. Wittke, Irish in America 186.

²³For a detailed account of the Molly Maguires, see Anthony Bima, The Molly Maguires (New York: International Publishers, 1950). O'Grady suggests that the Mollies affair was used by anti-Catholic forces well into the 20th century. O'Grady 66.

²⁴Joseph P. O'Grady, How the Irish Became Americans, (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1973) 92-102.

²⁵Rodenko 93.

²⁶Brown, Irish Nationalism 162.

²⁷Founder and editor Patrick Ford turned away from radical domestic policies--such as his endorsement Henry George's land tax--and ended his support for armed struggle to resolve the Irish question. The Irish World continued to agitate against British policies. It's "Spread the Light" fund, for example, sponsored the printing of 1.65 million copies of an 1896 edition of the paper. Wittke, Irish in America, 213

²⁸Brown, Irish Nationalism 175

²⁹Clan-na-Gael supported constitutional methods following the New Departure engineered by John Devoy, Charles Stuart Parnell, and Michael Davitt. Under the New Departure, radical nationalists supported Parnell's efforts to advance Ireland's interests in British Parliament.

³⁰Brown, Nationalism 168, 178.

³¹Between 1886 and 1914, when Home Rule was finally passed (but never implemented), three Home Rule bills were introduced in Parliament. The House of Lords vetoed Home Rule legislation in 1886 and 1893. The 1911 Parliament Act, which curtailed the power of the Lords, cleared the way for the approval of Home Rule legislation in 1914.

³²Cuddy, National Isolation 30.

³³The Liberal Party's inability to resolve the Irish question led to a series of constitutional deadlocks and was a major factor in the demise of the Liberal Party. George Dangerfield, The Strange Death of Liberal England (New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, 1935).

³⁴Dangerfield 371.

³⁵Two events offered ready proof of the inability or unwillingness of the British government to deal evenhandedly with Ireland. On April 24, 1914, little more than a month after the Curragh mutiny, loyalist forces in the north openly imported 30,000 rifles at Larne. Although the action was illegal, the government did nothing. Three weeks later Prime Minister Asquith announced an amending bill to exclude Ulster from Home Rule. On July 25, nationalists off-loaded 1500 rifles. British forces opened fire at Bachelor's Walk in Dublin killing three and wounding 38. Dangerfield 355, 420-421.

³⁶Carroll 190.

³⁷A.J. Ward 66. The U.I.L. was founded in 1898 to advance the interests of Redmond's Irish Party in the United States. Tierney 53.

³⁸The influence of the Irish World, editor Robert Ford, and Irish-America in general was such that Captain James Craig, a leader of anti-Home Rule forces in northern Ireland, warned in June, 1914: "There is a spirit spreading abroad . . . that Germany and the German emperor would be preferable to the rule of John Redmond, Patrick Ford, and the Molly Maguires." Quoted in Dangerfield 360. Craig was apparently unaware that Patrick Ford, founder of the Irish World, died in 1913 and was succeeded as editor by his son, Robert.

³⁹"Sense and Sentiment," editorial, Irish World 24 Jan. 1914: 4. "Irish Emigration," editorial, Irish World 5 Sept. 1914: 4.

⁴⁰"Ireland Under Home Rule," Irish World 24 Jan. 1914: 2.

⁴¹See Irish World 13 June 1914: 1-4. Irish World 8 Aug. 1914: 2.

⁴²"America's Greeting to Ireland," editorial, Irish World 13 June 1914: 4.

⁴³"Mutilated Ireland Unthinkable," editorial, Irish World 11 July 1914: 4.

⁴⁴Editorial, Gaelic-American 11 July 1914: 4.

⁴⁵Gaelic-American 3 Oct. 1914: 4. "Betrayal of Ireland," editorial, Gaelic-American 11 July 1914: 4.

⁴⁶See "Irish Home Rule," editorial, New York Times 27 May 1914: 10.

⁴⁷New York Times 5 Oct. 1912. Quoted in Carroll 21.

⁴⁸"Ulster Means It Says Northcliffe," New York Times 15 July 1914: 1.

⁴⁹"Calls C.F. Murphy Head of Home Rule," New York Times 21 May 1914: 8.

⁵⁰"Erin's Dream At Last Come True," editorial, San Francisco Examiner 27 May 1914: 24.

⁵¹"The Accursed Union Is Ended," editorial, Irish World 26 Sept. 1914: 4.

⁵²"Redmond's New Departure," editorial, Irish World 26 Sept. 1914: 4.

⁵³Buckley argues that only a "significant minority" of Irish-American opinion was against Redmond's agreement to assist Britain in the war. Buckley 4. Carroll concludes that it is impossible to estimate the actual strength of Redmond's support in the U.S. during late 1914 and 1915. Carroll 40.

⁵⁴Carroll 47-48.

⁵⁵James McGuire of Washington, D.C., former mayor of Syracuse, labeled Redmond "a British recruiting sargeant." Dr. Gertrude Kelly of New York expressed support for the advocates of physical force: "(we) women have hesitated to give adherence to the physical force party, not that we did not sympathize . . . with their aims . . . but in our capacity as conservators of the race. . . . If Irish youth must be sacrificed, let it be sacrificed in Ireland for Ireland." Letters-to-the-editor, Irish World 3 Oct. 1914: 3.

Patrick Coony of Cateret, N.J., called Redmond's action a "gross insult . . . I shall be ashamed of my nationality." Matt Cummins called it "humiliating and degrading news." Letters-to-the-editor, Irish World 10 Oct. 1914: 3.

Rev. P.A. Sharkey of Ayer, Mass., called the news of

Redmond's pledge "too humiliating to dwell upon. . . .the saddest that has ever come across the waves from Ireland to he scattered children." A.L. Morrision, a former Irish World staffer in New York City, wrote: "I cannot think of any possible contingency that would justify Irishmen fighting battles for our accursed enemy, who struggled for long horrible centuries to exterminate our race, who robbed our ancestors of their homes and made us exiles and wanderers all over the earth." Letter-to-the-editor, Irish World 31 Oct. 1914: 3.

⁵⁶"Irish Must Rely on Selves," editorial, Irish World 15 May 1915: 4.

⁵⁷"Black Treason to Ireland," editorial, Irish World 10 July 1915: 4. Redmond was not without supporters in the United States. Patrick Egan, business manager of the Irish World, resigned in protest over the paper's change in policy. Carroll 38.

⁵⁸"West Britain Party," editorial, Gaelic-American 22 June 1916: 4. "Clan-na-Gael Repudiates Redmond," Gaelic-American 30 Oct. 1914: 1.

⁵⁹Editorial, Leader 8 April 1916: 4. "Ireland and the War," Leader 27 Nov. 1915: 1.

⁶⁰"Our Most Scurrilous Enemy," editorial, Leader 26 Aug. 1916: 4.

⁶¹Loyal supporters of the U.I.L. raised money to start a small pro-Redmond paper in New York in early 1916. Ireland, edited by J.C. Walsh and Shane Leslie, tried to appeal to a moderate, sophisticated audience. It supported Redmond, Home Rule and Irish participation in the war, and it opposed Germany and revolutionary tactics in Ireland. Carroll 45-46.

⁶²A.J. Ward 72.

⁶³Quoted in Hachey 61.

⁶⁴Gaelic-American 12 June 1915: 2.

⁶⁵"O'Leary," Gaelic-American 8 Aug. 1914: 5.

⁶⁶"Volunteer Fund," Leader 23 Jan. 1915: 8.

⁶⁷Francis Green, letter-to-the-editor, Gaelic-American 25 Aug. 1917: 7. Gaelic-American 6 May 1916: 1. "Ireland's Prosperity," Irish World 7 Aug. 1915: 7.

68"Sinews of War," Leader 27 Nov. 1915: 1.

69"We Wage The Battle Still," editorial, Leader 12 Feb. 1916: 4.

70Carroll 52-53.

71"Irish Help To Teutons Urged," San Francisco Examiner 5 March 1916: 12.

72Smith observed: "I'm an American. I came into this country fully-clothed. Some of you others who are not hyphenated . . . came into this country naked. . . . [you are] Americans accidentally. "Hours Of Oration For Irish Freedom," New York Times 6 March 1916: 4. A few days later, U.S. Senator James D. Phelan of California, in a St. Patrick's Day address at a Friendly Sons of St. Patrick banquet in New York, defended dual loyalty and offered a similar pluralistic definition of Americanism: "The loyal American, possessing elements of good citizenship, is a man, who, irrespective of birthplace, religious beliefs or language, understands and appreciates American institutions. . . . the Irish have pined for such a government for centuries." "Loyalty Theme for Friendly Sons," New York Times 18 March 1916: 18.

73"Irish Race Stands For Ireland Only," Leader 11 March 1916: 6. "Irish Want England Humbled Says Goff," New York Times 5 March 1916: 7. "Irish Race Convention," Gaelic-American 11 March 1916: 2. "Irish Race Convention," Irish World 11 March 1916: 1.

74New York American quoted in Literary Digest 18 March 1916: 702-703.

75"Greatest Convention Voices Sentiment of Irish Race in America," Irish World 11 March 1916: 1. "Irish Race Convention," editorial, Irish World 11 March 1916: 4.

76"When Hyphens Were Needed," Leader 11 March 1916: 1.

77"Irish Race Convention," Gaelic-American 11 March 1916: 2.

78"Irish Race Convention," Gaelic-American 11 March 1916: 1.

79"The Dawn Of Freedom," editorial, Leader 11 March 1916: 4.

80New York Senator Gorman declined to accept an invitation to attend. Buckley 53. Gorman was long a target

of attack by the New York Times and the New York World for his anti-British positions. New York Supreme Court Justice Ford also refused to attend the Irish Race Convention. Ford said, "This is no time for any racial demonstration of any kind unless it be a demonstration of Yankees for this dear old Yankeeland of ours. . . . [it is] most unfortunate that American citizens of Irish birth should lay themselves open to suspicious that they are against our government when even the blindest among us can see that relations . . . with Germany are critical in the extreme." "Against Irish Convention," New York Times 4 March 1916: 6.

⁸¹Patrick F. Egan, "What an Irishman Thinks of the Irish-German Alliance," Forum August 1916: 143.

⁸²Quoted in Literary Digest 18 March 1916: 703. Ireland was founded and funded by the U.I.L. to serve as the voice of moderate nationalism after the Irish World turned away from Redmond and the Irish Party. The first issue appeared on 8 January, 1916. The Gaelic-American ridiculed the paper and labeled it a British tool: "German money is horrid, especially when none of it is in sight, but British gold is flying around New York in copious streams just now." Gaelic-American 25 Dec. 1915: 4. Quoted in Thomas R. Greene, "Shane Leslie and Ireland (1916-1917): 'England's Little Irish Organ in New York,'" Eire/Ireland Winter 1987: 75. Ireland ceased publication on 7 April, 1917--the day after the U.S. declaration of war on Germany.

⁸³"The Irish Race At A Hotel," editorial, New York Times 5 March 1916: 20. The Times also printed a series of anti-convention letters which accused convention participants of disloyalty to the U.S. Most of the letter writers had Anglo-Saxon names or identified their ancestry as Scotch-Irish. A letter writer identified as HJR observed, "My blood boils to think that in this great land of ours there are those who would by their voice and vote hurt the land of their ancestors." "Irishmen Here and at the Front," 6 March 1916: 10. A letter-writer identified only as an Anglo-German wrote, "such men debase their American manhood. . . . they are still in the tribal stage of national consciousness." "Old Race Hatreds." 8 March 1916: 10. N.W. Ingram of Brooklyn labeled the convention an "unparalleled piece of disloyalty to the United States." 9 March 1916: 12. In a by-lined news analysis, Sydney Brooks condemned "a little knot of hysterical irreconcilables whose views on Irish affairs began to be out of date about 42 years ago." Brooks also complained of the "abysmal ignorance of current Irish thought and sentiment." "Real Irishmen Loyal Says Brooks," 12 March 1916: 3.

⁸⁴Quoted in Literary Digest 18 March 1916: 702.

⁸⁵"Irish Help to Teutons Urged," San Francisco Examiner 5 March 1916: 12.

⁸⁶Even liberal publications such as Nation and New Republic dismissed the Rising as senseless. Carroll 55-58.

⁸⁷"Uprising in Ireland," editorial, New York Times 26 April 1916: 8. "Uprising in Ireland," editorial, New York World 26 April 1916: 8. "Emerald Isle in Grip of Military," San Francisco Chronicle 28 April 1916: 1. "Dublin Rebels Beseiged," Chicago Tribune 26 April 1916: 1.

⁸⁸"Ireland," editorial, New York Times 29 April 1916: 10.

⁸⁹"Irish Folly," editorial, New York Times 2 May 1916: 10. An earlier editorial in the New York Times also discussed the Rising in terms of Irish irrationality in taking up arms when they had already won the promise of Home Rule: "To an Irishman the thing itself is nothing. Give him what he wants and he will hate you for depriving him of his argument. . . . What the present rebels want is not to be free of England. . . . England is a symbol of restraint. If there were no England, it might be a king. If it were not a king it might be fairies that go about in Ireland, assuming fantastic shapes to frighten people and make them do all things they do not want to do." "Ireland," editorial, New York Times 29 April 1916: 10.

⁹⁰"Uprising in Ireland," editorial, New York World 26 April 1916: 8.

⁹¹Quoted in Sarbaugh 93. "Situation in Ireland," editorial, San Francisco Chronicle 29 April 1916: 20.

⁹²"Fiasco in Ireland," editorial, San Francisco Chronicle 2 May 1916: 20.

⁹³response

⁹⁴"Situation in Ireland, editorial, San Francisco Chronicle 29 April 1916: 20.

⁹⁵"Ireland," editorial, Chicago Tribune 28 April 1916: 8. The Tribune observed: "The flaming passion of many Irishmen against the English is as explicable as anything can be. . . . England's disgraceful failure as an empire builder is written in Ireland. . . . The good judgement of Irish revolvers can be questioned. They are not helping the cause of Ireland."

⁹⁶See "Another German Myth Explodes," editorial, New

York World 2 May 1916: 8. "Foil German-Irish Plot," Chicago Tribune 25 April 1916: 1. "San Francisco Irish Plan Aid to Dublin Revolt," San Francisco Examiner 30 April 1916: II, 1. At the eve of the Rising, the Germans had been foiled in an attempt to land a load of guns on the west coast of Ireland. In the same incident, the British also captured Sir Roger Casement, an Anglo-Irishman who supported armed struggle against Britain. Casement had been knighted by the British crown for humanitarian work in the African colonies.

⁹⁷"Irish Uprising," editorial, New York World 26 April 1916: 8.

⁹⁸The Gaelic-American editor John Devoy was convinced that the Wilson state department informed the British of a German arms shipment which was subsequently intercepted off the west coast of Ireland at the eve of the Rising. The Gaelic-American called Wilson's action the "most disgraceful and dishonorable act ever committed by an American President. . . . This was America's official expression of gratitude for the splendid services of Irishmen in the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the Spanish-American War." "Wilson's Base Act of Treachery," editorial, Gaelic-American 29 April 1916: 4. The San Francisco Leader made similar accusations. Leader 29 April 1916: 1. The Wilson administration did supply information about Rising to the British but nothing of substance prior to Easter. The information was gathered in a U.S. secret service raid on 18 April 1916 on the New York offices of Wolf von Igel, a member of the German embassy staff. The papers contained information about shipments of arms to Ireland and mentioned the names of John Devoy and Daniel Cohalan. Carroll 61. Ward, "America and the Irish Problem" 76.

⁹⁹"Irish Organ Attacks President Wilson," New York Times 28 April 1916: 2.

¹⁰⁰"U.S. Stirred By Irish Charges To Prosecute," San Francisco Examiner 29 April 1916: 2.

¹⁰¹William Randolph Hearst regularly championed the cause of Irish self-determination. On one occasion he offered material support, donating \$50 to the Irish Relief Fund for families of those who lost their lives in the Dublin Rising. Irish World 5 Aug. 1916: 1.

¹⁰²"History Repeats a Familiar Story," editorial, New York American 28 April 1916: 18. The Irish World reprinted this editorial on page one of its 6 May 1916 edition.

¹⁰³"Irish Men and Irish Women," editorial, Gaelic-American 29 April 1916: 4.

¹⁰⁴The Gaelic-American reserved a special rancor for the New York World which was generally considered a mouthpiece of the Wilson administration. "The New York World, England's official organ in America, states that the Irish revolution was made in Germany. Were the risings of 1798, 1848 and 1867 made in Germany? . . .The New York World is the yellow dog of the American press." "Pulitzer's Sordid and Dirty Rag," editorial, Gaelic-American 29 April 1916: 4.

¹⁰⁵"Wilson's Treachery," editorial, Gaelic-American 29 April 1916: 4.

¹⁰⁶"Ireland Redeemed by Dublin," editorial, Gaelic-American 6 May 1916: 4.

¹⁰⁷"The Latest Martyr," editorial, Irish World 12 August 1916: 4.

¹⁰⁸Editorial, Irish World 26 Aug. 1916: 4.

¹⁰⁹"For Ireland," editorial, Leader 29 April 1916: 4.

¹¹⁰"To Your Places Slaves," editorial, Leader 6 May 1916: 4. The Leader also took issue with reports that characterized the Rising as riots: "We know that this was not a riot and not a mob but . . . a real, true rebellion, even as Washington rebelled against the same bloody foe." Yorke speech at FOIF meeting in San Francisco, quoted in Leader 13 May 1916: 3.

¹¹¹"Convention Shake," editorial, Leader 28 July 1917: 4.

¹¹²"Construction and Destruction," editorial, Leader 23 Sept. 1916: 4. The Leader's religious fatalism and obsession with the past mirrored that of the nationalist press in Ireland. Two weeks before the Rising, the Leader reprinted an editorial from The Gael, a newspaper published (and suppressed) in Ireland: "Now or never for the final onslaught. . . . Our immortal dead, the graves of the unavenged, the harrowing cries of the murdered priests . . . the exiles--all rise up and command us to do the noble deed. . . . The only consequence to us is that some of us may be launched into eternity . . . sooner than we should like." "The Work Before Us," Leader 8 April 1916: 1.

¹¹³The Irish World made an obvious reference to the Catholic sacrament of the Mass in its description of the Dublin insurgents as "young men who are sacrificing their lives on the altar of the country." "Ireland's Fight For Freedom," Irish World 6 May 1916: 2. The Irish World argued

that the exiled Irish in America had a "sacred duty" to support the struggle in Ireland. "Insurgent Ireland," editorial, Irish World 6 May 1916: 4.

¹¹⁴"Americanism" was a common theme at Irish-American mass gatherings during this time. Organizers argued that Americanism should be based upon adherence to "democratic principles" rather than circumstances of birth or conformance to any one cultural standard. These democratic principles included: the right to revolt against tyranny; the belief that all men are created equal; and that the power to govern derives from the consent of the governed. See "Big Meeting Here For Ireland," New York American 4 May 1916: 7. Also "'Exciting Meeting Held By Irishmen," San Francisco Chronicle 1 May 1916: 2.

¹¹⁵"Americanism" was also a major theme at this meeting. Speakers also compared the Rising with the American Revolution. Carroll 66-67.

¹¹⁶"Irish Protest to White House," San Francisco Examiner 15 May 1916: 2.

¹¹⁷"Exciting Meeting Held By Irishmen," San Francisco Chronicle 1 May 1916: 3.

¹¹⁸"Irish-Americans Favor Revolution; Sir Roger Casement Praised as Patriot," New York American 26 April 1916: 2.

¹¹⁹Yorke, for example, chaired a pro-Rising gathering of 5000 in early May at San Francisco's Dreamland. "Irish Send Hot Note to Wilson," San Francisco Examiner 9 May 1916: 3.

¹²⁰Ireland 6 May 1916: 5. Quoted in Greene 78.

¹²¹"Irish-Americans Favor Revolution," New York American 26 April 1916: 2.

¹²²Patrick F. Egan, "What an Irishman Thinks of the Irish-German Alliance," Forum August 1916: 144, 139. Egan was also former U.S. minister to Chile.

¹²³"Egan Denounces Devoy," New York Times 4 May 1916: 2. "Raid Irish Meeting Here," New York Times 6 May 1916: 5.

¹²⁴"Irishmen Here Divided Over Dublin Revolt," Chicago Tribune 26 April 1916: 2. The New York Times also sought out Barry as a representative of the U.I.L. Barry claimed that the Rising "was bound to fail" and that the "great majority" of the Irish people were against it. "Irish

Minimize Revolt," New York Times 26 April 1916: 2. The Literary Digest, quoting the Boston Transcript, also cited Barry as a spokesman for moderate nationalism. Barry called the Rising an "ugly little revolt." "The New Irish Revolt," Literary Digest 6 May 1916: 1263.

¹²⁵"Ireland's Sudden Revolt," New York Times 30 April 1916: I18.

¹²⁶Britain treated the Rising as a serious threat during wartime despite the fact that the Dublin rebels had no chance of success, a fact readily acknowledged by Patrick Pearse and James Connolly, the leaders of the Rising.

¹²⁷Carroll 64-65. Two of the leaders of the Rising escaped execution: one, Eamonn De Valera, because of his possible American citizenship; the other, Countess Markievicz, because she was female.

¹²⁸Cuddy, Irish-America and National Isolation 109. The Gaelic-American quoted a number of Catholic publications which condemned the executions, including the Boston Pilot, the New York Catholic News, the Buffalo Union and Times, and America, the Jesuit magazine. Of the major New York Catholic publications, only the Tablet, the official newspaper of the Brooklyn diocese, attracted criticism for its failure to show sufficient antipathy toward British policies. The Gaelic-American condemned the Tablet for its anti-Irish "insults." The Ancient Order of Hibernians also passed a resolution condemning the Tablet. "Catholic Press of America Condemns Murder of Ireland's Patriot-Martyrs," "Condemn Anti-Irish Organ," Gaelic-American 3 June 1916: 5, 2. The Gaelic-American carried a reprint of an article from America (which the Gaelic-American described as the "chief Catholic organ in America," praising the Dublin rebels. "God Rest Heroes Souls," Gaelic-American 3 June 1916: 4. The Leader was less impressed--on the same day it ran and editorial criticizing America for its lack of ardor concerning the Rising. "Still the Theologians," editorial, Leader 3 June 1916: 4.

¹²⁹Quoted in "England's Way With Irish Rebels," Literary Digest 13 May 1916: 1355. As late as May 4, the Chicago Tribune claimed that the Chicago Irish were divided over the executions. "Irish of Chicago Widely Divided Over Executions," Chicago Tribune 4 May 1916: 5.

¹³⁰Senator William Borah of Idaho and Senator John Kern of Indiana sponsored a Senate resolution condemning the executions. "Irish Revolt Before the Senate," New York Times 18 May 1916: 3. In the House of Representatives L.C. Dyer of Mississippi introduced a resolution to express the

"horror of the American people" at the execution of Irish "prisoners of war." "Irish Motion in Congress," New York Times 13 May 1916: 2.

¹³¹Carroll 64-65.

¹³²A sample of English papers revealed that the English press criticized the executions as a political blunder which served only to create a new generation of Irish martyrs. "Those Irish Executions," Literary Digest 27 May 1916: 1524.

¹³³"A British Flurry of Frightfulness," editorial, New York World 9 May 1916: 8. "Executions of Dublin Rebels," editorial, New York World 4 May 1916: 8.

¹³⁴"Fate of Irish Rebels," editorial, New York Times 4 May 1916: 10.

¹³⁵"Irish Rebels," editorial, New York Times 12 May 1916: 10.

¹³⁶"A Terrible Mistake," editorial, San Francisco Chronicle 5 May 1916: 20.

¹³⁷"Britain and Ireland," editorial, San Francisco Chronicle 12 May 1916: 20. The Chronicle also condemned Britain for failing to exercise the same leniency as the U.S. did with the rebels of the Confederacy following the American Civil War. "The Irish Executions," editorial, San Francisco Chronicle 10 May 1916: 20.

¹³⁸"Men's Bodies Die: Their Souls Live On," editorial, San Francisco Examiner 8 May 1916: 16. "Irish Martyrdoms Were Not In Vain," San Francisco Examiner 7 June 1916: 24.

¹³⁹"Shooting of Irish Leaders a Colossal Blunder," editorial, New York American 9 May 1916: 18.

¹⁴⁰Sean Cronin, Washington's Irish Policy 1916-1986 (New York: Anvil, 1987): 20.

¹⁴¹"A Case for Mercy Not Justice," editorial, New York Times 20 July 1916: 10.

¹⁴²For some unexplained reason, the resolution sat at the White House for four days before being sent to the State Department which quickly wired it to London. The Senate resolution, which might have saved Casement's life, arrived too late. Sean Cronin concludes that President Wilson had little sympathy for either Casement or Irish independence. Wilson did not want to intervene to save Casement's life. He told his Irish-American secretary, Joe Tumulty on July

20: "It would be inexcusable for me to touch this. It would involve serious international embarrassment." Quoted in Cronin 19.

¹⁴³"Casement--A Blunder and Tragedy," editorial, New York World 3 August 1916: 8.

¹⁴⁴"Casement's Death Considered," editorial, New York Times 4 Aug. 1916: 8.

¹⁴⁵"Hanging Casement," editorial, Chicago Tribune 4 August 1916: 6.

¹⁴⁶"Casement Speaks Truth Mr. Hearst Lauds Speech," San Francisco Examiner 2 July 1916: 1. A subsequent editorial on the eve of Casement's death compared him to the heroes of the American Revolution. "England Faces Eternal Infamy in Putting Casement to Death," editorial, San Francisco Examiner 27 July 1916: 22. Hearst often took a direct personal interest in the Irish question. In the wake of the Rising, Hearst contributed \$50 to a fund for the relief of families of the rebels. Hearst's pro-Irish proclivities did not escape the attention of Irish-American newspapers. When Hearst's International News Agency was banned from the trans-Atlantic cable by Britain, the Irish World rose to Hearst's defense: "It is gratifying to find that one American newspaper publisher, William Randolph Hearst, cannot be bought, bribed, or frightened." "Interfering With Liberty of American Press," editorial, Irish World 21 Oct. 1916: 4.

¹⁴⁷Jeremiah O'Leary, publisher of Bull and president of the anti-British American Truth Society, and John Devoy, editor of Gaelic-American and a leader of Clan-na-Gael, consistently had the highest nationwide profiles in the mainstream press. Robert Ford of the Irish World and Peter Yorke of the Leader were somewhat less widely quoted. The Literary Digest usually cited these editors when a reference to Irish-American opinion was required. The New York Times referred to Ford, O'Leary and Devoy as "irreconcilables" on

CHAPTER V

THE WAR: LOYALTIES IN COLLISION

Introduction

World War One presented an opportunity--and a special problem--to the American advocates of Irish independence. The War offered the best hope in over 100 years of breaking the colonial link with Great Britain. But in the years prior to America's entry into the War, powerful political leaders--abetted by sectors of the mainstream press--relentlessly challenged the loyalty of Irish-Americans. The anti-hyphen campaign of 1915, the 1916 Presidential race and the neutrality debate had a cumulative effect of casting the Irish as one of the most disloyal elements in America.

When the United States entered the War in April 1917 as Britain's ally, Irish-American nationalism came into potential conflict with the foreign policy interests of the United States. Insistent voices argued that continued Irish antipathy toward Britain posed a direct threat to U.S. national security.

Prior to the Anglo-American rapprochement of the late 19th century, the American-Irish shared their antagonism toward Britain with a succession of U.S. administrations.¹ If the Irish were not always tolerated, their opposition to

Britain often was. At the eve of World War One, however, old antipathies between London and Washington had largely been reconciled. Woodrow Wilson, the latest in a series of anglophile presidents, resided in the White House and Britain was well entrenched as a friend of the United States.

The Irish-American press faced an intractable dilemma. Irish hostility toward Great Britain was stronger than ever following the failure of Home Rule and the execution of the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rebellion. So too was the need to demonstrate loyalty to the United States that was beyond question or reproach. As the voices clamoring for war gathered in strength and number, pressure to conform to policies favoring Britain would mount. The Irish-American press would soon find itself on a collision course with mainstream American opinion.

At the outbreak of War in 1914, most Americans wanted only to stay out of it. By Spring of 1915, however, the trade issue, British propaganda, and Germany's dogged refusal to abandon submarine warfare would begin to shift American public opinion in favor of the Allies. Even before the U.S. entered the conflict, the debate over what constituted true "Americanism" would be subsumed under demands for conformity to a brand of neutrality which favored the Allies. Support for--or at least acquiescence to--an agenda which favored Britain became, in the words of

President Woodrow Wilson, the "acid test" of "true loyalty and genuine Americanism."²

Irish-Americans overwhelmingly supported the effort to defeat Germany once the U.S. declared war on April 6, 1917. Irish-American opinion prior 1917, however, is more difficult to assess. Some historians suggest that most Irish-Americans backed Germany and saw the War as an opportunity for Ireland to break away from British control.³ Others conclude that opinions divided along class lines with wealthy Irish financiers and industrialists (who profited from the rise in industrial activity fueled by the War) supporting Britain while working-class Irish and more recent arrivals favored Germany.⁴ A few contend that Irish-Americans favored the Allies or were indifferent to the War.⁵

It seems likely, however, that the majority of Irish-Americans longed for the defeat of Great Britain--at least in the early days of the War--and that German-American/Irish-American cooperation to keep the U.S. out of the War was a matter of convenience rather than mutual affection. A New York-based British propaganda officer admitted as much in a secret dispatch to London: "The friendship between them is purely artificial and is based on a common hatred of England."⁶

Most Irish-American newspapers--whether secular or religious--favored Germany at the outset of the War.⁷ John

Redmond complained that the Chicago Citizen was the only Irish paper in America that was not pro-German.⁸ The War also spurred a flurry of publishing activity. Three new Irish papers appeared during the War years. In New York, the Gaelic-American enlarged its format and began to carry more ads.⁹

Some suggest that the Irish-American press was not a reliable barometer of Irish-American opinion.¹⁰ What is certain, however, is that the Irish-American press--regardless of whether it shaped or reflected the opinions of its readers--was not so much pro-German as anti-British. One historian writes: "Not instinctive love for Germany, but all-consuming Anglophobia accounted for the pro-German attitude of the Irish-American press. . . ."11

Ireland's Opportunity

World War One offered radical nationalists the best chance of securing Ireland's independence since the Napoleonic wars. In centuries past, Gaelic poets had looked to Spain and France for Ireland's deliverance. In 1914, Irish-American editors looked to Germany. "England's prosperity," a 19th-century maxim proclaimed, "is Ireland's misery; England's defeat is Ireland's victory."¹²

The War presented Ireland "the greatest opportunity in her history" of achieving self determination, according to the Gaelic-American. The Gaelic-American placed a somewhat messianic--and naive--hope in the prospects of a Germany

victory.¹³ The triumph of Germany was inevitable, the Gaelic-American insisted, and the Kaiser (who reportedly carried in his pocket a sprig of Irish shamrock) supported the goal of a free and independent Ireland.¹⁴

The fight for Irish liberty is being fought on the battlefields of Galicia, and when the kingdom of Poland is reconstituted . . . and a million victorious German veterans are freed for finishing up the war in the west, Irishmen will begin to see their day is close at hand.¹⁵

The New York Irish World was equally frank in its desire for a German victory. The interests of Germany and Ireland were synonymous: "It is treason to our race to hope for or help in an English victory."¹⁶ The War would rally Ireland's scattered exiles to the defeat of the "vampire nation," whose prosperity was gained at the expense of workers around the world. Germany would become the agent of their revenge:

[the] impending disaster . . . will strip the robber nation of the world of the spoils it has gathered unto itself after centuries of murder and robbery.¹⁷

The Irish World reasoned that Irish sympathy for Germany was a matter of convenience predicated upon the fact that Germany was the "enemy of Ireland's enemy." The Irish World went so far as to criticize the New York Staats-Zeitung for advocating a reconciliation between Germany and Great Britain:

. . . if this war [is] . . . merely a Teutonic family row preliminary to closer union, it behooves Ireland to stand aside. . . aid to Germany would ultimately be as prejudicial to the cause of Ireland as direct aid to England would be.¹⁸

Irish-American newspapers also feared that the European War could become the instrument of Ireland's final destruction. By the end of 1915, upwards of 100,000 Irish troops were serving in regiments of the British army.¹⁹ Britain's proposal to extend conscription to Ireland threatened to gather in tens of thousands more. The Irish-American press feared that an entire generation of Irishmen would be slaughtered on the killing fields of Europe, plunging an already depopulated Ireland into a state of irreversible decline. The Irish World feared that the War would Britain with final solution to its centuries old "Irish problem." What famine and forced transportation had failed to accomplish, the War would complete:

They are contemplating making the last remnant of our race food for German powder. The famine of '47 more than decimated Ireland's population; conscription in 1916 will rob her of her young men and seal the fate of our race in its cradle land. . . . We do not use the language of rhetoric. . . . if the decision is carried out, Ireland will enter upon a stage of decrepitude which will be the prelude to her final conquest by England. . . .²⁰

Irish-American support was essential, according to the Irish World, not only to the survival of Irish nationality in the old world but also to maintenance of Irish self-esteem in the new:

The last remnant of the old race is threatened with extinction by famine and conscription and you in America can save them. . . . Never were your manhood and pride so deeply at stake as in this hour of trial for your flesh and blood. . . . to fail her now would be the blackest treason.²¹

The Gaelic-American shared the Irish World's concerns about the effects of the War on Ireland. The Gaelic-American charged that Irish soldiers were sacrificed at Mons and Dardenelles in order that English soldiers might be spared.²² English troops occupied Ireland "as a conquered country" while Irish soldiers fell in France.²³

The prospect of conscription in Ireland (which would flare up again in the Spring of 1918) inspired an incendiary editorial in the Gaelic-American in 1915 which may have contributed to future governmental proscriptions of the newspaper. The editorial attacked a reported decision to sell U.S. riot shrapnel to Britain for use in Ireland. The Gaelic-American accused President Woodrow Wilson of "complaisance" in helping the British in their plans to slaughter Irish draft resisters. The Gaelic-American advocated possible sabotage of U.S. munitions factories:

. . . if a law is inhumane it should be broken . . .
 if the President does not stop it, then some means
 will be found. . . . When it comes to stopping the
 murder of ones own kindred, who cares about the law?
 . . . Blowing up of munitions factories will be
 justified in the sight of god if it stops the
 wholesale murder of innocent men, women and
 children--for in 'suppressing mobs' British soldiers
 always act like butchers.²⁴

The Neutrality Debate

When war broke out in August 1914 between Germany and Britain, Irish and Germans in America, who enjoyed a tradition of cooperation against the resurgence of Anglo-Saxonism, joined forces to lobby against American

involvement.²⁵ Public meetings and demonstrations took place in cities throughout the nation.²⁶ An avalanche of petitions descended upon Washington, D.C., urging Congress to keep the U.S. out of war.

The campaign in support of American neutrality was a broad-based movement involving socialists, pacifists, and radical labor elements in addition to nationality groups. Many Irish/German public rallies expressed open support for Germany. 6,000 Irish and Germans met in San Francisco in December 1914 to express hope for Irish independence through a German victory.²⁷ An August 1914 rally of 3,000 in New York's Celtic Park paraded the German flag and issued a pro-German resolution.²⁸ Jeremiah O'Leary, publisher of Bull and co-founder (with Alphonse Koeble of the German-American Alliance) of the American Truth Society, toured the country condemning Great Britain and pleading Germany's case.²⁹

President Woodrow Wilson's desire to keep the U.S. out of the European conflict was sincere and his administration professed a policy of strict neutrality. But there was a perception early on that Wilson's brand of neutrality was less than evenhanded. The San Francisco Examiner observed in November 1914:

There is a growing feeling that the neutrality of this administration is more a matter of sound than substance.³⁰

Not every Irish-American organization supported Germany--and the New York Times gave prominent coverage to

those who did not, specifically the all-but-defunct United Irish League.³¹ But the bulk of organized Irish-American opinion--at least that which was most vocal--supported Germany at least in the early days of the War.

The Propaganda War

German and Irish newspapers in the U.S. followed much the same propaganda line.³² They warned against British control of the seas, lobbied against U.S. financial support of the Allies, and decried munitions sales. The United States, according to the Irish-American press, was a victim of British intrigues.

The Irish World argued against war loans and complained that Britain's blockade of neutral shipping harmed American commerce.³³ Keeping America out of war, the Irish World advised, was the "duty of every patriotic American." Solidarity between Irish and Germans was the essence of true Americanism. As the elites of immigrant America, the Germans and Irish had a duty to lead the fight in support of American neutrality:

Americans of German and Irish descent should be especially conspicuous in combating English intrigues. . . . Unity between German-Americans and Irish-Americans would paralyze every effort of England to array the United States on her side against Germany.³⁴

Irish-American newspapers sometimes went to imaginative lengths to counter British war propaganda. After news of alleged German atrocities in Belgium swept across the U.S.,

the San Francisco Leader devoted all of page one to photographs of sites of British atrocities in Ireland dating back hundreds of years.³⁵ The Leader occasionally reprinted translations of reports from German-language papers.³⁶ The Gaelic-American urged its readers to read German-American papers "to understand our German-American fellow citizens."³⁷

Irish counter measures proved futile, however, against what an historian has described as "one of the major propaganda efforts in history."³⁸ From the early days of the War, Britain enjoyed a cable monopoly on news emanating from Europe.³⁹ British propagandists supplied free press releases to 360 newspapers in the U.S. In addition, the British maintained a mailing list of 260,000 American elites who they kept supplied with war information.⁴⁰ The British, unlike the Germans, were subtle and often covert in their massive campaign to sway American public opinion.⁴¹ One historian has concluded:

Americans were led to believe they were making up their own minds when they were really being directed gently toward a pre-determined set of opinions in favor of the allies.⁴²

British efforts proved so successful that Sir Gilbert Parker, the chief of the British propaganda mission in the U.S., could boast in August 1916, "We have swept German news out of American papers."⁴³ Parker resigned in February 1917 (reportedly due to ill health) when it became apparent that the U.S. would enter the War. He was replaced by Lord

Northcliffe, founder of the Daily Mail and the Daily Mirror and owner of the London Times. Northcliffe established the British Information Bureau. Headquartered in New York City, the British Information Bureau had at its height 500 officials with 10,000 assistants working in the U.S.⁴⁴

The Irish-American press began to warn of pro-British bias in the mainstream media soon after the first shots were fired in Europe. The Leader complained that Germany was being victimized by a "bigoted and unscrupulous press."⁴⁵ The Irish World called for a German/Irish alliance to counter British propaganda. "English influence," the paper warned, "has made itself felt in certain newspaper offices."⁴⁶ The Gaelic-American decried the "campaign of calumny" being waged by the "Anglomaniac press:"

The English are doing to the Germans what they have for centuries been doing to the Irish-- filling the world with lies about them.⁴⁷

There was a measure of truth about Irish complaints concerning the New York mainstream press. The New York Times became so partisan that Sir Gilbert Parker warned that British government against accepting it as a reliable barometer of American public opinion.⁴⁸

The Hearst papers, alone among the commercial daily press, offered solace to the Irish. Like the Irish-American newspapers, the Hearst papers advocated American neutrality and warned of Anglo-Saxon influence. The Leader often reprinted editorials from the San Francisco Examiner; the

Irish World occasionally borrowed political cartoons from the New York American.

Irish editors embraced Hearst as an ally. When Britain banned Hearst's International New Service from the trans-Atlantic cable in October 1916, the Irish World rushed to Hearst's defense:

It is gratifying to find that one American newspaper publisher--William Randolph Hearst--cannot be bought, bribed, or frightened. . . . In his stand against the arrogance of the British ministry he should have the support of every American citizen.⁴⁹

From the beginning, the New York Times regarded the pro-German sympathies of the American-Irish as evidence of disloyalty to the United States. A page-one Times account of a German/Irish meeting chaired by Jeremiah O'Leary reported, for example, that the American national anthem was not played and that the crowd "did not cheer when the Stars and Stripes . . . were mentioned."⁵⁰ The Gaelic-American disputed that Times' version of events and accused the Times and other New York papers of conspiring to print deliberate falsehoods in order to provoke hostility against Irish and German-Americans.

There is a hyphen in the term Anglo-Saxon, yet these unnaturalized Anglo-Saxons like Mr. Ochs of the Times, who is not an American, are ever referring to Irish and German citizens as hyphenated Americans. . . . yet some of the men in charge of Mr. Pulitzer's chief departments are Englishmen who have not yet taken out their naturalization papers and probably never will.⁵¹

The issue of loyalty--as it would be played out in public discourse and through the press--would be defined in part along racial lines.

The Anti-Hyphen Campaign

The coercive side of the neutrality debate surfaced in the anti-hyphen campaign of 1915. In 1915 and 1916, most Americans were "slowly making their minds up" about the War.⁵² The anti-hyphen campaign, which was ostensibly directed against those nationality groups which exhibited dual loyalties, in fact promoted a form of Anglo-conformity which sought to enforce a conception of American patriotism that was sympathetic to Great Britain in the War.

The campaign arose out of a fear that the process of immigrant assimilation had broken down and that the same old-world animosities that were rending Europe would shatter the American body politic.⁵³ George Creel, future head of the Committee on Public Information, wrote that "seditious attacks" upon the government by "hyphenated societies and a foreign-language press" offered clear evidence that the melting pot was not working:

The bland assumption that we are one country and one people has been given a rude shock. . . . a domestic peril . . . threatens the permanence of American institutions as gravely as any menace of foreign foe.⁵⁴

The campaign against the hyphen was also part of a larger and more diffuse debate about the limits of pluralism and the nature of American identity. Its most ardent

advocates claimed to condemn hyphenates of every kind, but their true targets were those Irish-Americans and German-Americans who lobbied against support for Britain.

The use of the term "hyphen" as a derogatory reference to nationality groups was introduced by Teddy Roosevelt in an 1894 journal article. Roosevelt wrote, "Some Americans need hyphens in their names because only part of them has come over."⁵⁵ He argued that divided loyalty was incompatible with true "Americanism." The targets of Roosevelt's attack were those nationality groups which sought to derail the Anglo-American rapprochement--Irish-Americans and German-Americans.

Although Teddy Roosevelt coined the phrase, "hyphenated American," President Woodrow Wilson did much to popularize it. President Wilson scorned dual loyalty other than the Anglo-Saxon variety. He cherished the English roots of American traditions and argued in his academic writings that race was the determining factor in the destiny of the nation.⁵⁶

Wilson and most of the senior members of his administration were anglophile by ancestry or inclination.⁵⁷ The President, who sprang from Ulster Protestant stock, had an "unconcealed distaste" for non-British immigrants and blamed them for the decline of American democracy.⁵⁸

In May 1914, Wilson appropriated a Roosevelt phrase to chastise those Irish immigrants who needed "hyphens in the

names because only part of them has crossed over."⁵⁹ The word "hyphen" soon became synonymous with questionable loyalty and with Americans of German and Irish ancestry.⁶⁰

Wilson breathed new life into the anti-hyphen campaign with a Philadelphia speech a few days after the sinking of the Lusitania. Before an audience of 15,000 recently nationalized citizens, Wilson attacked hyphenated Americans and insisted that the continued existence of national groupings was anathema to the interests of the United States. His words were clearly aimed at Germans and Irish:

America does not consist of groups. A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group in America has not yet become an American.⁶¹

The hyphen hysteria intensified in the autumn of 1915. On Oct. 1, Wilson chose a gathering of the (overwhelmingly WASP) Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) to observe:

Very large numbers of our fellow citizens, born in other lands, have not entertained with sufficient affection and intensity the American ideal.⁶²

Roosevelt took Wilson's message a step further in a speech to the Knights of Columbus eleven days later. The former President condemned dual loyalty and demanded more emphasis on duty, and less emphasis on rights:

There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americans. . . . For an American citizen to vote as a German-American, an Irish-American or an English-American is to be a traitor to American institutions, and those hyphenated Americans who terrorize American politicians by threats of the foreign vote are engaged in treason to the American republic.⁶³

The mainstream press fed the anti-hyphen fever through the latter months of 1915. As one historian described it, "cartoonist and columnist united in a campaign against the hyphen."⁶⁴ The Literary Digest declared hyphenism the most important issue of the day.⁶⁵ The New York World and the New York Times enthusiastically endorsed the Wilson and Roosevelt speeches.⁶⁶ The Times recommended "hazing" of hyphenates as "a cure for the dangerous un-American habit. . . . Life," the paper advised, "is hardly worth living under continual hazing."⁶⁷ The Times's indirect call for vigilante activity would be answered in 1917 and 1918 with chilling consequences.

The defining moment of the anti-hyphen campaign came in President Wilson's state of the union address on Dec. 7, 1915. The President, in an obvious reference to German and Irish immigrants, stated:

There are citizens of the United States . . . born under other flags, but welcomed under our generous naturalization laws to full freedom and opportunity of America, who have poured the poison of disloyalty into the very arteries of our national life.⁶⁸

The Irish-American press rose to the defense of hyphenated Americans and challenged the restrictive definition of Americanism. The Gaelic-American called Wilson a "demagogue" and a pawn of England.⁶⁹ The Gaelic-American defended the loyalty of hyphenates and blamed the mainstream press for orchestrating the campaign against them.

The press of New York stands for and exploits a policy of Toryism, toadyism and tawdryism, and the "hyphenated-Americans" insist upon a policy of strict neutrality. That is the essential difference between the Americanism as handed down by the Fathers of the Republic and the modern Americanism as defined by the subsidized press of New York.⁷⁰

The Gaelic-American complained that the press unfairly labeled as un-American or "hyphenated" anyone who dared criticize England:

American, in the Tribune's dictionary, means Anglo-American and no foreign-born citizen is properly "assimilated" unless he declares himself an Anglomaniac. . . . That is the new brand of Americanism.⁷¹

The Irish World accused the anti-hyphenates of hypocrisy, noting that the divided loyalties of "double hyphens," such as Scotch-Irish and Anglo-Saxon Americans, escaped scrutiny and condemnation.⁷² The Irish World complained of rising anti-Catholic bigotry. Both the World and the Leader warned that the anti-hyphen campaign represented a modern form of knownothingism.⁷³ The Leader predicted that President Wilson would adopt "the new knownothingism" as a rallying point in the 1916 election.⁷⁴ The Western Watchman advocated a more expanded definition of American identity and insisted that immigrants and their offspring strengthened rather than weakened the American social fabric:

When will our evil-minded fanatics come to learn that hyphenated Americanism, properly understood, is a virtue and only becomes vice by being misapplied. For the hyphen, as has been well said, of its very nature tends to unite, not to separate.⁷⁵

Although it was punctuated by speeches by President Wilson and ex-President Roosevelt, the anti-hyphen campaign was not orchestrated from on high. A groundswell of public sentiment drove the campaign against the hyphen as the nation--swayed by British propaganda, German blunders, and simmering racial antipathies--made its mind up about the War. One historian concludes:

It is hardly appropriate to attribute the wave of intolerance that inundated the U.S. in the fall of 1915 to the rhetoric of Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. These men merely rode its crest and sanctioned it with their moral authority.⁷⁶

The mainstream press aggravated the situation with its attacks on hyphenated Americans and with its countless unsubstantiated reports of German plots and conspiracies during the latter months of 1915.⁷⁷

By the end of the year, coercive elements began to coalesce into organized groups. An "America First" campaign was launched with the goal, among others, of imposing a "uniform interpretation of the meaning of American citizenship."⁷⁸ The "Loyal America League" described itself as a "movement to eliminate the hyphen and the dual loyalty for which it stands."⁷⁹ The New York Times call for the hazing of hyphenates would soon be answered.

The Lusitania

The turning point in the neutrality debate came on 7 May 1915 when German submarines on patrol in the North Atlantic torpedoed and sank the British steamship Lusitania,

killing 128 American civilians. The mainstream press quickly condemned Germany. According to a Literary Digest poll of 365 mainstream editors at the beginning of the War, 66 per cent supported neutrality, 29 per cent favored Britain, and five per cent favored Germany.⁸⁰ After the Lusitania, however, most editors called for Germany's defeat.⁸¹ Public support for Germany withered.

Despite the jingoist firestorm, Irish-American newspapers rushed to Germany's defense. The Gaelic-American insisted that Germany had every right to sink the Lusitania.⁸² Under rules of war, the Gaelic-American argued, Britain was guilty of carrying munitions aboard a civilian transport ship and President Wilson and Secretary of State Bryan were negligent for ignoring German warnings.⁸³ The "Anglomaniac" press, according to the Gaelic-American, distorting the incident in Britain's behalf.

When the subsidized yelping of England's hell-hounds in the New York press has subsided . . . it will be found that [the] incident was the deliberate work of the British government.⁸⁴

The Leader, in a page-one translation of an Illinois Staats-Zeitung editorial, claimed that the Lusitania had been warned and precautions taken to prevent the loss of life.⁸⁵ The Irish World charged that the ship was a "floating arsenal" and predicted that "mercenary,

unscrupulous, and unpatriotic newspapers" would use the incident as an excuse for American involvement.⁸⁶

The war of words grew shriller in the aftermath of the Lusitania. The Irish World accused U.S. arms manufacturers of war profiteering, insisted that Britain was the real enemy of the U.S., and argued that the Wilson administration had "no right" to threaten Germany with war if it refused to end its submarine warfare.⁸⁷

When Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan resigned in protest of Wilson's ultimatum to Germany, the Gaelic-American complained of the "moral cowardice" of America's leaders.

What was wanted was a man of courage to rally real Americans . . . and save the country from being dragged into . . . war to serve the purpose of a few millionaires who have already amassed great fortunes supplying the Allies with munitions.⁸⁸

The Leader accused the White House of wholesale capitulation to Great Britain.

Under the present supine and anglo-maniacal Administration, Old Glory can be trailed in the mud without bringing more than a feeble protest.⁸⁹

Sectors of the mainstream press increasingly questioned Irish loyalty. The New York Times--quoting a London press report--concluded, a "very large portion of German-American success must be ascribed to Irish-American cooperation."⁹⁰ The Literary Digest speculated about the depth of Irish loyalty to the U.S. Its survey of Irish-American newspapers found "plenty of anti-English and some pro-German

declarations."⁹¹ Irish-American newspapers were forced on the defensive. The Leader observed:

We are not more German than the Germans, nor are we more British than many native-born Irish who are ashamed of their nativity. . . . We are Americans and as such loath, suspect, and despise the one nation that has ever been our enemy . . . perfidious England.⁹²

Hearst's San Francisco Examiner, an advocate of neutrality and a vocal critic of Britain, made a similar declaration:

"This newspaper is not pro-German or pro-allies. It is pro-American morning, noon, and night."⁹³

Irish newspapers stepped up their attacks upon the mainstream press. The Gaelic-American labeled mainstream reports from the front a "disgrace to journalism."⁹⁴ A page-one editorial cartoon in Irish World depicted the "Anglo-American press" as a beguiling temptress trying to seduce Uncle Sam into war.⁹⁵ The Irish World chastised New York newspapers for truckling to British interests:

The craven, lying New York press tries to convince Americans that Germany is the enemy of the United States because, so they say, she seeks to dominate the world. In England's domination they gladly acquiesce. When will America once more declare her independence?⁹⁶

The Leader accused the daily press of "debauched flunkeyism" for subordinating the interests of America to those of Britain.

. . . our press, with a few notable exceptions, is proud of American slavery and lauds the hand that whips us.⁹⁷

Despite the efforts to preserve American neutrality, events pushed the nation ever closer to War. The sinking of the *Arabic* in August 1915 and the *Sussex* in March 1916 further eroded German/American relations. The Irish insisted that they hated England for the good of the U.S. and that anglophobia was a logical expression of Americanism. But the argument that England, rather than Germany, was the enemy of the United States became increasingly untenable. When Germany announced the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare in January 1917, the Senate quickly voted to sever diplomatic relations.⁹⁸ War seemed inevitable.

The Irish World responded to the latest crisis in calm and measured tones. It praised President Wilson's "pacific attitude" and urged him not to take the "fatal leap" into war.⁹⁹ Although the paper continued to criticize Britain, it advised that the "honor and the interests of America with all true Americans take precedent [sic] over all other considerations."¹⁰⁰

The Western Watchman also kept up its attacks on England and her allies in America. The Watchman dismissed as "Un-American" a pro-war speech by an Episcopal bishop:

If, as the Bishop says, America is on God's side, then she can't be with England. History reveals John Bull too often playing the devil's part to allow us to believe that he is now on the side of God's cause. . . . [England] is teaching the world today such lessons as men need--the dear bought lessons of the extent to which pride, avarice, ambition, jealousy and envy can go.¹⁰¹

The Gaelic-American called the break with Germany a "victory for English propaganda in America."¹⁰² The Chicago Citizen was more conciliatory. The Citizen proclaimed the willingness of Irish-Americans to stand behind the United States: "Their first duty is the flag of their country, and that flag is the stars and stripes."¹⁰³ Yet the Citizen also recommended sympathy for the "awkward position" of German-Americans.¹⁰⁴

The Leader reluctantly accepted the likelihood of war and warned, "It is not a time for jingoism nor for recrimination."¹⁰⁵ Within months, however, the Leader would run with the jingoistic pack.

The point of no return came in March 1917 when British agents intercepted a secret German communique. The so-called Zimmerman note proposed a German/Mexican alliance in the event of America's entry into the War. Unable to explain away the implications of the Zimmerman note, most Irish-American newspapers ignored it. A few questioned its authenticity. The Leader dismissed the note as a creation of British propaganda.¹⁰⁶ The Leader, as it accepted the inevitability of war, articulated the conflicting sentiments of many Irish-Americans:

. . . if this country should go to war, the vast majority of our citizens will be behind the flag.
. . . Our interests and our honor, or whatever we regard as our interests and our honor, may lead us to fight with Germany, but common decency, the memory of our dead fathers and the hope of our posterity should prevent us from allying ourselves with . . . England.¹⁰⁷

The 1916 Presidential Campaign

The discord stirred up by the anti-hyphen campaign of 1915 spilled over into the 1916 Presidential race. President Wilson ran on his record of having kept America out of war. But a major issue in the campaign was hyphenism.

Wilson set the tone early in the campaign. In his Flag Day speech, Wilson attacked those who advocated voting blocks organized around racial or nationality groups. In a clear reference to Americans of Irish and German ancestry, the President observed:

There is disloyalty active in the United States, and it must be absolutely crushed. . . . a very small minority . . . are trying to levy a species of political blackmail, saying "do what we wish or we will wreak our vengeance at the polls."¹⁰⁸

The Gaelic-American accused Wilson of deliberately stirring up racial strife to attract votes.¹⁰⁹ The San Francisco Examiner charged the "President's two personal newspaper organs in New York"--a veiled reference to the World and the Times--with "moral treason" for

. . . attempting to excite hatred between American citizens of different ancestry in these times of peculiar danger. . . . reprehensible as has been much of the pro-German propaganda, none of it has begun to equal in bitterness, abusiveness and persistency the pro-British . . . propaganda.¹¹⁰

Wilson raised the issue again in his acceptance speech at the Democratic national convention.

I am a candidate of a party but I am above all things an American citizen. I neither seek the favor nor fear the displeasure of that small alien

element which puts loyalty to any foreign power before loyalty to the United States.¹¹¹

The Hearst papers denounced the attacks on hyphenates as divisive and one-sided:

There are more kinds of hyphenates than one in this country. . . . We stand firmly for common sense Americanism that is neither pro-Teuton nor pro Allies. . . .¹¹²

The hyphen issue culminated in a widely-publicized exchange between President Wilson and Jeremiah O'Leary at the end of September. The occasion was the landslide victory in the New Jersey primary election of incumbent Senator James E. Martine over John W. Wescott, Wilson's candidate. In a telegram to the President, O'Leary commented:

Senator Martine won because New Jersey voters do not want any truckling to the British Empire. . . . Anglomaniacs and British interests may control the newspapers but they don't control votes. . . . Every vote for Martine was a vote against you.¹¹³

Wilson called a press conference to deliver a stinging retort to O'Leary:

I would feel deeply mortified to have you or anyone like you vote for me. Since you have access to so many disloyal Americans and I have not, I will ask you to convey this message to them.¹¹⁴

The Wilson/O'Leary brawl inspired a firestorm of editorial commentary--most of it directed against O'Leary--and thrust the hyphen issue to the center of the Presidential campaign.¹¹⁵ The press demonized O'Leary as a

paragon of disloyalty and the Wilson campaign shifted into high gear.¹¹⁶ A Democratic national committeeman observed:

We are going to make the hyphen issue the big talking point of this campaign. There isn't any other issue. The President's telegram to O'Leary has nailed Mr. Hughes' effort to win the German vote to a flagpole . . . so the whole country can see it.¹¹⁷

O'Leary and his supporters tried mount a counter attack. 12,000 gathered at an ATS rally in New York to protest Wilson's retort.¹¹⁸ And in a second telegram to Wilson, O'Leary argued:

It has remained for you to break new ground as a President and to seek to divide your countrymen into racial and religious groups. The word "hyphenate" was never heard in American public life until you coined it to insult your hosts, real Americans of Irish blood, at the dedication of the Commodore Barry monument in Washington.¹¹⁹

O'Leary's rebuttal, however, received much less attention in the press than his first telegram and Wilson came out much better after their confrontation. O'Leary accused the daily press of pro-British bias:

The applause it [Wilson's telegram] received from some newspapers, particularly those that are owned by Lord Northcliffe, newspapers like the New York Times, proves the existence . . . [of] knownothingism.¹²⁰

Of the major mainstream newspapers, only the Hearst papers were willing to speak on O'Leary's behalf. The San Francisco Examiner defended O'Leary's right to lobby against Great Britain and to criticize the policies of an incumbent President:

If an American citizen who strenuously objects to the welfare of England being put above the rights and dignity and sovereignty of the United States is disloyal . . . then the majority of us Americans are disloyal. If it is disloyal . . . to oppose the policies of an American President and to seek to defeat him at the polls . . . then every one us is a traitor. . . . this particular case ceases to be an individual case of Jeremiah O'Leary and becomes the public concern of all you citizens.¹²¹

In the final days of the Presidential campaign, Republicans and Democrats accused each other of courting the hyphen vote.¹²² A New York Times editorial accused Hughes of consorting with O'Leary, the "arch-hyphenate . . . one of the most strident and persistent un-Americans."¹²³ Hughes was compelled to publicly spurn the hyphen vote to counter charges that his managers had secretly met with O'Leary and Daniel Cohalan.¹²⁴ O'Leary had become an emblem of disloyalty for both political parties.

On the eve of the election, the San Francisco Examiner called for an end to hyphen-baiting and a for a more pluralistic vision of the American body politic:

Mr. Wilson and Mr. Hughes should cease making themselves ridiculous and cease affronting the spirit of true Americanism . . . by reflecting upon any worthy class of citizens through the pretense of not wanting their votes. . . . What are the men of Irish descent and German descent that any President should not try to get their votes. . . . They are an essential part of our citizenship. . . . all of us in this country who are not Indians came from somewhere else; and all of us who are descended from ancestors of foreign origin have some sympathetic interest of the land from which our people came.¹²⁵

Some Irish-American editors gave lukewarm endorsements to Hughes, more out of antipathy toward Wilson than

affection for his Republican challenger. The Irish World conducted a low-key campaign in opposition to Wilson's re-election. The Gaelic-American and the Leader, by contrast, leveled bitter and continuous attacks against the President. Following the Wilson/O'Leary exchange, the Gaelic-American called the President a "moral coward" and an anti-Irish bigot:

Wilson hates the Irish with the implacable hatred of Ulster Orangemen--the stock he comes of . . . his abuse is studied and always veiled. . . . [he has] never missed an opportunity of repeating his false accusations of disloyalty against the race that proved its loyalties on the bloody battlefields of the Civil War, fighting for the Union while . . . his father was desecrating a Christian pulpit by ranting in favor of human slavery.¹²⁶

The Leader condemned Wilson in even more acerbic terms. The Leader called Wilson a "sourfaced knownothing," the "most anti-Irish President America has ever had" and concluded that the Republicans could elect "a sick cat" over the incumbent President.¹²⁷ Three days before the election, the Leader issued its harshest attack:

We want no sniveling preaching in Washington . . .
 We do not want a snuffling schoolmaster, canting about the rights of the people of the world, while he neglects and condemns the rights of the people he is supposed to represent. . . .
 We do not want a canting hypocrite who preaches neutrality, but whose every act is anti-neutral. . . .
 We want a President who is an American, not a degenerate mental hyphenate who splashes his own filth across the faces of the American people. . . .
 We want a big man.
 We want an honest man.
 We want any man but Wilson.¹²⁸

Wilson won the election by the narrowest of margins. Irish-American voters apparently did not follow the advice of their editors en masse.¹²⁹ There is little evidence of any wholesale defection of Irish voters from the Democratic party in 1916. But Wilson's accusations of disloyalty had some effect. Except for California, Wilson failed to carry a single state that had a large Irish-American population. In predominantly Irish districts, the Democratic margin was down from previous and subsequent elections.¹³⁰

The Gaelic-American insisted that Wilson had won a "pyrrhic victory."¹³¹ But the hyphen issue, the public exchange between Jeremiah O'Leary and President Wilson, and the relentless campaign of calumny conducted by the mainstream press during the election left an enduring scar upon the public image of the Irish.¹³² By the end of 1916, Irish-Americans--at least those who continued to condemn Britain and insist upon strict American neutrality--were clearly branded as one of the most disloyal elements in the United States.

War Declared

The Irish-American press was thrown into turmoil when the United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917. Catholic newspapers in the East and in the Midwest scrambled to demonstrate their patriotism while the major secular papers went to torturous lengths to reconcile their conflicting sentiments.¹³³ The Irish World initially

condemned the vote for war as a capitulation to "Anglo-Saxon capitalism" and insisted that ordinary Americans had "every reason for wishing the English may not win."¹³⁴ Within a week, however, the Irish World proclaimed its grudging support of the war effort--even as it continued to condemn Britain: "To America and America alone is our allegiance."¹³⁵

The Gaelic-American followed a similar path. The Gaelic-American called the declaration of war "the first disgrace" since the birth of the republic and insisted that history would vindicate those who had opposed it.¹³⁶ The Gaelic-American soon conceded that war against Germany was the "law of the land" and that every Irish-American would support it. But the paper also cautioned:

[the] Irish in America . . . will not consent to have Irish or American blood poured out to help England to hold Ireland down.¹³⁷

The Leader stepped up its attacks upon Britain and tried to enlist the declaration of war as justification for armed revolt in Ireland.¹³⁸ The Leader launched a bitter denunciation of President Wilson--an action that attracted the attention of the U.S. Department of Justice. A page-one editorial in the early editions of the April 7 issue of the Leader observed:

Mr. Wilson's action in steering us into this wicked and wanton war is the worst blow the true interests of America have received since the flag was fired on at Fort Sumter--an action then applauded by Mr. Wilson's party and by Mr. Wilson's ally England even more vigorously than they are applauding his fatal

policy today. . . . Having obtained re-election under false pretenses, Mr. Wilson renewed his efforts to embroil us with Germany. He succeeded. . . . the season marked by the betrayal of Our Lord . . . [is] consummated by the betrayal of the nation.¹³⁹

The editorial, which gone to press before the vote in Congress, also stated that the Leader would support the War once it became official. Nevertheless, U.S. District Attorney John W. Preston pressured publisher Peter Yorke to remove the offending editorial. Yorke complied and the attack on Wilson did not appear in later editions.¹⁴⁰ Preston's action was a prelude to the governmental campaign of censorship that would affect Irish, foreign language, and other non-mainstream newspapers in the months ahead.

For the remainder of 1917, the Leader, the Gaelic-American, and the Irish World continued to question the war effort and criticize Great Britain. The three papers argued that American blood should not be shed in support of Britain. They complained that American troops would be sacrificed at the front while English troops sheltered behind the lines in relative safety.¹⁴¹

The Irish World charged that the "privileged classes," which it claimed had started the War, would conspire to provoke racial and religious divisions among American workers.¹⁴² The Leader warned of the rising threat of anti-Catholicism, demanded taxation of war profiteers and, in a final convulsion of defiance, challenged U.S. District Attorney Preston who had suppressed the Leader's April 7

editorial and who threatened to prosecute Irish activists on the west coast:

The Irish in San Francisco are not going to be cowed by a whippersnapper nor John Bullied into suffering the continued existence in public office of the mean slanderer of their race and faith.¹⁴³

The Western Watchman, which for the most part avoided controversy regarding the War, attacked Britain, "the apotheosized hypocrite of nations," and defended her American critics.¹⁴⁴ When Teddy Roosevelt recommended that "any man who hates England more than he loves the U.S. should be thrown out of the country," the Watchman advised: "There wouldn't be enough fighting men left in the country to whip Bulgaria, not to speak of the Germans."¹⁴⁵ The Watchman insisted that the U.S., despite its declaration of war, had "entered into no alliance with Great Britain. There has been no 'wedding of two nations.'" The Watchman argued that the Tories who ruled Ireland were descendants of those who oppressed the American colonies before the Revolution.¹⁴⁶ Even the conservative Chicago Citizen continued to criticize British policies in Ireland and Anglo-Saxon influence in the U.S.¹⁴⁷

But the Gaelic-American alone continued to call for Britain's defeat. The Irish question would be the "rock upon which the British empire would be split" and Ireland's exiles were gathering "in every country of the world" to hasten its dissolution.¹⁴⁸ Editor Devoy's obsessive devotion to Britain's demise--nourished over five decades--

overwhelmed the need to develop a less incendiary and more pragmatic strategy on Ireland's behalf. Months after the U.S. declared war, the recalcitrant old Fenian continued to express the full fury to his hatred of America's formal ally:

Hypocrisy, unctuous and unblushing, has always been the outstanding characteristic of the English. Wherever they have gone . . . massacre, assassination and every conceivable form of torture have accompanied them, and while they have exercised all these to the utmost cruelty, they . . . trumpeted to the world that they were solely interested in the advancement of Christianity . . . [and] the blessings and benefits of civilization to unhappy natives. Cromwell drenched Ireland with blood, massacred its men, disemboweled its women . . . for the glory of God and the cause of humanity. . . . Every Englishman since Cromwell's time . . . has carried out a similar policy in every land where the English have gone. Hindus were blown from the cannon's mouth . . . Boers were starved . . . Egyptians butchered . . . in the interests of English civilization. . . . England is not fighting unarmed men now. . . . it will be but justice, and justice too long delayed, if she has inflicted upon her a part of what . . . she inflicted upon so many.¹⁴⁹

The Loyalty Issue

As war fever swept the nation, Irish newspapers stepped up their declarations of loyalty and "true Americanism." Press accounts regaled the past contributions of Irish soldiers in the American Revolutionary and Civil Wars and claimed that 30 percent of the present U.S. fighting force was of Irish descent.¹⁵⁰ Irish newspapers urged their readers to support the war effort and to

purchase Liberty Bonds. The Leader became active in the Catholic War Drive in San Francisco.

Irish newspapers scrambled to demonstrate the patriotism of their readers. The Leader became chauvinistic in its support of the War. The Chicago Citizen boasted that the Stars and Stripes were a "prouder ensign for Irish-Americans . . . than even the 'Wearing of the Green.'"¹⁵¹ The Citizen insisted that Irish-Americans--"Sinn Feiner and non-Sinn Feiner"--stood united in their support of the President.¹⁵² In St. Louis, the Western Watchman suggested that immigrants and their offspring were more willing to join the armed forces than even the children of native-born Americans.¹⁵³

The effusive outpouring of patriotic sentiment was designed to shield the Irish from accusations of disloyalty. Sectors of the Irish-American press struggled to distance themselves from the more unrepentant elements of the nationalist movement and yet somehow maintain an anti-British posture. The Western Watchman observed:

Some Irishmen in America are under accusation of too close an affiliation with Germany. Perhaps the charges have a basis in fact, but that does not justify the fear that there is any doubt about loyalty to that vast body of Americans who are of Irish lineage. . . . they are not pro-German, but by the same token they are not pro-British; and they are unwilling to see our proud flag entwined more closely than is necessary with the English banner.¹⁵⁴

The cleavage between the Chicago Citizen and the Sinn Fein wing of the nationalist movement grew wider when

America entered the War. The moderate Irish Party, which the Citizen continued to support, advocated active Irish support of Great Britain in order to win a hearing for Ireland at the post-war peace conference. The Citizen also feared that the strident campaign on behalf of Ireland's independence threatened the tenuous status of the Irish in America. The Citizen warned that the actions of "certain professional 'Irish' patriots" could bring disrepute upon American citizens of Irish birth and ancestry.¹⁵⁵ The Citizen charged that the anti-British sentiments of a visiting F.O.I.F. (Friends of Irish Freedom) speaker bordered on treason:

He has no right to come here to Chicago or any other center of population to dictate to Irish-American citizens what their duty is in this crucial situation.¹⁵⁶

The Citizen offered an analysis strikingly similar to that which would be used to silence Irish-American publications in the months ahead:

Sowing distrust of an ally of the United States must . . . create discontent, prove embarrassing to the government, give comfort to the enemy and . . . prolong the war.¹⁵⁷

At the opposite extreme, the Gaelic-American continued to insist that its advocacy of an independent Ireland was consonant with American values. The Gaelic-American presented a defiantly anti-British brand of patriotism that chastised its critics in the "Anglomaniac" press:

The Gaelic-American is more truly loyal to the United States than Pulitzer, Reid, Rathom or any

other of the journalistic prostitutes who are working for England and flinging charges of "treason" or "disloyalty" against every man who stands for the independence of Ireland and insists that President Wilson should make good his solemn words.¹⁵⁸

The Gaelic-American escaped proscription--for the moment.

Conclusions

The U.S. declaration of war shattered the possibility of securing Ireland's liberation through England's defeat at the hands of Germany. Irish hopes now lay with President Wilson and the prospect of including Irish independence an American war goal.

But the Irish-American press found itself in an increasingly hostile environment where the acceptable parameters of public discourse grew ever more constricted. The Irish-American press had lost the propaganda war and come out on the wrong side of the neutrality debate. Great Britain, intractable enemy of the American-Irish, was now America's ally.

The Irish loudly proclaimed their loyalty. But the anti-hyphen campaign, the 1916 Presidential election and their previous advocacy of Germany had tarred the Irish with the taint of disloyalty. The cumulative effects of British propaganda and unrelenting attacks in the mainstream press also exacted a toll.

By the end of 1917, it had become increasingly risky to question the conduct or goals of the War, criticize Great

Britain, or give vocal support to the campaign for Irish independence. The Leader had been forced to kill an editorial which criticized President Wilson. Vigilantes in New York--urged on by the New York Times--had begun to disrupt Irish street rallies. More serious proscriptions lay ahead.

Notes to Chapter V

¹Northern bitterness about British support for the South during the American Civil War lingered for decades. Brown, Nationalism 39-40.

²Woodrow Wilson employed the term, "acid test," on a national level during the 1918 election in regard to candidates attitudes concerning the McLemore resolution (which forbade Americans to travel on armed merchant ships in submarine-infested waters), the embargo issue and the armed neutrality measure. This same "acid test" for loyalty was also employed on a local level during the 1916 campaign--before the U.S. declared war on Germany. Quoted in Seward W. Livermore, Woodrow Wilson and the War Congress, 1916-1918. (Seattle: U of Washington P, 1968): 117-118.

³Dean R. Esslinger, "American German and Irish Attitudes Toward Neutrality, 1914-1917: A Study of Catholic Minorities," Catholic Historical Review July 1967: 202. Cuddy contends that the Redmond incident and the executions following the Rising turned most Irish-Americans against Britain. Edward Cuddy, "Irish-American Propagandists and American Neutrality, 1914-1917," Mid-America October 1967: 254, 259. Cummins concludes that Irish-Americans were unanimous in their hope for England's defeat in the War. C.C. Cummins, Indiana Public Opinion and the World War, (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1945) 56-57.

⁴Wittke, Irish in America 276. Leslie, Irish Issue, 179. Link concludes that the majority of rank and file Irish--especially those in New York City--were anti-Ally because of their hatred of Britain. Link, Struggle for Neutrality 22. John C. Crighton, Missouri and the World War 1914-1917 (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1947) 210.

⁵Jamison 413-417. One contemporary observer suggests that opinions "varied enormously." Leslie 177-178. Cuddy concludes that Irish-American opinion regarding the War was "difficult to assess." Cuddy, "Irish-American Propagandists" 273.

⁶Geoffrey Butler, Department of Information dispatch, "The Catholic Question in the United States," 15 Jan. 1918. Quoted in Hachey 51. Pat O'Donnell, a Chicago lawyer, offered this rationale at an Indianapolis Neutrality League gathering for his support for Germany: "Why am I at a German meeting? When the Irish were worn down and in despair after 700 years of adversity, it was German professors, Teutons of the north, who came to teach in our universities and lift us up. And as the Teuton came to me in my day of despair, I go

to him in his hour of need." "Indianapolis Holds Meeting," Gaelic-American 20 Feb. 1915: 7.

⁷The Irish secular press in America was overwhelmingly anti-Britain. Esslinger's study of Catholic opinion in the mid-west found that the vast majority of Catholic newspapers, most of which had Irish-American editors, were pro-German. Most Catholics in the Mid-west were of Irish or German descent. Esslinger 194-216. Cummins came to the same conclusion in his study of Indiana. Cummins 65. See also Link, Struggle for Neutrality 87. In New York, only the Tablet, the diocesan paper of Brooklyn, consistingly favored the Allies.

⁸Cuddy, "Irish-American Proagandists," 274.

⁹These papers, all staunchly nationalist (and short-lived), sought to exploit the War to gain support for Irish independence. New titles included the Irish Voice of Chicago, the Irish Review of Los Angeles, and the Irish Press of Philadelphia. Wittke, The Irish in America 279-280.

¹⁰Leslie, an associate editor of New York City's Ireland (one of two Irish-American papers that supported Britain prior to the U.S. declaration of war), argues: "The Irish-American press must largely be disgarded as an indicator of opinion of the Irish in America before or after the entry of America into the war." Leslie 181. Ireland, it is important to note, attracted little support and failed after 16 months. Buckley also suggests that the "general Irish community" could not accept the pro-German stance of the Irish-American press. Buckley argues that by Spring 1916, the pro-German positions of the Irish-American press had succeeded in alienating many of the New York Irish. Buckley 36, 48.

¹¹Wittke, Irish in America 273.

¹²This observation, often-quoted in the Irish-American press, is attributed to Daniel O'Connell, "the Liberator," who achieved emancipation for Ireland's Catholics in the early 19th century through constitutional methods. Editorial, Irish World 11 March 1916: 4.

¹³"Redmond, Traitor to Ireland," editorial, Gaelic-American 8 Aug. 1914: 4.

¹⁴The Gaelic-American insisted that Germany's triumph was coming "as surely as the sun will rise tomorrow." "Irish Settlement," editorial, Gaelic-American 3 June 1916: 4. See also "Perfidious Suggestion," editorial, Gaelic-

American 3 Oct. 1914: 4. "England Fears Ireland," editorial, Gaelic-American 12 Feb. 1916: 4.

¹⁵"Carson and Cambell," editorial, Gaelic-American 12 June 1915: 4. The Irish World hoped that the liberation of Poland would preface the liberation of Ireland by Germany and called upon Germany to explicitly state its support for an independent Ireland. "After Redeemed Poland, What?" editorial, Irish World 23 Sept. 1916: 4.

¹⁶"Irish Race Convention," editorial, Irish World 11 March 1916: 4.

¹⁷"Help, Cassius, or Ireland Sinks," editorial, Irish World 23 Sept. 1916: 4.

¹⁸"What is Germany's Attitude Toward England?" editorial, Irish World 23 Sept. 1916: 4. The Gaelic-American, in part to counter suggestions that the Dublin Rising was inspired by Germany, also insisted that Irish support for Germany was a matter of pragmatism: "It is Ireland's interest that Germany win the war and it is Germany's interest that Ireland should be a free and independent nation. This and this alone is the basis of the German-Irish alliance." "Ireland Fighting for Freedom," editorial, Gaelic-American 29 April 1916: 4.

¹⁹Tansill claims that 150,000 Irishmen were in the War by Oct. 1915. Tansill 164.

²⁰"Conscription," editorial, Irish World 16 Dec. 1916: 4.

²¹"Shall Ireland Be Left to Die," Irish World 13 Jan. 1917: 4.

²²"Irishmen Put At Front And Slaughtered," Gaelic-American 12 June 1915: 1. The Gaelic-American suggested that captured Irish troops would form the nucleus of an Irish Brigade within the German army. "Scots and Irish Slaughtered," editorial, Gaelic-American 31 Oct. 1914: 4. Sir Roger Casement was unsuccessful in his attempts to form such a brigade in 1915 and 1916 in Germany. Captured Irish troops refused to cooperate.

²³Editorial, Gaelic-American 25 Aug. 1917: 4. Approximately 150,000 British soldiers manned garrisons around Ireland in 1914.

²⁴"To Slaughter Irish People," editorial, Gaelic-American 7 Sept. 1915: 4.

²⁵German-Americans and Irish-Americans forged an alliance in 1907 to combat the resurgence in Anglo-Saxonism--specifically calls for immigration restrictions and foreign entanglements (a euphemism for Anglo-American rapprochement). Cuddy, National Isolation 41.

²⁶Irish organizations formed Neutrality Leagues in Philadelphia, Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Louis. Child 52. In June 1914, the United Irish Societies joined forces with the Socialist Party, the German Catholic Federation and others to form the Friends of Peace, a pacifist organization. Child 76.

²⁷"Germans and Irish Meet Over War," San Francisco Examiner 18 Dec. 1914: 6.

²⁸"Call Redmond Traitor," New York Times 10 Aug. 1914: 10.

²⁹The American Truth Society was founded in 1912 to lobby against the proposed "100 Years of Peace" celebration which was planned to promote the Anglo/American rapprochement.

³⁰"Fiction of Our Strict Neutrality," editorial, San Francisco Examiner 19 Nov. 1914: 16.

³¹John G. Doyle of the U.I.L. argued that John Devoy of the Gaelic-American did not represent Irish-American opinion and that affiliation with German-American societies posed a "danger to good American citizenship and to single-hearted devotion to the interests of this country." "Irish League Has No German Affiliation," New York Times 11 Nov. 1914: 7.

³²Cuddy, Irish-America 54. Wittke, German Language Press 277.

³³"Imperiling American Interests," editorial, Irish World 2 Oct. 1915. "English Piracy," editorial, Irish World 27 Oct. 1915: 4.

³⁴"England's Intrigues Exposed," editorial, Irish World 21 Feb. 1914: 4.

³⁵Leader 3 Oct. 1914: 1. The stories of German atrocities in Belgium were based upon a report compiled by a committee under the leadership of Lord Bryce, former British ambassador to the United States. The Bryce report, which Knightley calls "one of the most successful propaganda efforts in the war," was translated into 30 languages. A 1922 Belgian enquiry, however, "failed to corroborate a single major allegation" of German atrocities in Belgium.

Knightley 83-84.

³⁶For example, the Leader reprinted a translation of a story from Norddeutsche Allegmeigne Zeitung alleging that Britain planned the war. "England's Pact With Belgium," Leader 23 Jan. 1915: 1.

³⁷"New War Publications," Gaelic-American 3 Oct. 1914: 7.

³⁸Knightley 121.

³⁹Cuddy, Irish-America and National Isolation 67. Britain severed all German trans-Atlantic cables in August 1914. Child 23. Buckley 24. An estimated 75% of dispatches written by American correspondents in central Europe were censored by the British. Buckley 25.

⁴⁰Sir Gilbert Parker, chief of British propaganda in the U.S. until February 1917, wrote in the March, 1918 issue of Harper's Magazine about the extent of British efforts to mold American opinion. His staff supplied newspapers in the smaller states with a weekly review and comment on the conduct of the War. "We advised and stimulated many people to write articles; we utilized the friendly services and assistance of confidential friends. . . . Besides an immense correspondence with individuals, we had our documents and literature sent to great numbers of public libraries, Y.M.C.A. societies, universities, colleges, historical societies, clubs and newspapers." Quoted in Terrence St. John Gaffney, Breaking the Silence (New York: Liveright, 1930) 9. See also Sanders 169.

⁴¹Parker recalled: "We advised and stimulated many people to write articles; we utilized the friendly services and assistance of confidential friend; we had reports from important Americans constantly . . . beginning with university and college professors, and scientific men, and running through all the ranges of population. We asked aour friends and correspondents to arrange for speeches, debates, and lectures by American citizens, but we did not encourage Britishers to go to America and preach the doctrine of entrance into the war. Quoted in Gaffney 9. James Squires suggests that German propaganda was too open and obvious and lacked the tact and finesse of British propaganda. German methods were consequently viewed with suspicion by most Americans, according to Squires. James D. Squires, British Propaganda at Home and in the United States from 1914 to 1917 (Cambridge: Harvard UP) 45.

⁴²Sanders 172.

⁴³Quoted in Sanders 171.

⁴⁴Knightsley 122. The British Information Bureau was established as an overt agency in February 1917, just prior to the U.S. declaration of war. Sanders 185.

⁴⁵"Plea for Fair Play," Leader 5 Sept. 1915: 1.

⁴⁶"War Causes," editorial, Irish World 8 Aug. 1914: 4.

⁴⁷"Germany and the English," editorial, Gaelic-American 5 Sept. 1914: 4. The Hearst papers had a similar analysis of the influence of British propaganda and warned of Britain's monopoly over news emanating from Europe. "England has controlled the news of the world for more than a century. It has been her greatest diplomatic weapon. . . . the myth of British fair play." "How Britain Makes and Unmakes National Reputations," editorial San Francisco Examiner 15 Dec. 1914: 18.

⁴⁸Cuddy, Irish-America and National Isolation 68. The New York Times and the New York World had strong British connections. Both papers covered Europe from London and gave a British perspective to the news. The chief, Ernest Marshall, and most of the staff of the Times' London bureau were Englishmen. Fred W. White, the Times' correspondent in Berlin also worked for Lord Northcliffe's Daily Mail. Most of the staff members of the New York World's London staff was also English. Peterson, Propaganda 6. Pomeroy Burton, former news editor for the New York World, was general manager of the Northcliffe chain. He was dispatched to the U.S. in 1917 to assess British propaganda needs. Sanders 187.

⁴⁹"Interfering With the Liberty of the American Press," editorial, Irish World 21 Oct. 1916: 4. The Hearst papers were banned from use of the trans-Atlantic cable on 11 Oct. 1916. They were banned from Canada on 8 Nov. 1916. Swanberg 301.

⁵⁰"Irish Join Germans to Sway Sentiment," New York Times 18 Dec. 1914: 1.

⁵¹"Newspapers Conspire to Provoke Riot," Gaelic-American 26 Dec. 1914: 1. A letter to the New York Times also disputed that paper's account of the rally. Matthias Harford, Irish National Volunteer Committee, "Did Play National Anthem, letter-to-the-editor, New York Times 19 Dec. 1914: 12.

⁵²Henry R. May, The End of Innocence (New York: Knopf, 1959) 370.

⁵³Teddy Roosevelt, in a speech in St. Louis, argued that immigrant groups must assimilate. It was "moral treason" to maintain separate identities. "I stand against every form of hyphenated Americanism . . . [especially] when it represents an effort to form political parties along racial lines to bring pressure to bear . . . not for American purposes, but in the interest of some group of voters of a certain national origin, or of the country from which they or their fathers come from. . . . If some citizens band together as German-Americans or Irish-Americans, then after a while others are certain to band together as English-Americans or Scandanavian-Americans . . . against the interests of straight-out American citizenship. . . . [This would] bring into our country the bitter old world rivalries and jealousies and hatreds." "Hyphenated Intrigues Scored by Roosevelt," San Francisco Examiner 1 June 1916: 6.

⁵⁴George Creel, "Hopes of the Hyphenated," Century (Jan. 1916): 350.

⁵⁵Theodore Roosevelt, "What 'Americanism' Means," Forum (April 1894): 202.

⁵⁶See Woodrow Wilson, History of the American People, (New York: Harper, 1902). Cited in Alexander De Conde, Ethnicity, Race and American Foreign Policy (Boston: Northeastern UP: 1992) 78-79.

⁵⁷Joseph P. Tumulty, Wilson's personal secretary, was the President's only close Irish-American associate.

⁵⁸Buckley 86.

⁵⁹The occasion was the dedication of a memorial to Irish-born Revolutionary War hero, John Barry.

⁶⁰"Hyphenated Americans" were defined by one letter writer to the New York Times as "persons who legally owe allegiance to the United States but who give their allegiance mostly to some other country. The only persons distinguished by the hyphen are German-Americans and Irish-Americans." "Hyphenated Americans," letter-to-the-editor, New York Times 3 Feb. 1915: 10.

⁶¹Quoted in Frederick Leubke, Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War One (Dekalb: Northern Illinois P, 1974) 140. See also Leubke 140-142, and San Francisco Examiner 11 May 1915: 1.

⁶²Quoted in "Hazing the Hyphenate," editorial, New York Times 13 Oct. 1915: 14.

⁶³"Roosevelt Sees Peril to Nation in Hyphenates," New York American 13 Oct. 1915: 3. See also "Roosevelt Brands Hyphen a Symbol of Treason," New York World 13 Oct. 1915: 1.

⁶⁴Child 87.

⁶⁵Alexander DeConde, Ethnicity, Race and American Foreign Policy (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1992): 83.

⁶⁶"America First," editorial, New York World 13 Oct. 1915: 8. "Hazing the Hyphenates," editorial, New York Times 13 Oct. 1915: 14.

⁶⁷"Hazing the Hyphenate," editorial, New York Times 13 Oct. 1915: 14.

⁶⁸Quoted in Esslinger 211.

⁶⁹"Demagogue," editorial, 11 March 1916: 4; "England Running U.S.," editorial, 27 Nov. 1915: 4; Gaelic-American.

⁷⁰Editorial, Gaelic-American 20 Feb. 1915: 4.

⁷¹"Tribune Draws the Sword," editorial, Gaelic-American 12 June 1915: 4.

⁷²"Loyalty of Hyphenated Americans," Irish World 12 Feb. 1916: 2.

⁷³"Wave of Religious Bigotry," "Revival of Know-Nothingism," Irish World 30 Oct. 1915: 3. "History's Repitition," editorial, Leader 30 Oct. 1915: 4.

⁷⁴"Heneyism," editorial, Leader 25 Dec. 1915: 4.

⁷⁵"The Reason," editorial, Western Watchman 15 March 1917: 10.

⁷⁶Luebke 145.

⁷⁷The Providence Journal specialized in such stories. The New York Times Index for October-December 1915 devotes five pages to reports of conspiracies and plots. Child 88.

⁷⁸"Eminent Citizens Join Patriotic Band," New York Times 17 Oct. 1915: 1.

⁷⁹"Crush the Hyphen-Naturalized Citizens in Patriotic Organization," New York Times 7 Dec. 1915: 3.

⁸⁰Cited in Esslinger 195.

⁸¹Esslinger 205. The Hearst papers continued to support neutrality, claiming that the Lusitania incident proved that the U.S. needed its own navy and that neither side in the War could be trusted. "Lesson of Lusitania," editorial, San Francisco Examiner 8 May 1915: 22.

⁸²"Churchill's Plea False," editorial, Gaelic-American 15 May 1915: 4.

⁸³"Lusitania Was Floating Arsenal," Gaelic-American 15 May 1915: 1. This analysis of the Lusitania was written by John Devoy for and at the request of the Illinois Staats Zeitung.

⁸⁴"Churchill's Plea False," editorial, Gaelic-American 15 May 1915: 4.

⁸⁵"Lusitania's Victims Warned," editorial, Leader 15 May 1915: 1.

⁸⁶"Sinking the Lusitania," editorial, Irish World 15 May 1915: 4.

⁸⁷"Murder Most Foul," editorial, 12 June 1915: 4; "Freedom of the Seas," 10 July 1915: 2; "Let Us Have Peace," 10 July 1915: 2; Irish World.

⁸⁸"Bryan's Resignation," editorial, Gaelic-American 12 June 1915: 4.

⁸⁹"Prophets and Prize Courts," editorial, Leader 27 Nov. 1915: 4.

⁹⁰"Germans To Sway America," New York Times 8 Dec. 1915: 2.

⁹¹"How Loyal Is Ireland?" Literary Digest 31 July 1915: 201. The survey cited the Leader, the Irish World, the Irish Voice of Chicago, the Irish Standard of Minneapolis, and the Butte Independent.

⁹²"A Vancouver Chump," editorial, Leader 15 May 1915: 4.

⁹³"Real Neutrality Makes For Peace," editorial, San Francisco Examiner 29 July 1915: 18. The Examiner's position on neutrality echoed that of the Irish papers. It criticized U.S. arms sales, demanded rights for neutral shipping, and condemned British seizure of U.S. mail. See "Protest Against Shipment of Arms to Europe," 15 Aug. 1915: 1; "Our Rights on Seas Must Be Protected," editorial, 6 Aug. 1915: 19; "We Might Try a Humble Appeal to Our Master's

Gratitude," editorial, 21 July 1916: 20.

⁹⁴"Course of War," editorial, Gaelic-American 23 Sept. 1916: 4.

⁹⁵Editorial cartoon, Irish World 12 June 1915: 1.

⁹⁶"Need Of A New Declaration Of Independence," editorial, Irish World 10 July 1915: 4.

⁹⁷"Our Master England," editorial, Leader 21 Oct. 1916: 4.

⁹⁸The vote was 78 to 5 in favor.

⁹⁹"Our Break With Germany," editorial, 10 Feb. 1917: 4; "War or Peace," editorial, 10 March 1917: 4; Irish World.

¹⁰⁰"Break With Germany," editorial, Irish World 10 Feb. 1917: 4.

¹⁰¹"Decidedly Un-American," editorial, Western Watchman 15 Feb. 1917: 10.

¹⁰²"Victory for English Propaganda in America," editorial, Gaelic-American 10 Feb. 1917: 4.

¹⁰³James Conwell, editor, "For Flag For Home For Country," Chicago Citizen 9 Feb. 1917: 1.

¹⁰⁴"Trying to German-Americans," editorial, Chicago Citizen 9 Feb. 1917: 4.

¹⁰⁵"Peace or War," editorial, Leader 10 Feb. 1917: 4.

¹⁰⁶"A New Plot," editorial, Leader 3 March 1917: 4.

¹⁰⁷"War?" editorial, Leader 3 March 1917: 4.

¹⁰⁸"Kill Disloyalty, Says Wilson, 'Ugly' Minority Under Attack, San Francisco Examiner 15 June 1916: 5. The Committee on Public Information distributed seven million copies of the speech nationwide. Luebke 234-235.

¹⁰⁹Editorial, Gaelic-American 24 June 1916: 4.

¹¹⁰"Citizens, Let Us Make This Campaign Solely an American Campaign," editorial, San Francisco Examiner 21 June 1916: 24.

¹¹¹Quoted in Child 148. The Democrats also incorporated an anti-hyphen plank into the party platform.

DeConde 85.

¹¹²"We Americans Should Be Nothing But Americans," editorial, New York American 19 Sept. 1916: 18. See also San Francisco Examiner 27 Sept. 1916: 20.

¹¹³"Wilson Wants No Disloyal Vote Cast On His Side," New York Times 30 Sept. 1916: 1. This was not O'Leary's first telegram to Wilson after a primary election. In Nov. 1915, O'Leary, sent a telegram to the President following the defeat of a pro-British Republican candidate in the Bronx. O'Leary accused Wilson of injecting the hyphen into the Presidential and Congressional elections. O'Leary also informed Wilson that the American Truth Society, of which O'Leary was president, would oppose all pro-British candidates in the 1916 campaign. "Hyphenates Enter American Politics," New York Times 11 Nov. 1915: 5. The F.O.I.F. hailed Martines's primary win as a victory over "sinister pro-England interests." Martine Defeated Wescott by 20,000," New York American 30 Sept. 1916: 1.

¹¹⁴"Wilson Wants no Disloyal Votes on His Side," New York Times 30 Sept. 1916: 1. See also Child 149.

¹¹⁵Of the major mainstream papers in New York City, only the New York American defended O'Leary. A Literary Digest survey of daily newspapers found no sympathy for O'Leary among the mainstream daily press. "The President and the Hyphen," Literary Digest (14 Oct. 1916): 935.

¹¹⁶Joseph P. Tumulty, Wilson's secretary, said that the telegram exchange marked a turning point in the Wilson campaign. Buckley 96.

¹¹⁷Quoted in "The President and the Hyphen," Literary Digest (14 Oct. 1916); 935.

¹¹⁸"Wilson Rouses Huge Protest," New York American 1 Oct. 1916: 1. The ATS later produced and distributed a pamphlet in defense of O'Leary. Buckley 96-97.

¹¹⁹"Political Opposition to the President Must Never be Construed as Treason to the U.S.," San Francisco Examiner 1 Oct. 1916: 1.

¹²⁰"German Campaign on Wilson Begins," New York Times 6 Oct. 1916: 3.

¹²¹"Political Opposition of President Must Never be Construed as Treason to U.S.," editorial, San Francisco Examiner 1 Oct. 1916: 1.

¹²²"Hyphens Hurlled Anew by Each Side," San Francisco Examiner 24 Oct. 1916: 1.

¹²³Editorial, New York Times 24 Oct. 1916: 12.

¹²⁴"Alien Aid at Polls Spurned by Hughes," San Francisco Examiner 25 Oct. 1916: 1. The Democratic National Committee issued a statement claiming that in a secret deal Hughes had received the "unqualified support" of an organization "pledged to the destruction of Anglo-Saxon influence in America" and the "open vilification of President Wilson as typified by the notorious O'Leary telegram." New York Times 23, 24 Oct. 1916: 1.

¹²⁵"Hyphen Issue is not a Genuine Issue, editorial, San Francisco Examiner 2 Nov. 1916: 18.

¹²⁶"Wilson Bitterly Hates the Irish," editorial, Gaelic-American 7 Oct. 1916: 4.

¹²⁷Editorial, Leader 11 March 1916: 4. "England Wants Wilson," editorial, Leader 4 Nov. 1916. "The Local Indictments," editorial, Leader 12 Feb. 1916: 4.

¹²⁸"Too Much Wilson," editorial, Leader 4 Nov. 1916: 4.

¹²⁹Wilson may have benefitted from a backlash against Roosevelt's more vehement attacks on hyphens. DeConde 86.

¹³⁰The evidence suggests that traditional loyalty to the Democratic party and machine politics were more important to Irish voters than Wilson's anti-Irish attitudes. Buckley contends that the Irish gave "wholesale but reluctant support to Wilson" over Charles Evans Hughes, his Republican opponent in the 1916 election. Buckley 100. Lichtman, in his regression analysis of 1916-1932 elections, concludes that "ethnic issues" may have cut into Irish support for Wilson in the 1916 election. Allan J. Lichtman, Prejudice and Old Politics: The Presidential Election of 1928 (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1979): 103.

¹³¹"Wilson Wins Pyrric Victory," Gaelic-American 18 Nov. 1916: 1. Devoy of the Gaelic-American attributed Wilson's win in part to post-colonial inferiority complex of some Irish-American politicians "who love to be lorded over and insulted by the very superior English." Gaelic-American 18 Nov. 1916: 8.

¹³²Child concludes that British propaganda, not necessarily produced directly by the British government, contributed to the anti-Irish, anti-German attitude of the mainstream press during the 1916 election. "Much of the

campaign of vituperation was of avowedly British origin." Child 86.

¹³³Esslinger concludes that the Catholic papers of the Midwest, the vast majority of which had Irish editors, were indistinguishable from other papers after April 1917. Esslinger 200-201. Buckley makes a similar observation concerning the Catholic press of New York. Buckley 121.

¹³⁴"Breaking Constitutional Safeguards," editorial, Irish World 7 April 1917: 4.

¹³⁵"America Above All Lands," editorial, Irish World 14 April 1917: 4.

¹³⁶Editorial, Gaelic-American 7 April 1917: 4.

¹³⁷Editorial, Gaelic-American 2 June 1917: 4.

¹³⁸"Lesson for Ireland," editorial, Leader 7 April 1917: 4.

¹³⁹"Our King Shall Fight Our Battles," editorial, Leader 7 April 1917: 1.

¹⁴⁰In later editions, the editorial was replaced by an inoffensive article about Home Rule. Joseph S. Brusher, Consecrated Thunderbolt: Father Yorke of San Francisco, (Hawthorne: Wagner 1973) 179-180.

¹⁴¹"Legality of Draft," editorial, Leader 11 Aug. 1917: 4. "20,000 Sent to France," editorial, 5 May 1917: 4; "Truth About War," editorial, 2 June 1917: 4; Irish World. Editorial, Gaelic-American 28 July 1917: 4. The New York American expressed a similar attitude regarding the participation of American troops. The American insisted that British subjects in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and the "five hundred thousand English slackers in the United States" should be conscripted before America sent "her beardless boys across the sea to be sacrificed for England's cause." "We Will Send Our Boys to Fight for England Only When England Has Rallied All Her Own," editorial, New York American 16 June 1917: 20.

¹⁴²"Modern Know Nothingism," editorial, Irish World 30 June 1917: 4.

¹⁴³"Beware Profiteers," editorial, 15 Aug. 1917: 4; "Preston's Comeback," editorial, Leader 18 Aug. 1917: 4. The Leader also continued to condemn "Anglo-Americanism" and to insist that the real menace to America was not German militarism, but English navalism. "Anglo-Americanism,"

editorial Leader 29 Sept. 1917: 4.

¹⁴⁴"Ireland's Hour," editorial, Western Watchman 2 May 1917: 10.

¹⁴⁵"Please Excuse Us," editorial, Western Watchman 29 June 1917: 10.

¹⁴⁶Editorial, Western Watchman 22 June 1917: 10.

¹⁴⁷The Citizen, for example, complained of British recruitment posters in the U.S. that urged British subjects to enlist in the British rather than the American army. The paper suggested that most Britons in the U.S. refused to become American citizens in order to avoid military service (non-citizens could not be drafted). "While our American boys are taken from their homes and employment and are being marched off into the teeth of war, it is not just . . . that their jobs should go wholesale to immune, skulking, cowardly aliens of any nationality . . . Anglo-Saxon slackers should be rounded up and herded across the Canadian border. . . ." "Fight Under Your Own Flag," editorial, Chicago Citizen 24 Aug. 1917: 4.

¹⁴⁸Editorial, Gaelic-American 28 July 1917: 4.

¹⁴⁹"Wheel Has Turned for Ireland," editorial, Gaelic-American 28 July 1917: 4.

¹⁵⁰Chicago Citizen 28 Dec. 1917: 4.

¹⁵¹"Sons of Erin True to Cause of U.S.," Chicago Citizen 21 Sept. 1917: 1.

¹⁵²"Another 'Bray' From Bray," editorial, Chicago Citizen 7 Sept. 1917: 4.

¹⁵³"Ungrateful Americans," editorial, Western Watchman 10 Aug. 1917: 4.

¹⁵⁴Editorial, Western Watchman 28 Sept. 1917: 10.

¹⁵⁵"America First," editorial, Chicago Citizen 28 Sept. 1917: 4. In a page-one account in the Citizen, Quinn O'Brien, a Chicago lawyer, articulated the attitudes of Chicago's American-born Irish elites. O'Brien noted that most were proud of the Irish pedigree, but were "prouder far of our American birth and citizenship. . . . Whatever may have been our respective predilections and prejudices before our nation was drawn into this war, we now view all questions through but one lens . . . of unmixed Americanism. Germany is our fierce treacherous foe." "Chicago Lawyer

Pays Envoy Tribute," Chicago Citizen 9 Nov. 1917: 1.

¹⁵⁶"Don't Embarrass Government," editorial, Chicago Citizen 14 Sept. 1917: 4.

¹⁵⁷"Don't Obstruct President," Chicago Citizen 14 Sept. 1917: 3.

¹⁵⁸Editorial, Gaelic-American 18 Aug. 1917: 4.

CHAPTER VI

THE TREASONOUS IRISH: VIGILANTES, CONSPIRACIES AND THE MAINSTREAM PRESS

Introduction

Following America's entry into the War, the character of public discourse concerning anti-British agitation shifted from criticism to confrontation and finally, to coercion. The anti-hyphen campaign of 1915 and the presidential election of 1916 had branded the Irish as one of the most potentially disloyal elements in the nation. Demands for conformity to a crabbed conception of American patriotism escalated. So too did public suspicion of those Irish-Americans who refused to abandon their advocacy of Ireland's independence. The mainstream press fed upon and inflamed a national mood of suspicion by giving credence to rumors of pro-German plots and by equating anti-British exhortations with treason to the United States.

In the latter months of 1917--and well into 1918-- the mainstream press gave prominent coverage to a series of alleged conspiracies involving Irish-Americans. Even the Hearst papers--normally wary of British intrigue--gave uncritical coverage to the wildest of reports emanating from London. The New York Times cheered on a vigilante campaign which drove Irish soap-box orators from the streets of

Manhattan. In the New York mayoral race, mainstream papers made the names of certain Irish editors and nationalist leaders synonymous with sedition.

The mainstream press endorsed vigilantism, disseminated British propaganda, and typecast Irish-Americans as purveyors of treason despite the absence of convincing evidence. Powerful daily newspapers thus contributed to a national climate of coercion that set the stage for and legitimized the suppression of the Irish-American press.

Vigilantism and Spy Hysteria

In early 1917, as the United States moved inexorably towards war with Germany, scores of local and regional vigilante organizations stirred into action from Honolulu to Hartford. Often sanctioned though seldom supervised by government agencies, groups like the Guardians of Liberty, the Anti-Yellow Dog League, the Knights of Liberty, the Boy Spies of America, the Sedition Slammers and the American Protective League, to name but a few, scoured the nation for signs of sedition and sabotage.¹ Draft dodgers and supposed spies were the initial targets, but socialists, labor radicals and the foreign-born were soon swept into the web of the self-proclaimed protectors of the American way.²

The American Protective League (APL) quickly rose above the pack to become the largest corps of sleuths in the nation's history--a kind of citizen's auxiliary to the Department of Justice. The APL soon established units in

cities with large foreign-born populations. By the time Congress declared war in April, the APL had 100 branches. Within a month, nearly 1,000,000 citizens had applied for membership in the APL. By November 1917, the APL had 1200 branches with upwards of 260,000 undercover agents in cities, towns and hamlets across America.³

Vigilante groups such as the APL reserved a special rancor for the foreign-born. The chief APL inspector in Minnesota, for example, urged that foreigners be kept from "colonizing" large cities. He proposed a kind of ethnic cleansing, suggesting that municipalities emulate villages that had banished foreigners and remained "American."⁴

The Justice Department made several half-hearted attempts to restrict the APL to purely war-related activities.⁵ But internal dissension at the federal level and public support for "excesses in the name of patriotism" overwhelmed efforts at restraint.⁶ John Lord O'Brian, who headed the Justice Department's War Emergency Division, spoke of

. . . immense pressure brought to bear throughout the war upon the Department of Justice in all parts of the country for indiscriminate prosecution demanded in behalf of a policy of wholesale repression and restraint of public opinion.⁷

The Justice Department was forced to compete with state defense councils, other federal departments and a myriad of vigilante organizations.⁸ In the public consciousness, spies and saboteurs were abroad in the land and the foreign-

born were prime suspects. War fever had resurrected and unleashed a virulent form of nativism. O'Brian recalled:

No other one cause contributed so much to the oppression of innocent men as the systematic and indiscriminate agitation against what was claimed to be an all pervasive system of German espionage.⁹

The vigilante groups which monitored Irish-American activities often wielded considerable influence. In 1917, the American Defense Society (A.D.S.)--an organization founded by Teddy Roosevelt--disrupted street meetings in Boston and New York City organized by Irish-Americans in support of the anti-colonial struggle in Ireland. ADS agitation forced the New York City Board of Magistrates to outlaw such public meetings for the duration of the war.¹⁰ Vigilante activity against the Irish was not limited to the East Coast. In June 1917, vigilantes and police attacked an Irish anti-war parade in Butte, Montana.¹¹

Vigilantism and the Mainstream Press

The mainstream daily press did little to temper the rising public paranoia. Instead of serving as voices of reason and restraint, newspapers across the nation encouraged vigilantism and spy hysteria. The Providence Journal specialized in stories about spies and conspiracies. These reports gained wide currency and were often reprinted in the New York Times despite the fact that most were "pure and unadulterated fabrications," as Attorney General Thomas Gregory later recalled.¹² The New York Times Index for 1917

and 1918 contains page after page of reports devoted to sedition, spies and conspiracies. Yet not a single spy was convicted in the U.S. after mid-1917.¹³

Press coverage of the lynching of Frank Little in August 1917, was emblematic of the press' willingness to excuse if not sanction mob violence. Little, an anti-war agitator and organizer for the Industrial Workers of the World, was castrated and hanged from a railroad trestle outside Butte, Montana, by local vigilantes. A Literary Digest survey of newspaper accounts reported widespread editorial support for the lynching as a means of combating disloyalty.¹⁴ The Boston Transcript observed:

. . . millions of people who, while sternly reprehending such proceedings as the lynching of members of that antipatriotic society, will nevertheless be glad, in their hearts, that Montana did it in the case of Little.¹⁵

The Chicago Tribune stated: "The howls of Industrial Workers of the World over the lynching of Little will find no echo in any reasonable heart."¹⁶ Literary Digest noted that although many newspapers condemned the hanging, others were willing to forgive the lynchers' "excess patriotism." Some papers in effect blamed the victim for the crime by attributing the lynching to the government's unwillingness to suppress dissent.¹⁷

The press continued to rail against sedition throughout the remainder of 1917. Teddy Roosevelt's "unhung traitors" were widely denounced in press accounts. Editors condemned

the "quasi-sedition" of certain German-American and Irish-American newspapers.

Rumor and innuendo fed the vigilante fever. Important public figures sanctioned it with their moral authority. Former Secretary of State Elihu Root, upon his return from a trip to Russia, was widely quoted as saying that there were men walking the streets of America ". . . who ought to be taken out at sunrise and shot for treason."¹⁸ In a speech before 8,000 in San Francisco, former ambassador to Britain, James W. Gerard, made this observation regarding the loyalty of Wisconsin Senator Robert LaFollette, one of six U.S. senators who voted against the War:

I do not agree with what my friend Teddy Roosevelt says about [LaFollette] . . . that if he lived in Germany he would be sent to digging a trench. My friend Teddy is wrong. If this gentleman lived in Germany he would not be digging a trench. He would be filling one.¹⁹

One rumor proved so tenacious that the White House was forced to issue a statement denying reports that Joseph Tumulty, President Wilson's personal secretary and an Irish-American, had been arrested and sent to Fort Leavenworth for being a German spy.²⁰

The New York Times, commenting just after the new year on the lack of executions, called for stronger laws to allow summary execution of "unpunished spies."²¹ A few weeks later the Times observed that "a few prompt hangings" would

"silence all individuals and organizations that raise their voices against the war."²²

The anti-sedition hysteria intensified in the spring of 1918. A San Francisco judge urged vigilantism to stifle seditious talk.²³ Complaints of disloyalty flooded into state councils of defense. Mobs of vigilantes prowled the countryside burning books, forcing the foreign-born to kiss the flag, and splashing yellow paint--the mark of the coward--upon the homes of those suspected of "disloyalty."²⁴ Scores of men and women were tarred and feathered in Colorado, Michigan, Oklahoma and Missouri.²⁵

The press fueled the flames of intolerance and violence. At the end of February the Literary Digest reported:

The extremely low mortality among German spies in America is considered very encouraging, by our observant editors, to their continued activity. No other country in the world, it is maintained, is so healthful and salubrious for persons of an occupation which in some lands is thought a bit hazardous or risky.²⁶

The Digest's weekly survey of opinion noted that editors continued to call for executions. The Syracuse Herald suggested that various stone and brick walls stood idle and available for use in the early morning hours, presumably for firing squads. The New York Evening Post observed:

A dead spy or two might act as a deterrent. An interned or incarcerated spy is a joke, and more than one is a national calamity.²⁷

The call for retribution was soon answered. Within days, a mob lynched a German-American coal miner in Collinsville, Illinois. Frederick Praeger, a socialist accused of treason for refusing to purchase a Liberty Bond, was dragged from his jail cell, forced to kiss the American flag, and strung up in an incident that garnered national attention.²⁸ While most newspapers condemned the lynching, they united--as they did following Little's murder--in blaming Congress for failing to pass stronger laws against disloyalty.²⁹

There were no similar demands for stronger laws to punish those responsible for mob violence.³⁰ The press, in fact, became a willing ally to factions within the executive branch of the federal government who used Praeger's murder to implement stronger anti-disloyalty legislation.³¹ A Literary Digest survey revealed that editors attributed mob violence to a lack of sufficient laws and weak courts, forcing citizens to take the law into their own hands.³² Two days after the lynching, the New York World quoted Postmaster General Burleson:

If Congress will not pass the necessary laws, then the American people will take matters into their own hands. . . . I am not at all surprised at the fate which befell Praeger.³³

It would be wrong to conclude that all mainstream newspapers fanned the hysteria with equal vigor. Following the Praeger murder, for example, the New York World attempted to refute some of the wildest rumors of sedition

and sabotage.³⁴ The San Francisco Examiner, for its part, gave prominent coverage to efforts to curtail the activities of a local vigilante group, the Knights of Liberty.³⁵ What is certain, however, is that much of the mainstream press contributed to a national mood of suspicion that also reverberated through press coverage of Irish-American support for the independence struggle in Ireland.

The Irish and the Mainstream Press

Prior to America's entry into the war, most Irish-Americans favored Germany over Great Britain or remained neutral.³⁶ Once America declared war, however, the overwhelming majority of Irish-Americans and Irish-American editors endorsed the war effort. That many if not most Irish-Americans continued to support Irish independence even as they proclaimed their loyalty to the United States was a fact not easily digested by the mainstream press.

President Wilson's rhetorical flights about liberty and self-determination as U.S. war objectives emboldened Irish-American lobbyists to demand a place for Ireland on the agenda. Petition drives and rallies, which had begun before America's entry into the War, gathered momentum throughout 1917 and 1918.

The New York Times was contemptuous of all talk of Irish independence. It labelled those who advocated the same--whether in Ireland or America--as Sinn Feiners and repeatedly dismissed the 1916 Easter Rebellion as "Sinn Fein

riots."³⁷ For the Times, Ireland would always remain an inseparable part of the British Empire. To suggest otherwise was tantamount to treason:

It is preposterous for Sinn Feiners to talk about a separate and wholly independent government. . . . only the wildest radicals think they want absolute independence.³⁸

A glance at the map is enough to show that Great Britain can never consent, unless she becomes impotent and ruined, to an independent Ireland.³⁹

Although less vociferous, the Chicago Tribune echoed those sentiments. The Tribune supported limited self-government for Ireland but dismissed independence as a "wild and visionary scheme" that was "no less reactionary" than the "designs of British Tories."⁴⁰

There is no desire in America that England should in any way lay herself open to treachery at the hands of misguided and fanatical impossibilists in Ireland. . . . There is very little patience here, and this emphatically includes responsible Irish-Americans, for Sinn Fein extremists. . . .⁴¹

Alone among the nation's mainstream dailies, the Hearst papers were early and stalwart advocates of Irish independence. When the United States entered the War, Hearst suggested that Irish freedom should be one of America's war aims--a position which mirrored that of the Irish-American press.⁴²

The New York Times often included reports of Irish-American rallies and conventions in stories about the arrest of alien enemies and German spies.⁴³ Editorial commentary regularly spilled over into news reports about Irish

meetings. A May 1918 news report characterized a meeting of the I.P.L. as a

. . . strange kind of gathering held at a time when Fifth Avenue was full of marching soldiers and when the whole city was celebrating the success of the Liberty Loan drive.⁴⁴

The same report suggested that one of the speeches delivered at the I.P.L. gathering was ". . . very near crossing the line that divides sedition from loyalty."⁴⁵

The Times attacked members of Congress who supported Irish independence. In January 1918, for example, Congresswoman Jeanette Rankin of Montana, who had voted against war, introduced a resolution endorsing Irish independence. The resolution requested that Ireland be included among those nations "for whose freedom we are fighting." In response, The Times called Rankin, the lone woman in Congress, "a pitiless [sic] example of emancipation:

Miss Rankin is ready to play the game of our enemies, foreign and domestic . . . to insult our loyal democratic comrades in the war, to act in harmony with German propagandists, the Sinn Feiners Here and in Ireland, Sinn Fein is our foe [Sinn Fein is] a contemptible organ of sedition.⁴⁶

The New York World was more evenhanded in its coverage of Irish-American activities. The World more often refrained from editorializing in its news reports about Irish-American activities. While the World questioned the loyalty of "a small number of persons who seek to make trouble for an ally of the U.S.," it also acknowledged

American sympathy for Ireland and noted Prime Minister Lloyd George's desire to produce good will among the American public by settling the Irish question.⁴⁷

The World blamed the ongoing crisis in Ireland on Britain's unwillingness to grant Home Rule.⁴⁸ To the New York Times, however, the failure of Home Rule was a direct consequence of the inability of the Irish to get along with each other.⁴⁹ The Times was so protective of British public opinion and so convinced of the pro-British sympathies of the American public that it once chastised the Washington correspondent of the London Times for reporting that many Americans would be upset if Britain failed to apply Wilson's principles of self-determination to Ireland. The New York Times complained that such reports painted a false picture of American public opinion. "Were the censors asleep?" the paper asked.⁵⁰

The New York Anti-Street Speech Campaign

By summer of 1917, New York City had become the center of an Friends of Irish Freedom (F.O.I.F.) campaign to keep the Irish issue before the public. The F.O.I.F. led a series of mass gatherings and street rallies at which protestations of devotion to the U.S. were matched in fervor only by exclamations of antipathy toward Great Britain. At a Terrace Garden meeting, John Moore, secretary of F.O.I.F., proclaimed, "We love America as much as we hate England, and it is impossible to love America more than that."⁵¹ The New

York Times interpreted such sentiments as evidence of disloyalty to the U.S. The Times condemned F.O.I.F. members as pro-German polemicists

. . . whose not unprofitable profession is to keep alive the ancient grievances of Ireland and to manufacture new ones.⁵²

Agitation peaked in August as F.O.I.F. sympathizers gathered almost nightly along Broadway to lambaste Britain and demand a hearing for Irish national aspirations. The street rallies soon captured the attention of the American Defense Society (A.D.S.). The New York Times turned its attention to the street rallies when a prominent A.D.S. member, writer Cleveland Moffett, was arrested (and later released) for heckling an F.O.I.F. speaker who compared Sir Roger Casement, the executed Irish leader, with George Washington and Benjamin Franklin.⁵³

The incident quickly evolved into a confrontation between supporters of free speech and those who argued that criticism of Britain should be silenced. The ADS demanded that street rallies in New York and other cities be outlawed.⁵⁴ In a letter to the New York Times, Teddy Roosevelt suggested that anyone who attacked an ally of the U.S. was a traitor. He also advocated government suppression of newspapers that criticized Britain.⁵⁵

For nearly two weeks, the New York Times gave prominent coverage to the controversy. The Times charged that German money financed the rallies and that the anti-British

rhetoric of the F.O.I.F. amounted to treason.⁵⁶ The Times argued that public speech was not free but was subject to standards and limits imposed by the will of the majority:

. . . people of America are free to say what they please, but it is only on condition that they do not please to say what too seriously offends the ears of their neighbors.⁵⁷

The paper urged that stern measures be taken against Irish street orators: "If Great Britain cannot or will not repress her traitors, we shall repress ours."⁵⁸ The New York American, by contrast, argued that free discussion was the cornerstone of the American democratic traditions:

The very essence of Americanism is the free right to differ in opinion, to speak freely. . . . full recognition of every citizen's sovereign right to a share in public discussion . . . is the fundamental basis of all our liberties. . . .⁵⁹

The New York World joined in condemning the street demonstrations. The World also leveled unsubstantiated charges of German involvement and accused both the F.O.I.F. and unnamed Irish-American newspapers of treason:

These organizations and newspapers are frankly disloyal to the United States. They preach sedition. They oppose the war policies of the Government. . . . They are morally, if not legally, guilty of treason. We have no doubt that much of this propaganda has been bought in the open market with German money.

The World, however, did not suggest suppression as a solution. Instead, it advocated counter-demonstrations: "It is as easy for patriots as for traitors to organize public meetings."⁶⁰

Hearst's New York American initially ignored the controversy surrounding soap-box orators. While the Times and the World were busy condemning Irish street speakers as traitors, the American was championing the New York 69th Regiment--the "Fighting Irish"--as symbols of patriotism.⁶¹

Demands for an end to street rallies soon had an effect. The Board of City Magistrates issued a directive curtailing public demonstrations and Mayor Mitchell ordered the police to act.⁶² On August 29, a force of 100 policemen supported by members of the A.D.S. broke up a crowd of 10,000 F.O.I.F. supporters in what the New York Times described as ". . . one of the wildest scenes that Broadway ever witnessed."⁶³

The F.O.I.F. tried to rally its forces on Broadway the following week. But no sooner had the Star Spangled Banner been played and the Declaration of Independence read than the police moved in and scattered the crowd of 4000.⁶⁴

That incident marked the end of F.O.I.F. street rallies. But it did not mark the end of campaign against street corner free speech. A New York judge advised the Grand Jury to indict those Irish speakers who spoke "contemptuously" of the President and Congress. The New York American labeled the judge's action "utterly abominable."⁶⁵

The New York Times complained that Irish political power in New York was weakening the enforcement of anti-soap

box provisions.⁶⁶ The Times called upon the governor to ". . . crush the heads of the serpents of sedition before they have become too numerous."⁶⁷ The A.D.S., for its part, announced a national campaign against soap-box orators and demanded even stronger laws in New York to require licensing and prior review in advance of any public speech--the A.D.S. complained that the New York policy punished public speakers only after the fact.⁶⁸

Irish Conspiracies

Reports of alleged German-Irish plots appeared regularly in the mainstream press throughout 1917 and 1918. These reports were often heavy with innuendo and thin on evidence.

In September, 1917, the so-called Bernstorff and von Igel revelations charged, among other things, that certain Irish-American leaders, including John Devoy, editor of the Gaelic-American, Jeremiah O'Leary, publisher of Bull, and Daniel Cohalan, New York Supreme Court justice and part owner of the Gaelic-American, sought German assistance in support of the 1916 Easter Rising. The revelations received page-one coverage in newspapers across the nation.⁶⁹

Few newspapers commented on the fact that the von Igel revelations dealt with events that took place well before America's entry into the War. And most were prepared to believe the worst. The San Francisco Chronicle concluded that Cohalan was a "pro-Kaiser conspirator."⁷⁰ The New York

Times noted that Viereck's Weekly, a prominent German-American newspaper, had supported Cohalan as a candidate for the U.S. Senate.⁷¹ The Literary Digest ran a summary of reports concerning the revelations under the headline "America Infested With German Spies."⁷² The Boston Transcript commented:

The time has come for the Irish societies to say under which flag they stand--whether with the country of their people's refuge . . . or whether with the Cohalans, Devoy's, and O'Leary's . . . the plotters against America's integrity and welfare.⁷³

Despite the absence of corroborating evidence, several New York newspapers called for Cohalan's removal from office.⁷⁴

The New York Times observed:

The thing needs no proof. . . . It makes no difference that some of the men who are engaged in this movement may be merely foolish or deluded and not in receipt of money from Wilhelmstrasse. There are others who are, and these dupes are merely their tools.⁷⁵

The alleged conspirators denied the charges. Justice Cohalan denied knowing von Igel and claimed he was the victim of a plot to sabotage the Irish cause. O'Leary also denied knowledge of or involvement in any sabotage plans.⁷⁶ Devoy called the accusations a "mixture of invention, suggestion and falsehood."⁷⁷

The release of the documents was timed to ensure maximum impact. The Justice Department had possession of the von Igel documents some 16 months before their release. The revelations--which dealt exclusively with events prior to America's entry into the War--were designed to discredit

the most vocal Irish-American critics of Great Britain at a time of increasing agitation in support of Irish independence.⁷⁸

There is no doubt that certain Irish leaders had contacts with representatives of the German government prior to the U.S. declaration of war. Cohalan and Devoy were clearly implicated in the von Igel papers. There is also little evidence that any U.S. laws were violated. The mere suggestion of German-Irish intrigue, however, was enough to tarnish Irish activists and editors with the taint of treason. The Chicago Citizen felt compelled to parade its loyalty, insisting that not even the activities of "a few politicians of our own race can injure it."⁷⁹

The von Igel revelations had another effect. Postmaster General Albert S. Burleson soon announced that the Post Office would take action against "treasonable" newspapers that questioned the truth of the revelations or "circulated matter for the purpose of arousing prejudice against . . . the nations now cooperating with us."⁸⁰

The New York Times gave prominent coverage to alleged Irish-American plots throughout the remainder of 1917. Based in part upon allegations made by Lloyd George in Britain, the Times claimed in October that plans for another German-inspired uprising--a second "Dublin riot"--had been uncovered in the U.S. and that the Secret Service was about to swoop down upon Sinn Fein conspirators.⁸¹ Reports

claimed that Secret Service documents--none of which were produced--contained proof of Sinn Fein collusion with Germany. The New York Times reported that Devoy and the Gaelic-American were under federal investigation.⁸² Devoy denied the existence of a plot, but the Times concluded that the unsubstantiated reports provided sufficient proof of treason:

As friends of Germany and enemies of England, Sinn Fein in Ireland and its abettors in the United States are necessarily enemies of the United States. They are doing all in their power to beat the United States whose cause cannot be separated from any of her associates in the war. . . . Sinn Fein is seeking and helping to make war on the United States. . . . [the] gravity of the crime calls for severe punishment.⁸³

The New York World, the New York American, the Chicago Tribune and the San Francisco Chronicle also devoted substantial coverage to the October plot and to the rumors of impending arrests.⁸⁴ These papers, however, did not draw the same editorial conclusions as the New York Times.

Two Irish nationalists, Dr. Daniel McCartan and Liam Mellows, were arrested in the U.S. during the height of the October revelations while enroute to Ireland. Press reports insinuated that the two were involved in German conspiracies. The charges proved groundless, however, and the two were soon released. The importance of the episode, according to Alden Jamison, lay in the fact that

. . . for several days the mainstream press carried stories of the arrests which, with no basis in fact whatsoever, linked Sinn Fein to German conspiracy. The American public was not so well informed about

the thinness of the evidence upon which the arrests were made.⁸⁵

In May 1918, another alleged conspiracy captured national attention when the British arrested 500 leaders of Sinn Fein in a sudden sweep across Ireland. The 500 were held without formal charges. But reports emanating from the British Press Bureau and reprinted in the New York Times, the Tribune, the Chronicle, the Examiner, the American and the called attention to yet another German plot.

The story, which came at the height of the conscription crisis in Ireland, received page one-coverage in each of the papers for several days.⁸⁶ It also came in the midst of a two-day F.O.I.F. convention in at the Central Opera House in New York City and quickly eclipsed F.O.I.F. efforts to petition Congress and the President on behalf of Ireland.⁸⁷

Reports charged that Sinn Fein members in the United States and Ireland had conspired with German agents to foment another rebellion. In exchange for German aid, the rebels would provide Germany with a submarine base in Ireland. Arrests of Irish leaders in the United States were reported to be imminent.⁸⁸ These reports coincided with allegations emanating from Washington, D.C., that Sinn Feiners and German agents had also attempted to stir up Finns, Negroes and Lithuanians in the U.S. but had succeeded only with Irish-Americans. The Chicago Tribune spoke of "conclusive evidence" and stated that conspirators in Chicago, Boston and New York would soon be arrested and

tried for treason.⁸⁹ British authorities claimed to have irrefutable evidence to support their allegations and suggested that the details of the May conspiracy had been provided by the American Secret Service.⁹⁰

No evidence was ever released, however, and the May conspiracy appears to have been a creation of British imagination. This tactic was a regular part of British propaganda efforts in the United States. Alluding to past British activities, Colonel Edward House offered the following advice to President Wilson concerning the May plot:

. . . the British government wish this government to pretend that we have found some of the treasonable matter concerning Ireland. If I were you I would caution [Secretary of State] Lansing about this, the British have made several attempts in this direction before, as you will remember.⁹¹

Ever sensitive to American public opinion, the British hoped to discredit Irish nationalism by making it appear that a German-Irish conspiracy had been uncovered by the American government. The U.S. State Department, however, decided not to take part in the subterfuge.

The British effort to cast suspicion upon Irish nationalism proved successful. Even the Hearst papers--normally suspicious of British subterfuge--were seduced into giving credence to the conspiracy tale. In its survey of press reports about the story, the Literary Digest concluded:

American sympathy for Ireland received a shock . . . [when it learned of the] . . . treasonable

conspiracy with German agents against Great Britain, on evidence unearthed by our government agents here.⁹²

The U.S. government publicly neither confirmed nor denied the British version of events. The New York Times characterized the attitude in Washington as one of "profound reticence." The Chicago Tribune reasoned that London withheld its evidence because of security considerations.⁹³

Despite the absence of evidence, many newspapers gave credence to the reports. The Tribune concluded that Sinn Fein was guilty of treason toward America and Great Britain even if the allegations of German conspiracy proved untrue: "Sinn Fein [is] . . . striking a blow not only at Great Britain but at our American soldiers on the firing line."⁹⁴ The New York World observed:

Although the proofs of Sinn Fein plotting with Germany are less definite and immediate than preliminary reports had foreshadowed, they have placed the criminality of Sinn Feinism beyond doubt.⁹⁵

The San Francisco Chronicle, while it castigated Sinn Fein, refrained from condemning all advocates of Irish independence:

Ireland may have her domestic grievances against England, but Ireland has no grievance against America or any other of the allies fighting against Kaiserism.⁹⁶

The cumulative weight of rumors and unsubstantiated reports of conspiracies raised questions about the patriotism of those Irish-American editors who continued to advocate Irish independence or criticize Great Britain.

The 1917 New York Mayoral Election

Loyalty was the primary issue in 1917 New York City mayoral election. The four-man race pitted Tammany Democratic candidate Judge John Hylan, Republican William M. Bennett, and Socialist Morris Hillquit against incumbent Mayor John Purroy Mitchell.⁹⁷ William Randolph Hearst had considered running for mayor but instead supported Hylan. Jeremiah O'Leary flirted with the idea of entering the race on a "free speech" platform.⁹⁸

Both the New York Times and the World were adamant in their support of Mitchell--who ran on a platform of "straight Americanism"--and in their condemnation of the challengers. Hearst's American backed Hylan, and Hearst's endorsement of Hylan became an issue. The names of certain Irish-American leaders also figured prominently in the campaign.

Mitchell himself often raised the names of O'Leary and Cohalan to demonstrate that Hylan had the support of "every seditious, every traitorous, every disloyal element to be found in this city."⁹⁹ In announcing his candidacy, Mitchell stated:

I will . . . fight against Hearst, Hylan and the Hollenzollerns; against Murphy, Cohalan, O'Leary and all the Tammany crowd . . . and against the seditionists.¹⁰⁰

On the eve of the election, Mitchell accused Hylan of being "publicly allied with men whose loyalty has been

officially denounced by the U.S. government--Cohalan, Devoy and O'Leary."¹⁰¹

The New York Times praised Mitchell for his "flaming Americanism" and warned the election would constitute a

. . . direct public weighing of the forces of loyalty and the forces of disloyalty, of Americanism and Germanism, in this town. . . . Is New York American or German?¹⁰²

The Times concluded that "Irish Revolutionists . . . the forces of disloyalty" had divided their support between the two "Hohenzollern" candidates--O'Leary and Cohalan for Hylan; the Irish Progressive League for Hillquit.¹⁰³ The attacks upon Hylan became so strident that O'Leary's brother-in-law, Grover Whelan, who later became Hylan's secretary, was forced to publicly disavow any connection--beyond marriage--to O'Leary.¹⁰⁴

The World also attempted to link Hylan to O'Leary. The election of Hylan, according to the World, would lead to chaos. The World condemned Hylan as "an unscrupulous blatherskite and demagogue" who was "inflaming class hatred and capitalizing on the ignorance of the great alien populations of New York City." Hylan, the World predicted, would lead the ignorant masses in a "heedless rule of idleness, ignorance, violence and confiscation."¹⁰⁵ The Hearst's were the only mainstream papers which supported Hylan. The American openly courted the immigrant vote, dismissing Mitchell as "the little brother to the rich, the

ally of greedy corporations and the benefactor of syndicates speculating in city property."¹⁰⁶

The New York mayoral race attracted the attention of Irish newspapers far outside of New York. In St. Louis, the Western Watchman derided Mitchells's divisive campaign theme and warned that the great daily newspapers of New York--with the exception of the Hearst papers--were "active partners" in a "giant confidence game."¹⁰⁷

The New York mayoral race was the only major wartime election in which President Wilson declined to take sides. Mitchell, who had been elected in 1913 on a Fusion (or reform) platform with strong administration support, had alienated Wilson by endorsing Hughes in the 1916 Presidential election. Wilson may also have been warned off by a Tamanny threat to oppose the war program should Wilson interfere.¹⁰⁸

New Yorkers--nearly half of whom were foreign-born--paid little heed to the apocalyptic warnings of the New York Times and the New York World. Hylan won the election by a plurality. Hearst celebrated Mitchell's defeat as a personal triumph over the forces of repression:

No longer can every little aspirant for office wrap himself in the American flag and denounce as traitors all who do not believe him fit. . . . The crushing defeat of Mr. Mitchell at the polls yesterday was the fourth rebuke administered by the American people to the shameless attempts to prostitute patriotism to selfish ends. . . . [the people] have fully vindicated their patriotism.¹⁰⁹

Despite the outcome, the New York mayoral election left a mark upon the reputation of the Irish. What was significant about the 1917 New York mayoral election was the readiness of the Times and the World to raise the names of Devoy, Cohalan and O'Leary as ultimate examples of disloyalty in a campaign in which loyalty was by far the dominant issue.¹¹⁰

Conscription

In April 1918, Prime Minister David Lloyd George decided to impose conscription upon Ireland. Massive losses in the battle of Picardy had left the British army short of manpower and Lloyd George felt compelled to act despite the certainty that his decision would provoke fierce resistance in Ireland. Lloyd George was also concerned that forced conscription could alienate American public opinion.¹¹¹

These concerns were discussed in the British press. Many British papers suggested that the policy would require more manpower to enforce than it would produce.¹¹² The London Daily Chronicle, for example, labelled the move a "blunder and a catastrophe."¹¹³ The Irish-American press reacted to the news with outrage, fearing that forced conscription would dangerously deplete the population of Ireland. Irish editors also questioned the justice of forcing Irishmen to fight in France while British soldiers remained garrisoned in Ireland. On May 4, 15,000 New York

Irish gathered at Madison Square Garden to denounce conscription.¹¹⁴

The conscription question garnered much attention in the New York Times, the World, the American, the Tribune the Chronicle and the Examiner. The Tribune, the Chronicle, the American and the Examiner gave prominent coverage to criticism in Ireland and England of the conscription plan.¹¹⁵ Of these latter papers, only the Tribune took an editorial position on the issue.¹¹⁶

In the two New York papers, however, the conscription provoked more editorial comment than any other Irish issue in 1918. Both the Times and the World supported conscription, but although the World expressed certain reservations, the Times was adamant in its advocacy.

The World acknowledged opposition to conscription in Ireland and Britain. The World accused Britain of having "broken faith with Ireland" and suggested that Home Rule would have to be implemented if conscription were to succeed.¹¹⁷ The World, which had a large Irish-American readership, also began to carry news accounts regaling the European exploits of the predominantly Irish-American 69th Regiment of the U.S. Army. But in the end, the World came down firmly in favor of conscription:

[there is] . . . full recognition here of every oppression and every blunder of the British government for generations past. . . . but only one view prevails as to the present situation. Neither Home Rule nor party and race prejudice nor personal

animosity can be pleaded in justification of resistance to war.¹¹⁸

The New York Times reasoned that conscription was necessary for the "preservation of Irish liberty" and labeled anti-conscription demonstrations in the U.S. as "pro-German and anti-American."¹¹⁹ The Times denied that Ireland had any legitimate grievances against Britain and concluded that the failure of Home Rule was the fault of the Irish themselves.¹²⁰ The Irish, the Times concluded, were ungrateful recipients of British beneficence:

Ireland runs over with prosperity. Her farmers fattened by British legislation, have been rushing about in automobiles to Sinn Fein meetings. . . . Irishmen eat of the fat and drink of the sweet while England lives narrowly and is partly rationed. . . . The world has heard somewhat too much about 'the wrongs of Ireland.'. . . For a generation, the English democracy has sought to confer benefits upon Ireland.¹²¹

The World presented a different view of conditions in Ireland. Four months earlier, an English correspondent for the World filed this report:

It is said that Ireland is now prosperous. . . . I do not call that country prosperous in which the common winter spectacle . . . is barefoot children.¹²²

Realizing the plan was untenable, Lloyd George finally abandoned conscription in June 1918. The Times condemned his decision as "abject surrender" to Irish intransigence and the "arrogance" of the Roman Catholic hierarchy.¹²³ Throughout the controversy, however, neither the Times nor the World addressed the fact that 200,000 Irish men were

serving with the British forces in Europe.¹²⁴ The papers also failed to note that 150,000 British troops were garrisoned in Ireland as an army of occupation.¹²⁵ After June 1918, coverage of the Irish question declined in both the Times and the World for the remainder of the War.

Conclusions

Mainstream press coverage of Irish-American activities and of events in Ireland during 1917 and 1918 was marked by suspicion, hysteria and a ready willingness to believe the worst. In news reports and editorial columns, leading newspapers excoriated the anti-British activities of the American-Irish and attacked their loyalty. The press' attitude toward Irish anglophobia both reflected and inflamed the climate of vigilantism and resurgent nativism that afflicted much of the nation.

The views expressed in New York Times, the New York World, the Chicago Tribune, the San Francisco Chronicle, and the newspapers surveyed by the Literary Digest do not comprise a completely representative a cross section of American press attitudes. They did, however, constitute a chorus of powerful voices that joined in condemnation of Irish-American support for the independence movement in Ireland. Even Hearst's New York American and San Francisco Examiner--which supported Irish aspirations--carried reports of German/Irish conspiracies. Irish-American nationalism

had become synonymous in much of the mainstream press with disloyalty--and even treason--towards the United States.¹²⁶

Many Irish-Americans openly supported Germany or advocated American neutrality in the early days of the War. The Department of Justice kept extensive files on various Irish-American organizations and Justice agents regularly monitored the speeches and activities of Irish-American leaders.¹²⁷ Yet there is little evidence of disloyalty or sedition among even the most strident sectors of the Irish-American community following America's entry into the War. For all its vigilance, the Department of Justice turned up sufficient evidence for only a handful of indictments against Irish-Americans during the War.¹²⁸

Large daily newspapers gave credence to every imagined plot brought forth by the British government. Yet they neglected to give equal attention to the paucity of evidence.¹²⁹ In the 1917 New York mayoral race, Irish nationalist leaders and editors were held up by the mainstream press as paragons of pro-German sympathy. In such an environment, no proof was needed. Even the Hearst papers--notorious adversaries of the British--succumbed to British propaganda efforts.¹³⁰

The British waged a sophisticated campaign to discredit Irish nationalists in the U.S. Irish activities were under constant surveillance. British operatives monitored Catholic opinion and sent detailed analyses to British

Foreign Office and the British Department of Information.¹³¹ The cumulative weight of negative news reports and commentary concerning the Irish in America--whether inspired by British propaganda or not--had two pronounced effects: In the public consciousness, Irish-American nationalism became the equivalent of treason to the United States; moderate Irish-Americans--their loyalty questioned, their status threatened--distanced themselves ever further from their more radical countrymen.¹³² Stories about pro-German plots and conspiracies and Ireland's rejection of conscription prompted many Americans to revert to the nativist passions of the 19th century.¹³³

At least part of the mainstream press' willingness to believe the worst about the Irish must be attributed to the success of British propaganda. Sir William Wiseman, a special emissary and unofficial head of British intelligence in the U.S., was well aware of the benefits of using the American press to promote British interests. His efforts may have played a role during the conscription crisis. In a cabled message to a British cabinet member in April 1918, Wiseman advised:

I consider that America's view would depend largely on how the case is presented through the [American] press, and I do not believe the possibility of bad effects here should influence your decision.¹³⁴

Wiseman's confidence was well grounded. Prior to sending the cable he had consulted with an adviser to President Wilson and with Frank Cobb, editor of the New York World.¹³⁵ The

U.S. Post Office subsequently barred three April issues of the Irish World containing editorials against the conscription bill before British Parliament.

The British maintained a huge propaganda apparatus in the U.S. At its height, the British Information Bureau with headquarters in New York had 500 officials with 10,000 assistants working in the United States in what one scholar characterized as ". . . one of the major propaganda efforts in history." The New York Times had a number of pro-British editors on staff and at least one British citizen.¹³⁶

Irish-American editors were convinced that Lord Northcliffe, owner of the Times and the Daily Mail of London and who for a time headed the British Information Bureau, dictated editorial policy at the New York Times regarding Irish issues.

Only the Hearst papers gave a hearing to Irish concerns. The New York World, the San Francisco Chronicle and the Chicago Tribune made some attempts to be evenhanded in their coverage of Irish-American issues. But the cumulative weight of their reports called into question the loyalty of those who advocated American support for Irish independence. Of the three newspapers, the Tribune was most willing to equate pro-Ireland agitation with sedition.

The New York Times, however, embraced an imperial view of the world that was at times more jingoist than even that of the British Tory press. The Times saw the Irish question

as a kind of Manichean struggle between the forces of darkness and light: Irish-American support for Irish independence, in that context, constituted treason to the United States.

The Times abandoned all restraints in its attacks upon the loyalty of certain Irish-American editors and it regularly accused Irish newspapers of sowing discontent within the Irish-American community.¹³⁷ Ironically, the issues of the Gaelic-American, the Irish World and the Freeman's Journal that were barred from the mails by the U.S. Post Office in April 1918 carried reports on conscription similar to those quoted from London in the mainstream press.

It is impossible to determine what direct role--if any--newspapers like the New York Times and the World played in encouraging the postal suppression of the Irish-American newspapers, books, pamphlets and magazines. At the very least, they contributed to a public mood of suspicion by casting aspersions upon the loyalty of Irish activists and polemicists. The negative coverage of Irish-American issues also served to endorse the policies of those faceless men at the U.S. Post Office who censored and suppressed the Irish-American press.

By the end of 1917, the most ardent voices of Irish-American nationalism were being marginalized or silenced. The F.O.I.F. called off the Irish Race Convention scheduled

for the autumn of 1917. The Ancient Order of Hibernians put off plans for its 1918 convention and temporarily suspended publication of Hibernian, the organizations official monthly mouthpiece.¹³⁸ Bull, an anti-British monthly, was suppressed by the Justice Department and its publisher, Jeremiah O'Leary, indicted on charges of conspiracy to obstruct the war effort. The Irish World and the Leader, under financial strain and political pressure, appealed to readers to support their advertisers.¹³⁹ At the height of October press reports about Sinn Fein plots--and a month after its editor, Laurence De Lacey was convicted of conspiracy to free a former German consul from internment--the Leader observed:

The Leader has enemies as well as friends . . . we expect our enemies to strike back at us and we expect that our friends will aid us . . . by giving recognition to our countless other friends who use our advertising columns.¹⁴⁰

The Gaelic-American, which began to lose ground after the U.S. entered the War, maintained a defiant posture even as it acknowledged the effects of the relentlessly hostile environment in which it struggled to survive.¹⁴¹ In a November 1917 editorial, a few weeks before the imposition of postal proscriptions, editor John Devoy advised:

We are not asking for immunity or special favors but standing on our rights and demanding only justice. We make no promises and will continue to insist on Ireland's right to independence. . . . If this paper is to go down, it will be with its colors nailed to the mast, confident the Irish cause will eventually triumph whether the paper lives or dies.¹⁴²

Events would soon confirm Devoy's worst fears.

Notes to Chapter VI

¹Joan M. Jensen, Price of Vigilance (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1968) 127, 146. H.C. Peterson and Gilbert C. Fite, Opponents of War 1917-1918. (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1957) 18.

²The Justice Department continued until 1921 to receive letters from these organizations complaining about the Irish-American press and about those Irish-American organizations that agitated in behalf of Irish independence. See file number 191962, Department of Justice-Classified File 9-12, National Archives, Washington D.C.

³James R. Mock, Censorship 1917 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1941) 28. Jensen 31, 47, 86. APL operatives worked undercover in banks and industries. They carried concealed badges and often worked undercover in the sense that their surveillance activities were secret.

⁴Jensen 187.

⁵John Lord O'Brian, special assistant to the Attorney General for war work, forbade the APL from investigating persons merely because of their membership in unpopular groups. He was unsuccessful. Jensen 233. President Wilson reportedly feared the power of the APL but was unwilling to overrule Attorney General Gregory's support of the organization. Peterson 19.

⁶Mock 28-30.

⁷Quoted in Chafee 69.

⁸Jensen 297.

⁹Quoted in Chafee 65.

¹⁰Peterson and Fite 73.

¹¹Peterson and Fite 28. 600 members of the Pearse/Connolly Club were driven from the streets and martial law was imposed.

¹²Quoted in Luebke 243.

¹³Jensen 295.

¹⁴Melvyn Dubofsky concludes that the lynching of Little won sympathy from much of the nation's press. Melvyn Dubofsky, We Shall Be All (New York: Quadrangle, 1969) 392.

¹⁵"Lynch Law and Treason," Literary Digest 18 Aug. 1917: 12.

¹⁶"Lynch Law" 12.

¹⁷"Lynch Law" 13, 14. Montana's senior senator, H.L. Meyers, also blamed Washington for Little's murder: "Had he been arrested and put in jail for his seditious and incendiary talks, he would not have been lynched." Quoted in Dubofsky 392.

¹⁸"The Menace of Sedition," Literary Digest 1 Sept. 1917: 12.

¹⁹"Gerard Flays U.S. Prussians," San Francisco Examiner 4 Oct. 1917: 11.

²⁰"Tumulty Denies Story of Arrest as Teuton Spy," San Francisco Examiner 14 November 1917: 2.

²¹"Unpunished Spies," editorial, New York Times 28 Jan. 1918: 12.

²²"Kahn Would Silence Sedition With Rope," New York Times 25 March 1918: 8. Congressman Julius Kahn (Cal.) was the father of the World War One military draft law.

²³"Vigilantes Urged As Curb to All Traitors," San Francisco Examiner 7 March 1918: 1.

²⁴Peterson and Fite 194-208.

²⁵"Tar and Feathers for Coats," New York World 14 April 1918: 8.

²⁶"Longevity of Spies," Literary Digest 23 Feb. 1918: 12.

²⁷"Longevity of Spies" 12.

²⁸Following the lynching of Praeger on April 4, 1918, John Lord O'Brian asked President Wilson to go before the public and condemn the murder. Wilson declined. The President not issue a public statement until July 26, 1918, after the "patriotic" jury in Illinois had proclaimed the mob innocent. Peterson and Fite 205-207.

²⁹"The First War-Lynching," Literary Digest 20 April 1918: 16. "Obstructing Law and the War," editorial, New York World 6 April 1918: 10. "Lynching is Blamed to Delays on Spy Bill," San Francisco Examiner 6 April 1918: 1. John Temple Graves, "Nation Rises in Its Wrath Against Spies," 7

April 1918: 8. "Stronger Curb on Enemies at Home,"
Literary Digest 4 May 1918: 19.

³⁰In April, John Lord O'Brian asked President Wilson to issue a statement condemning mob violence. Wilson remained silent until July, 1918, when he finally made a public statement to that effect. Jensen 158. Peterson and Fite 205. Eleven men charged with Praeger's murder were acquitted by an Illinois jury after 45 minutes of deliberation in June 1918.

³¹Attorney General Gregory argued that legislation to insure loyalty would curb mob violence. Peterson and Fite 211-212. Zachariah Chafee concludes that passage of the Sedition Act of 1918, which amended the Espionage Act of 1917 by imposing stronger penalties for disloyal speech, came largely as a response to the mob violence of early 1918. Chafee 41.

³²Peterson and Fite 212.

³³"Cabinet Discusses Praeger Lynching," New York World 6 April 1918: 7.

³⁴See "Contribution to Sanity," editorial, New York World 15 April 1918: 8.

³⁵See the San Francisco Examiner 21 April 1918: 6, 8. 23 April 1918: 7. 4 May 1918: 1. 10 May 1918: 4.

³⁶Dean R. Esslinger, "American German and Irish Attitudes Toward Neutrality, 1914-1917: A Study of Catholic Minorities," Catholic Historical Review (July 1967).

³⁷Sinn Fein ("ourselves alone"), was founded in Ireland by Arthur Griffith in 1908 as an alternative to the Irish Parliamentary Party. Sinn Fein initially advocated a limited form of Irish independence under a dual monarchy. Sinn Fein played no part in the 1916 Easter Rising. Following 1916, Sinn Fein advocated complete Irish independence. The term "Sinn Feiner" was appropriated by much of the American mainstream press to label those in Ireland and in the U.S. who advocated Irish independence.

³⁸"Ireland Must Unite," editorial, New York Times 26 May 1917: 12.

³⁹"Sinn Fein Rebels," editorial, New York Times 25 Oct. 1917: 14.

⁴⁰"America and Sinn Fein," editorial, Chicago Tribune 22 May 1918: 8.

⁴¹"Ireland and America," editorial, Chicago Tribune 8 July 1918: 6.

⁴²See "When War Is Over We Should Insist on Justice and Freedom for Ireland," editorial, San Francisco Examiner 27 April 1917: 20.

⁴³See "Sinn Fein Speeches Under Inspection," New York Times 6 May 1918: 5.

⁴⁴"Sinn Fein Speakers Attack Allies," New York Times 5 May 1918: 12.

⁴⁵"Sinn Fein Speakers" 12.

⁴⁶"A Woman in Public Life," editorial, New York Times 6 Jan. 1918: II2.

⁴⁷"Ireland's Worst Enemy," editorial, New York World 20 May 18: 6.

⁴⁸"British Tories Will Fight Any Home Rule Plan," New York World 3 May 1918: 1. "Home Rule Pledged to Ireland," editorial, New York World 18 April 1918: 6.

⁴⁹"Ireland and Conscription," editorial, New York Times 28 April 1918: II2. "Chance of Settlement," editorial, New York Times 18 May 1917: 12.

⁵⁰"Reprehensible," editorial, New York Times 24 Jan. 1918: 8

⁵¹"Demand We Exact Home Rule For Ireland," New York Times 15 May 1917: 9.

⁵²"Irishmen Who Love The Germans," editorial, New York Times 21 May 1918: 4.

⁵³The speaker, W.J. Robinson, stated that Washington and Franklin would have been hung for treason like Casement had their rebellion against England failed. "Moffet Arrested for Street Protest," New York Times 14 Aug. 1917: 1.

⁵⁴"Soap Box Sedition to Feel Heavy Hand," New York Times 16 Aug. 1917: 7. The A.D.S. was a citizens' organization founded in 1914 by Teddy Roosevelt to promote "100% Americanism." Jensen 96. The "Americanism" of the A.D.S. was decidedly Anglo/Saxon in orientation. Roosevelt regularly attacked "hyphens" and questioned the loyalty of the foreign-language press. Peterson and Fite 81, 97. Supporters of Irish independence were regular targets of

Roosevelt's ire: "Any Sinn Feiner who directly or indirectly seeks to discredit America's allies . . . should be interned as an enemy alien or sent out of the country." "Would Intern Sinn Feiners," New York Times 26 May 1918: 3.

⁵⁵Theodore Roosevelt, "Roosevelt Enters Fight on Sedition," letter-to-the-editor, New York Times 18 Aug. 1917: 6.

⁵⁶"Asks President to Define Treason," New York Times 17 Aug. 1917: 7. "Treason and Free Speech," editorial, New York Times 25 Aug. 1917: 6.

⁵⁷"Freedom Has Its Boundaries," editorial, New York Times 18 Aug. 1917: 6.

⁵⁸"Sinn Fein and the Police," editorial, New York Times 15 Aug. 1917: 8.

⁵⁹'Children of the Crucible' Are Not Logical in Their Attitude Toward Those Who Do Not Agree With Them," editorial, New York American 15 Sept. 1917: 10.

⁶⁰"Free Speech in War," editorial, New York World 26 Aug. 1917: 2E.

⁶¹Articles concerning the overwhelmingly Irish 69th Regiment appeared throughout August on page one of the American. For examples see page one, August 14 and August 17.

⁶²Peterson and Fite 73-74. Mayor Mitchell, in a public exchange with Jeremiah O'Leary, cited the Espionage Act (which made it a crime to interfere with recruitment of troops) as justification for banning street speakers who criticized Britain. "Mayor Defines Law Governing Sedition," New York Times 24 Aug. 1917: 5.

⁶³Among those arrested was the niece of Boston Mayor James Michael Curley. "Police Clubs End Soapbox Sedition In Broadway Riot," New York Times 30 August 1917: 1.

⁶⁴"Police Stop a Gaelic Speech," New York American 6 Sept. 1917: 2.

⁶⁵"It is a Thousand Times Better to Have Soapbox Oratory Than to Suffer Suppression of Free Speech," editorial, New York American 12 Sept. 1917.

⁶⁶"Speech is Never Unrestricted," editorial, New York Times 18 Sept. 1917: 8. There was perhaps some substance to the Times' complaint. New York Supreme Court Justice John

Goff, a prominent and outspoken advocate of Irish independence, issued a stay pending appeal on the prosecution of four F.O.I.F. members charged with disorderly conduct. "Grand Jury Calls Soap Box Leaders," New York Times 21 Sept. 1917: 3.

⁶⁷"Soap Box Preachers of Sedition," editorial, New York Times 16 Sept. 1917: III, 2.

⁶⁸"Vigilantes to Extend Anti-Sedition Drive," New York Times 20 Sept. 1917: 3. "Grand Jury Calls Soap Box Leaders," New York Times 21 Sept. 1917: 3.

⁶⁹On September 21, 1917, Secretary of State Lansing released the contents of a telegram reportedly written by the former German ambassador to the United States, Count von Bernstorff. The telegram, dated January 22, 1917, requested \$50,000 in German funds to lobby Congress in support of German interests. The money was to be funneled through an unnamed organization. Most news reports suggested that Irish organizations were involved. The document also suggested that an official German declaration in support of Ireland would be ". . . highly desirable in order to gain support of Irish influence here." Quoted in "Plot to Buy Peace Angers Congressmen," Chicago Tribune 22 Sept. 1917: 1.

The following day the Committee on Public Information released the von Igel papers which had been seized in a Secret Service raid on the office of a Captain Franz von Papen in April 1916. Included in the documents were unsigned letters implicating Devoy, Cohalan and O'Leary. Cohalan, for example, was said to have offered submarine bases in Germany in exchange for German support for the Easter Rising in 1916. "U.S. Exposes More German Plots," San Francisco Chronicle 23 Sept. 1917: 1. See also, "New York Men Involved in Latest Plot," New York American 23 Sept. 1917: 1; "Cohalan and Other Irish Leaders Named in New Expose of German Plots," New York Times 23 Sept. 1917: 1.

The story spread that the British had persuaded the U.S. State Department to release the von Igel papers. Thomas E. Hachey and Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Perspectives on Irish Nationalism (Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1989) 64.

⁷⁰"U.S. Exposes More German Plots," San Francisco Chronicle 23 Sept. 1917: 1.

⁷¹"Cohalan And Other Irish Leaders Namerd In New Expose of German Plots," New York Times 23 Sept. 1917: 1. The proper name of the German-American newspaper was Viereck's American Weekly. The Times declined to include the word "American" when referring to the paper.

⁷²"America Infested With German Spies," Literary Digest

6 Oct. 1917: 9.

⁷³Quoted in Literary Digest 6 Oct. 1917: 10.

⁷⁴"America Infested" 11. Another justice of the New York Supreme Court, John Goff, was also prominent in the Irish independence movement. See also, "Cohalan Evidence," editorial, New York Times 26 Sept. 1917: 12.

⁷⁵Quoted in Literary Digest 6 Oct. 1917: 9.

⁷⁶Cohalan stated, ". . . as an American who yields to no man in devotion to this country of ours, a grave error in judgement is being made by those who attack the loyalty of citizens of Irish blood." "Cohalan and Other Irish Leaders Named in New Expose of German Plots," New York Times 23 Sept. 1917: 1. See also, San Francisco Examiner 23 Sept. 1917: 1, 4; "Cohalan Says Britain Plots to Ruin Him," New York American 23 Sept. 1917: 6; "O'Leary Issues Denial of Sabotage Complicity," San Francisco Examiner 11 Oct. 1917: 4.

⁷⁷"Cohalan Inquiry Likely at Albany," New York Times 25 Sept. 1917: 1.

⁷⁸In May 1916, the names of John Devoy and John T. Ryan, a Buffalo attorney, were mentioned in indictments handed down by a federal grand jury in New York based on information found in the Von Igel documents. Von Igel and von Papen were indicted on charges of conspiracy to blow up the Welland canal in Canada. The indictments reportedly stated that Devoy and Ryan had knowledge of the plot. Neither man was charged. See "Irish Named in Welland Plot," Chicago Tribune 4 May 1916: 5; "John Devoy, Irish-American Leader, Mixed in Bomb Plot, 4 May 1916: 2.

⁷⁹"Irish American Patriotism Untarnished," editorial, Chicago Citizen 12 Oct. 1917: 4.

⁸⁰Quoted in "Fangs of The Traitor Press To Be Pulled By Post Chief," Chicago Tribune 26 Oct. 1917: 2.

⁸¹"German Scheming With Irish Now and Last February Revealed," New York Times 24 Oct. 1917: 1. "Seek More Sinn Feiners," New York Times 25 Oct. 1917: 8. "Suspect Brothers as German Spies," New York Times 28 Oct. 1917: 116. "Seized Letters Reveal German Aid to Sinn Fein," New York Times 11 Nov. 1917: 1.

⁸²"Gaelic-American Is Under Inquest," New York Times 10 Nov. 1917: 8. "Irish Vote Used As Club By Devoy," New York Times 16 Nov. 1917: 5. "New Sinn Fein Move to Free Ireland

Seen," New York American 11 Nov. 1917: 4L.

⁸³"Sinn Fein Rebels," editorial, New York Times 25 Oct. 1917: 14.

⁸⁴"Germany Plots Again To Land Arms In Erin," San Francisco Chronicle 24 Oct. 1917: 1. "Germany Plots Again To Arm Irish Rebels," Chicago Tribune 24 Oct. 1917: 1. "More Arrests Looked For In Sinn Fein Plot," Chicago Tribune 25 Oct. 1917: 4. "New Irish Plot to Rebel Bared," New York American 8 Nov. 1917: 1.

⁸⁵Jamison 581-562.

⁸⁶See New York Times 18-20 May 1918. Chicago Tribune 18, 19, 22 May 1918. San Francisco Chronicle 18-22 May 1918. San Francisco Chronicle 18-22 May 1918. New York American 18-23, 25 May 1918. New York World 19, 22, 26 May 1918.

⁸⁷"Irish As U.S. to Aid Nation to Win Freedom," New York American 18 May 1918: 1. Liam Mellows, a veteran of the Easter Rebellion and one of the organizers of the F.O.I.F. convention, denied the existence of any Irish/German plot and claimed that reports of the same were "concocted for purposes of alienating American sympathy" for Ireland. "Irish Here Call for American Help," New York Times 20 May 1918: 3.

News also broke during the May plot hysteria that Jeremiah O'Leary, anti-British polemicist and publisher of Bull, had gone on the run. O'Leary failed to turn up at federal court on May 8 to answer charges of obstructing military recruitment. The press did not report his disappearance until after news of the Sinn Fein plot. The nationwide search for O'Leary attracted considerable press coverage. Following O'Leary's capture in June on a chicken ranch in Washington state, reports of further impending arrests prompted this response in the Western Watchman: "Just how far is our secular press doing the dirty work of British aristocracy. The announcement that O'Leary's arrest is to be followed up by the taking into custody of numerous other Irishmen in different parts of the country sounds like a piece of news given out by an Orange cabinet member. Americans of Irish blood are not going to have their name bespattered by agents, commissioned or uncommissioned, of any foreign clique." Editorial, Western Watchman 21 June 1918: 10. See "More O'Leary Aids To Be Arrested," New York Times 18 June 1918: 5; "Seven Indicted As Traitors to U.S.," San Francisco Examiner 8 June 1918: 1; "U.S. Ready to Net Others in Treason Plot," San Francisco Examiner 9 June 1918: 4. The postal suppression of Bull is discussed in chapter seven.

⁸⁸"Irish Plotters in U.S. Exposed," San Francisco Examiner 25 May 1918: 1. "Irish Plot Leaders in U.S. To Be Seized," San Francisco Examiner 26 May 1918: 1.

⁸⁹"Irish Plot in U.S. Includes Other Races," Chicago Tribune 22 May 1918: 1. See also "Irish-German Plot Made Under U.S. Flag," San Francisco Chronicle 21 May 1918: 1; "Sinn Fein Plot Here Laid Bare," New York American 22 May 1918: 1.

⁹⁰The New York Times, in a page-one story copyrighted by the Chicago Tribune, reported that information concerning the plot had been gathered in the U.S. and would soon be released. "Irish Plot Evidence Found Here," New York Times 20 May 1918: 1. The World reported that "Secret Service revelations" had been turned over to Great Britain. "German Money Aided Irish and other Plots Here," New York World 22 May 1918: 1. The American also reported that "documentary evidence" concerning the May plot would soon be released. "500 Held in Coup on Irish Plotters," New York American 19 May 1918: 1. See also "Says Irish Plotting Menaces America," New York Times 20 May 1918: 3; "Sinn Fein Rising Planned for May," New York Times 26 May 1918: 3.

⁹¹Quoted in Alden Jamison, "Irish-Americans, the Irish Question and American Diplomacy 1895-1921," diss., Harvard U, 1942, 583-587. The "evidence" which the British sent to the U.S. State Department consisted of translations of decoded German messages about German-Sinn Fein discussions in America prior to and shortly after the Easter 1916 Rising, well before the U.S. entered the War. Carroll 111.

⁹²"The Sinn-Fein Round-Up," Literary Digest 1 June 1918: 25.

⁹³"Washington is Reticent," New York Times 21 May 1918: 4. "Ireland Split By Expose of German Plot," Chicago Tribune 26 May 1918: 10.

⁹⁴"America and Sinn Fein," editorial, Chicago Tribune 22 May 1918: 8.

⁹⁵"Sinn Fein Plot Laid Bare By Great Britain," New York World 26 May 1918: 1. There is evidence that at least some newspapers in the U.S. were reluctant to accept the story at face value. The Literary Digest reported that some American papers were demanding proof of the allegations. "The Sinn Fein 'Plot' and the Evidence," Literary Digest 15 June 1918: 17.

⁹⁶"Kaiser Balked in Ireland," editorial, San Francisco Chronicle 22 May 1918: 20.

⁹⁷Mitchell, who lost the Republican primary to Bennett, ran as the "fusion" candidate in the general election. Ironically, Mitchell was grandson of an Irish revolutionary and journalist, John M. Mitchell, who was forced to flee Ireland for the United States in 1853. According to one scholar, the younger Mitchell was the leading Preparedness mayor in America and he "personified the most strident form of Americanism during the war years." J.P. Buckley, The New York Irish: Their View of American Foreign Policy 1914-1921, diss., New York University, 1974, (New York: Arno, 1976) 132-133.

⁹⁸"Ponder Plan to Run O'Leary," New York World 26 Aug. 1917: 12.

⁹⁹"Mayor Links Hylan and Jerry O'Leary," New York Times 15 Oct. 1917: 4.

¹⁰⁰"Text of Mayor Mitchell's Speech," New York American 2 Oct. 1917: 4.

¹⁰¹"War Assailed as Hillquit Speaks," New York Times 2 Nov. 1917: 1, 5. Mitchell also attempted to link Hearst with O'Leary. "Loyalty is Issue Declares Mitchell," New York World 27 Oct. 1917: 5.

¹⁰²"Candidate of Patriotism," editorial, 27 Sept. 1917: 12; "American Candidate," editorial, 29 Sept. 1917: 10, New York Times.

¹⁰³"Among the Sinn Fein," editorial, New York Times 3 Nov. 1917: 14.

¹⁰⁴According to the Times, Whelan was head of the Business Men's League, an organization which was instrumental in securing the mayoral nomination for Hylan. "Repudiates O'Leary," New York Times 15 Oct. 1917: 4.

¹⁰⁵"Tammany's Riots," editorial, New York World 19 Oct. 1917: 10.

¹⁰⁶"What the Renomination of Mayor Mitchell Would Mean to the People," editorial, New York American 18 July 1917: 20.

¹⁰⁷Editorial, Western Watchman 19 Oct. 1917: 10. "Mitchell's Career Ended," editorial, Western Watchman 2 Nov. 1917: 10. The Western Watchman also chastized the St. Louis Dispatch for supporting Mitchell on the loyalty issue. Editorial, Western Watchman 4 Jan. 1917: 10.

¹⁰⁸Top Democratic party officials reportedly ordered

all federal officeholders in New York City not to take sides or to commit the President in any way to Mitchell's campaign. Seward W. Livermore, Woodrow Wilson and the War Congress, 1916-1918 (Seattle: U of Washington P, 1968): 106.

¹⁰⁹"The American People Will Not Allow Their Highest and Holiest Motives To Be Profaned, Their Noblest Sentiments To Be Violated And Prostituted To Further Selfish Objects of Political Partisanship," signed editorial by W.R. Hearst, reprinted from the American in the San Francisco Examiner 7 Nov. 1917: 22.

¹¹⁰According to the World, O'Leary considered running against Mitchell for mayor of New York on a "free speech" platform if Hearst decided not to run. "Ponder Plan To Run O'Leary, New York World 26 August 1917: 12.

¹¹¹Lloyd George acknowledged that conscription might only get an additional 160,000 men. Ward 82. President Wilson was also concerned enough about the conscription crisis to send journalist Ray Stannard Baker to Ireland to assess the situation. Carroll 110.

¹¹²"The English Press on Conscription," Literary Digest 18 May 1918: 17-18.

¹¹³Quoted in "Angry Protest Aroused By Lloyd George As He Announces Conscription For Ireland," New York Times 10 April 1918: 1.

¹¹⁴Carroll 112.

¹¹⁵See the New York American 10 April 1918: 2; 11 April 1918: 1, 4; 14 April 1918: 3; 17 April 1918: 1; 18 April 1918: 1; 19 April 1918: 1; 5 May 1918: 1; 7 May 1918: 2; 17 May 1918: 2; 6 June 1918: 3. Chicago Tribune 10 April 1918: 1,4; 11 April 1918: 1, 4; 13 April 1918: 1; 14 April 1918: 16; 15 April 1918: 3; 5 May 1918: 6. San Francisco Chronicle 10 April 1918: 1; 11 April 1918: 1. San Francisco Examiner 10 April 1918: 1; 11 April 1918:1; 13 April 1918: 1; 14 /April 1918: 4; 17 April 1918: 1; 19 April 1918: 1, 5.

¹¹⁶The Tribune criticized Britain for its "extraordinary mishandling" of the question of conscription and Home Rule. "Ireland and America," editorial, Chicago Tribune 8 July 1918: 6. A minority of mainstream newspapers, most notably the New York Evening Post and the Chicago Daily News, expressed some sympathy for the Irish-American position regarding conscription. Carroll 116.

¹¹⁷"Conscription for Ireland," editorial, New York World 11 April 1918: 10. "Ireland's Duty to Itself,"

editorial, New York World 12 April 1918: 8. "Home Rule Before Conscription," editorial, New York World 17 April 1918: 6.

¹¹⁸"An Opinion for Ireland," editorial, New York World 24 May 1918: 6.

¹¹⁹"Conscription for Ireland," editorial, New York Times 11 April 1918: 12. "Irish Conscription," editorial, New York Times 12 April 1918: 12.

¹²⁰"Ireland and Conscription," editorial, New York Times 28 April 18: II, 2.

¹²¹"Wrongs and Wrongheads," editorial, New York Times 7 May 1918: 12.

¹²²"Strength of Sinn Fein Lies in Labor Cause," New York World 11 Nov. 1917: 1.

¹²³"Irish Home Rule and Conscription Put Aside," New York Times 21 June 1918: 1.

¹²⁴This figure was quoted in Literary Digest 19 June 1917: 1502.

¹²⁵One news report in the New York Times quotes Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, an advocate of Irish independence who conducted a speaking tour in the U.S. following the Easter Rising, as claiming that 150,000 British troops were garrisoned in Ireland. "Attack on England Renewed by Irish as Americans Are About to Enter Great Battle," New York Times 1 April 1918: 20.

¹²⁶Emmons observes that even in Butte, Montana, Sinn Fein became for many a "code word" for Irish-German-IWW conspiracies. David M. Emmons, The Butte Irish: Class and Ethnicity in an American Mining Town 1875-1925 (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1989) 377-379.

¹²⁷See file numbers 191962 and 188967, Department of Justice-Classified File 9-12, National Archives, Washington D.C. These files contain various letters and reports relating to Justice Department surveillance of Irish-American activities during the period.

¹²⁸Daniel O'Connell, a San Francisco attorney, was convicted of conspiracy to obstruct the draft because of a speech he made during a public meeting in San Francisco in August 1917 allegedly urging men not to enlist. The judge in the case noted that O'Connell's activities grew out of his "hostility" toward Great Britain. "O'Connell Given 7

Year Prison Term," San Francisco Examiner 30 Sept. 1917: 10. His sentence was commuted to two years. Peterson and Fite 33. Also in San Francisco, Charles De Lacey, former editor of the Leader, was convicted of conspiring to free Franz Bopp, the former German Consul General, from internment in California. Jeremian O'Leary, editor of Bull was tried and acquitted under the Espionage Act of conspiracy to commit treason and espionage against the United States. Justice Department records show that John Lord O'Brian once considered charging John Devoy with contempt of court. Letter, O'Brian to Francis G. Caffey, assistant district attorney, 1 July 1918, file number 188967, Records of the Department of Justice. John T. Ryan, an Irish-American attorney from Buffalo and a veteran of the Spanish-American War, fled the country after being indicted on charges of aiding and assisting German spies in New York. Carroll 103. Jamison reports that there were "one or two actual indictments" relating to Irish-American activities during the period. Jamison 591.

¹²⁹Judge G.W. Anderson, who was U.S. District Attorney in Massachusetts in 1917, concluded that "more than ninety-nine per cent of advertised and reported pro-German plots never existed." Quoted in Chafee 65.

¹³⁰Peterson concludes: "A careful analysis demonstrated quite clearly that news items in the Hearst papers more often than not were British propaganda." Peterson, Propaganda For War 165.

¹³¹Sanders 199-200.

¹³²Following the release of the von Igel papers, Patrick Egan (former business manager of the Irish World) and other New York Irish elites publicly denounced those named in the revelations as well as the supporters of F.O.I.F. "Loyal Irishmen Protest," New York Times 30 Sept. 1917: 7. British propagandists were cognizant of class differences among Irish-Americans and of how those differences could be played upon to Britain's advantage. In a confidential memo dated 15 Jan. 1918 to the British Department of Information, Geoffrey Butler advised from New York: "The moderate Irishman does not wish to be tarred with the pitch of Germanism and does not want to be classed as a bad American along with his German colleagues or discontented elements in the labour world." Butler also advised that the Irish in America resented praise from the British. Hachey 51-52.

¹³³Carroll concludes that this resurgent white Anglo-Saxon Protestant hostility would help shape native American attitudes toward Ireland for the next few years. Carroll

117.

¹³⁴W.B. Fowler, British-American Relations, 1917-1918. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1969) 160.

¹³⁵Fowler, footnote 95, 160.

¹³⁶Knightley, Phillip, The First Casualty (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975) 119-121.

¹³⁷"Sinn Fein Meeting Likely To Be Stopped," New York Times 3 May 1918: 7. "Irish World Banned," New York Times 23 Jan. 1918: 9.

¹³⁸Carroll 106.

¹³⁹The Irish World observed: "We have never previously solicited business on these lines." Editorial, Irish World 10 March 1917: 4.

¹⁴⁰"Another Advertising Talk," editorial, Leader 20 Oct. 1917: 4. See also "A Talk on Advertising," editorial, Leader 13 Oct. 1917: 4. De Lacey was convicted in San Francisco federal court of conspiring to free Franz Bopp, former German consul general and his deputy, E.H. Von Schack. See "Plot to Aid Bopp Escape is Frustrated," San Francisco Examiner 11 Aug. 1917: 1; "Two Jailed as Heads of Plot to 'Free Bopp,'" San Francisco Examiner 15 Aug. 1917: 1; Gaelic-American 22 Sept. 1917: 4. The De Lacey case was never mentioned in the news columns of the Leader. Father Peter Yorke, publisher and guiding force behind the Leader, himself came under fire in July 1917 in the aftermath of a mass rally at Dreamland, which Yorke hosted, in support of Irish independence. Federal District Attorney John W. Preston, who the previous April had forced Yorke to remove an editorial critical of President Wilson and the war, released to the press an anonymous letter which disparaged the loyalty of Catholic chaplains in the U.S. Army. Preston also warned that public meetings which inspired anti-conscription sentiment could be in violation of the Espionage Act. Yorke responded: "You may be able to bluff and oppress the Germans [but] the Irish are always ready and able . . . the shamrock will be the national flower before the conflict is over." "Priests Are Traitors?" Leader 7 July 1917: 1. In a final burst of defiance a few weeks later Yorke added, "The Irish in San Francisco are not going to be cowed by a whipper snapper nor John Bullied into suffering the continued existence in public office of the mean slanderer of their race and faith." "Preston's Comeback?" editorial Leader 18 Aug. 1917: 4.

¹⁴¹Ward 80. Cronin 19. The Gaelic-American, which was

less dependent upon advertising revenues, did not make a direct appeal for financial support until well after the postal ban. See Gaelic-American 13 July 1918: 1.

¹⁴²Editorial, Gaelic-American 17 Nov. 1917: 4.

CHAPTER VII

THE POSTAL SUPPRESSIONS

Introduction

The campaign to discredit Irish nationalist agitation culminated in the postal suppressions of 1918. On January 18, 1918, the Irish World, the largest and most influential Irish newspaper in America, received word that its New York and Chicago editions for that week had been withheld from the mails. In a terse written statement to publisher Robert Ford, Postmaster Thomas G. Patten advised: "The question whether these issues are mailable under the Espionage Law . . . has been submitted to the Solicitor for the Post Office Department."¹ Two of New York's other Irish-American weeklies--the Gaelic-American and the Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register--received similar notifications.²

Each newspaper carried an account of an interview granted by President Wilson to Mrs. Hanna Skeffington, an Irish pacifist whose husband had been gunned down by a deranged British officer during the 1916 Easter Rising. Mrs. Skeffington had presented a petition to the President calling for recognition of Ireland's right to self-determination under Wilson's Fourteen Points peace plan.

The newspapers also reported the introduction of a pro-Irish resolution to Congress by Jeanette Rankin of Montana.³

The Hearst papers carried similar reports but escaped censure.⁴ The implication was clear--criticism of British policies in Ireland would no longer be tolerated in the Irish-American press.

Although relatively immune prior to 1918, the Irish-American press was no stranger to intimidation. In 1915, the short-lived Irish Voice of Chicago suspended operations after being raided by federal agents for possible violation of U.S. neutrality laws.⁵ In April 1917, a federal district attorney forced the San Francisco Leader to remove an editorial which criticized President Wilson for leading the U.S. into war. In November 1917, John Devoy of the Gaelic-American was investigated by a federal grand jury for alleged pro-German activities.⁶

The postal proscriptions of January 1918, however, marked a new departure. The postal bans set in motion a sustained campaign of de facto censorship and suppression that would last until the end of the War, and in some cases, beyond. In the coming months, six Irish-American papers as well as a number of magazines, books and pamphlets would suffer postal exclusions. For some newspapers, only occasional issues would be declared non-mailable. For others, the penalties were more severe, the consequences, more damaging.⁷

The Gaelic-American and the Freeman's Journal of New York and the Irish Press of Philadelphia suffered complete loss of mailing privileges by Spring of 1918. The Gaelic-American would be denied access to the mails until nearly three months after Armistice. Because these weekly newspapers depended upon the mails to reach their readers, the loss of mailing privileges was devastating.

Distribution became a logistical nightmare. The Post Office had broad discretionary power to withdraw second-class mailing privileges--subject to its own interpretation of the Espionage Act--from any paper in the country. The Trading-with-the-Enemies Act of October 1917 also made it illegal to distribute proscribed publications by other means. Thus the loss of mailing privileges meant financial ruin.⁸ One newspaper--the Freeman's Journal--and a monthly magazine, Bull, were forced out of business. The Gaelic-American survived only through donations from supporters. The Irish Press of Philadelphia was subjected to almost continuous bannings in 1918. The Advocate, another New York Irish newspaper, had three issues withheld.

The New York Irish World, the flagship Irish newspaper in America, suffered less at the hands of the postal watchdogs and survived the War intact. In all, only five editions of the Irish World were banned from the mails. But the seemingly insignificant number of postal exclusions renders a distorted picture of the ordeal endured by the

Irish World during 1918. Post Office and Justice Department documents from the period reveal a continuing policy of scrutiny and harassment that culminated in the pre-publication censorship of virtually every issue of the Irish World from August 1918 until the end of the War.⁹

Postal records trace the texture and contours of the government's campaign of suppression against the Irish-American press. Letters and internal memoranda disclose a lack of coherent guidelines among those whose duty it was to monitor Irish publications. News and editorial content were judged according to arbitrary and capricious standards. Records also reveal that officials at the press-monitoring division of the New York Post Office and attorneys with the Justice Department were often motivated by a spirit of vigilantism, nativism, and a desire to stifle public discourse regarding the Irish question.

The Irish World was the largest and most influential of the Irish publications affected by postal proscriptions during World War One.¹⁰ The Irish World supported the American war effort after April 1917 and advocated upward mobility and middle-class values as proper strategies for securing the status of the Irish in America. Publisher Robert Ford was also able to enlist the support of influential friends to intercede on behalf of the Irish World. Yet despite its prestige, its protestations of loyalty, and its mainstream, middle-class orientation, the

Irish World's calls for inclusion of the Irish issue at the post-war peace conference and its criticism of British imperialism and Anglo-Saxon influence in the U.S. were sufficient to call down the wrath of the U.S. government. The Hearst newspapers, by contrast, expressed many of the same sentiments but escaped government censure.¹¹

The story of the Irish-American press suggests that the government and large sectors of the public equated Irish national aspirations with anti-American sentiment. The experience of the Irish-American press during 1918 also raises important questions concerning the nature of political and cultural pluralism and the limits of legitimate public discourse during wartime.

Censorship Laws and Official Policy

The Espionage Act, which became law on June 15 1917, established what came to be the first official U.S. policy of prior restraint upon the press in the 20th century.¹² Obscene material and sexually provocative material had been banned from the mails since 1873 but the Espionage Act marked an unprecedented extension of postal powers.¹³ With a maximum possible fine of \$10,000 and 20 years imprisonment, the law made it a crime to

willfully cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty . . . or refusal of duty in the military or naval forces . . . or willfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States.¹⁴

The Espionage Act also empowered the Post Office to declare nonmailable photographic, written or printed materials which violated any provision of the Act. The Post Office could also revoke second-class mailing privileges from offending periodicals. A weekly publication was entitled to a hearing within four days of notification that an issue had been withheld.¹⁵ The decision to bar a publication from the mail could be challenged in court. But there was little chance of success. There is no evidence that even a single postal banning was overturned by the courts.¹⁶ There was little comment in the mainstream press when the Espionage Act became law.¹⁷ Fiorello LaGuardia, U.S. congressman from New York, warned Daniel Cohalan that sections of the law were aimed directly at Irish activists.¹⁸

The Post Office soon issued a set of policy guidelines called the "Rules of Procedure for Illegal Publications from the Mails Under the Espionage Act." Among the nine points listed, two were significant in light of later actions against the Irish press:

No publication shall be excluded on account of the general tone of either its editorial or news columns. Exclusion from the mails, shall be based only upon specific articles which may be violative of the Act.¹⁹

These directives were violated in spirit and in form almost as soon as the ink was dry upon the page.

A more expansive interpretation of the statute circulated secretly within the Post Office. The day after the Espionage Act became law, Postmaster General Albert Sydney Burleson issued a confidential memorandum directing postmasters around the country to

. . . keep a close watch on unsealed matter, newspapers, etc., which is calculated to . . . cause . . . disloyalty . . . or otherwise to embarrass or hamper the Government in conducting the war.²⁰

The memorandum advised postmasters to withhold questionable matter and submit samples to Solicitor of the Post Office William H. Lamar for review.²¹ Burleson neglected to mention that excluded material must be willfully obstructive. Nor did he define what constituted "disloyalty." His order to include "embarrassing" material exceeded his authority under the law.²² In August--around the time Irish F.O.I.F. were being hounded from the streets of New York by ADL vigilantes--the Post Office announced that "tactless attacks" on America's allies would be banned from the mails.²³ Burleson refused to answer congressional inquiries concerning his instructions to postal workers. Such disclosure, he insisted, would be "incompatible with the public interest."²⁴

Postmasters from across the country soon flooded the national office with publications they believed were unmailable. Within a month, the Post Office had banned fifteen major publications, most of them socialist.²⁵ As one observer noted, the Espionage Act soon became "the chief

weapon leveled by the federal government against dissenters, who gradually replaced spies and aliens as the major enemy."²⁶

Passage of the Trading-With-the-Enemies Act on 6 October 1917--in the midst of reports in the press concerning alleged Irish/German plots--dramatically broadened the powers of the Post Office.²⁷ The law required foreign-language publications to submit translations to the Post Office prior to publication or obtain special permits from the President.²⁸ The law also extended the Post Office's control over English-language newspapers by making it unlawful to "transport, carry, or otherwise distribute any matter which is non-mailable."²⁹

The Translation Bureau at the New York City Post Office assumed responsibility for reviewing the Irish-American papers published in the city--the Irish World, the Freeman's Journal, the Gaelic-American and the Advocate--even though the newspapers were published in English and presumably did not require translation.³⁰

Two District Court decisions in the autumn of 1917 gave a stamp of judicial legitimacy to the campaign of postal suppression. The Masses ruling supported the revocation of second-class or bulk-rate mailing privileges.³¹ In this case, Burleson had withheld an August 1917 edition of Masses from the mails. President Wilson interceded on behalf of the publishers of Masses. The President asked Burleson to

ease up, arguing that the men who ran the Masses were "well-intentioned." But when Burleson threatened to resign, the President backed down.³²

Burleson then employed a rather byzantine rationale to justify subsequent bannings: since Masses had missed an issue--the one that Burleson had banned--it was no longer a bona fide periodical and thus no longer eligible for a second-class mailing permit.³³ The Masses decision affirmed the Postmaster General's right to drive a publication out of business after only one offense.³⁴

The Spirit of 1776 decision in November 1917 upheld the suppression of a motion picture which disparaged England's conduct during the American Revolutionary War. The film by the same name presented graphic depictions of an incident known as the "Wyoming Valley Massacre," which showed British soldiers impaling infants upon bayonets, shooting innocent women and dragging off young girls. Thomas Bledsoe, a judge on the Southern District Court of California, concluded that the film, despite its historical accuracy, tended to inspire animosity towards Great Britain:

That which in ordinary times might be clearly permissible, or even commendable, in this hour of national emergency . . . may be as clearly treasonable. . . . The constitutional guaranty of "free speech" carries with it no right to subvert the purposes and destiny of the nation.³⁵

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the ruling and Robert Goldstein, producer of the film, was sentenced to ten years in penitentiary.³⁶ The ruling, in the judgment of

Zachariah Chafee Jr., "made the maintenance of a real freedom of speech impracticable."³⁷ The Post Office later used the Spirit of 1776 decision to publicly justify its suppression of the Irish World and other Irish-American newspapers.

Flushed by these court victories, postal officials began to scrutinize the Irish-American press with a renewed sense of purpose. William H. Lamar, Solicitor for the U.S. Post Office, took an unusual interest in the Irish World.³⁸ Lamar, perhaps in response to a letter from the editor of an Ohio newspaper, directed Postmaster Patten in New York City to send him two copies of each issue of the Irish World "until further notice," as well as past issues dating back to the implementation of the Espionage Act.³⁹

Lamar publicly defended his press-monitoring policies in the February 1918 edition of Forum magazine. In what was billed as "the first official interpretation" of the Post Office Department ruling with regard to the Espionage and Trading With the Enemy Acts, Lamar stated: "There is no such thing as suppression of a publication, as such, under our system."⁴⁰

Lamar dismissed critics who argued that the postal restrictions violated constitutional protections of freedom of speech and freedom of the press. He insisted that the use of the mails was simply

. . . a business arrangement by which a special privilege is granted upon compliance with conditions

imposed by certain laws. . . . For us to permit an exaggerated sentimentality, a misapplied reverence for legal axioms . . . would be criminal not only to our soldiers, sailors and ourselves, but to posterity!⁴¹

Lamar departed from Burleson's stated policy which forbade punishing publications for the "general tone" of their news or editorial columns. Criticism, Lamar advised, would only be permitted from those who were "loyal to the nation." For Lamar, the only practical way to cut through the ambiguities of questionable language was by ". . . application of that old adage of reading between the lines."⁴² Lamar issued a stern warning to those who--in defense of their rights of free expression--hearkened back to the signers of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution (a pervasive theme in the Irish-American press):

They are good rhetoricians but sorry historians It may be reasoned from history that had they pursued their present tactics then, instead of being mildly denied the use of the mails, they would have adorned the limbs of trees.⁴³

Lamar's thinly-veiled evocation of colonial lynching was an attempt to feed upon public sentiment. At the time, vigilantism was rampant throughout the nation. Gangs regularly disrupted public meetings, tar-and-featherings were endemic, lynchings, not uncommon.⁴⁴ Lamar's pronouncements represented a clear attempt to enlist popular support for less draconian measures. By his logic, press

censorship was preferable to public lynching. The goal was to give free rein to government censors.⁴⁵

Initial Reactions

The Post Office devoted most of its early attention to socialist and radical publications and to the increasingly suspect foreign-language press.⁴⁶ Irish-American newspapers, however, scorned socialism and were published in the English language. As a consequence they avoided problems with the Post Office--at least in the beginning.

Despite its early immunity, the Irish World condemned the harassment of foreign-language newspapers. The Irish World attributed the postal banning of an Italian-language paper and a Slovak-language paper to an insidious Anglo-Saxon campaign to control American public opinion:

[The] aim is to completely Anglicize this country in language, thought and feeling so that it may more easily and completely be brought under the domination of England.⁴⁷

The first sign of serious trouble came when the New York Post Office barred the July, August and September 1917 issues of Bull from the mails.⁴⁸ Although not an Irish-American publication per se, Bull was singleminded in its anglophobia and publisher Jeremiah O'Leary was a nationally-known Irish agitator. His highly publicized exchange with Woodrow Wilson during the 1916 presidential election had also marked O'Leary as the most notorious hyphenate in the nation.

The banning of Bull sent shock waves through the editorial offices of Irish-American newspapers.⁴⁹ The Leader was incredulous:

Bull is not a Socialist publication! It is American through and through and its editor Mr. Bedford has 260 years of American ancestry.⁵⁰

The Gaelic-American defined the issue in terms of freedom of the press and accused the New York mainstream press of encouraging the censorship:

England's subsidized papers of New York are howling for the suppression of every newspaper that refuses to laud England or to swallow without wincing the hypocritical pretense that the arch foe of human liberty is fighting for the freedom of small nations. . . . We have a right say no American troops should be sent to France. . . . We have a right to print this and send it through the mails . . . no Postmaster, President or Congress has the right to stop us.⁵¹

Not all Irish-American newspapers opposed censorship. The Western Watchman suggested that freedom of speech and of the press were limited rights and that "preventative measures" were necessary. The Watchman, the official newspaper of the St. Louis diocese, argued that censorship of the press was consistent with Church attitudes regarding the suppression of "immoral" literature. "Rigid censorship," the paper advised, "is necessary for the public good."⁵²

The Chicago Citizen gave vague and muted support to the governmental campaign to silence dissent:

[The] government is entitled to the benefit of every doubt . . . as long as it is not clearly in error, it ought to be supported. . . . [The] effort federal

authorities are making for the suppression of treason have had their effect. The old theory that it is better to allow men to express themselves has happily not been followed.⁵³

The decision to suppress Bull was quickly upheld in U.S. District Court.⁵⁴ In October, O'Leary announced that Bull would suspend publication until the constitutionality of the postal ban was resolved.⁵⁵ A month later, O'Leary and two Bull employees, business manager Adolf Stern and managing editor Luther S. Bedford, were indicted under the Espionage Act on charges of conspiring to obstruct recruitment in the armed forces.⁵⁶ Irish-America's most acerbic anti-British voice was silenced.⁵⁷ The suppression of Bull and the indictment of O'Leary were harbingers of things to come. Soon after the indictment, Solicitor Lamar began to personally monitor the Irish World.⁵⁸

January 1918 Bannings

The New York press took passing notice of the Irish press bannings but offered little comment. The New York Times suggested that the Irish papers sowed discontent among the volatile Irish. The New York World recorded publisher Robert Ford's surprised reaction. Ford admitted that the Irish World had

. . . not been saying complimentary things about England. But we have demonstrated our loyalty to the government of the United States at all times.⁵⁹

The broader Irish community reacted to the press bannings with a contradictory mixture of outrage and shame.

The United Irish Societies of New York expressed "astonishment" at the postal proscriptions and sent off an angry resolution to Attorney General Gregory. A spokesman for the group articulated the recurring refrain--that criticism of England and support for Ireland did not constitute disloyalty to the U.S.⁶⁰ In contrast, the Citizen expressed guarded regret at the banning of the Irish World (it failed to mention the other two papers) but was more concerned about the possible effects upon the public image of the Irish:

. . . it is unfortunate that anything should occur to give the enemies of the Irish race an opportunity to question the loyalty of our people in America to the flag and the government of this country.⁶¹

Lamar based his decision to withhold the Jan. 19 issue of the Irish World upon reports filed by L.J. Vance, a civilian volunteer at the Translation Bureau of the New York Post Office, and M.H. Bigelow, assistant district attorney with the Justice Department. Vance and Bigelow objected to articles about an Irish women's petition to President Wilson on behalf of Ireland. Ford learned through "unofficial channels" that the reports about the petition had inspired a "storm of protest in certain quarters."⁶²

Vance called attention to "two deliberate misstatements of fact." The first concerned a reference to Countess de Markievicz who, the newspaper stated, had been condemned to

death "for her share in the struggle for Irish freedom."

Vance advised:

The truth of the matter is that she was condemned to death quite justly for her part in inciting the Sinn Fein rebellion which resulted in a bloody massacre in the streets of Dublin.

The second alleged misstatement was in an editorial about Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington whose husband, the paper noted, had been "brutally murdered by an English officer" during the Easter Rising. Vance conceded that Skeffington had indeed been shot and killed by a British officer but he attributed the Irish World's characterization of the incident to German intrigue. Vance, in effect, blamed the victim for the crime:

. . . it is also true and subsequently proven that the officer responsible for his execution had been insane by the horrors of the massacre brought about by the Irish revolutionaries. . . . Both these instances are plain and brazen illustrations of the way the Irish-American press is being utilized by German interests for the dissemination of Prussian propaganda in this country.⁶³

Bigelow agreed with Vance's assessment:

This paper makes the Irish cause a mere instrument for casting aspersions on all the allies and their war aims.⁶⁴

Vance--along with William H. Maxwell, the ex-newspaperman who volunteered to oversee the press-monitoring division of the New York post office--would become an unbending advocate of harsher controls on the Irish-American press in the coming months. On more than one occasion, Vance forwarded information gleaned from the Irish World concerning public

meetings to Military Intelligence and to the Bureau of Information, forerunner of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.⁶⁵

The press monitors, however, did not always see eye to eye. Assistant district attorneys with the Justice Department often disagreed with the assessments of the civilian volunteers who examined Irish newspapers for the Post Office.⁶⁶ The civilians at the Translation Bureau were not ordinary postal employees but were private citizens who volunteered to translate foreign-language newspapers for the Post Office.⁶⁷ Nationwide, there were perhaps several hundred. Many, if not most, were college and university professors. In New York these translators expanded their mandate to include English-language papers.⁶⁸

Assistant U.S. district attorneys often tried to rein in their civilian counterparts. An assistant district attorney identified only as J.A.H. ridiculed, for example, a report by Robert A. Bowen concerning the Jan. 26, 1918 issue of the Freeman's Journal.⁶⁹ J.A.H. concluded that nothing in a report about English losses to German submarines--reprinted from the London Herald and judged by Bowen to be offensive--was in violation of the Espionage Act. J.A.H. noted that the story had already appeared in "practically all the American papers." He concluded that a report about British efforts to control news from the Western front had been discussed in British and American papers and in British

Parliament. Concerning Bowen's assessment that another report was against conscription in the United States, J.A.H. advised: "The charge is so silly that it may be passed over."⁷⁰ He recommended that the Jan. 26 issue be released for distribution.

Bowen argued that the use of previously published material by the Freeman's Journal was no defense: "That it attains its ends often by use of articles and speeches elsewhere given cannot disguise its purpose."⁷¹ Bowen's judgment prevailed and the Jan. 26 issue was withheld pending the removal of the offensive material.

Following their banishment from the mails, the three New York Irish papers engaged the services of a Judge Rooney of New York. Rooney, accompanied by Robert Ford of the Irish World and James K. McGuire, former mayor of Syracuse, met with Lamar to discuss the problem.⁷² McGuire also met separately with Postmaster General Burleson, a personal acquaintance.

By all accounts, the meetings were conciliatory and Ford was eager to comply with government regulations. Lamar permitted the newspapers to withdraw the Jan. 19 and Jan. 26 issues, remove the offending material and resubmit revised editions for inspection:

I am satisfied, from the thorough understanding which has been had, that no further action will be necessary and that the publications will continue without interruption.⁷³

Ford began to probe the postal barriers in search of weak points. First, he requested permission to re-mail the original copies of the Jan. 19 and Jan. 26 issues with the offending material cut out.⁷⁴ Lamar refused. Such alteration, Lamar, would result in the revocation of second-class mailing privileges. Ford also tried unsuccessfully to mail unaltered original copies at first-class rates.⁷⁵

A pattern was established. Offending issues would have to be revised, reprinted and submitted for re-examination. Throughout the negotiations about procedures, Lamar and Burleson continued to insist that the Post Office was not engaging in censorship of the Irish press:

The Postmaster General takes the position that neither this Department nor postmasters should assume the position of censors; that is, suggest what should be put in or left out of any publication. . . .⁷⁶

The revised editions of the Irish World displayed a dramatic shift in content which would continue through the remainder of 1918. Page one of both the January 19 and January 26 revised issues were devoted to a mawkish patriotic serial entitled, "A Study of Lincoln's Life."⁷⁷ The inside pages substituted gossip and family-oriented features for the usual editorials and news about the War.

February/March 1918

The Irish World escaped proscription in February and March despite recommendations that several issues be banned. The Freeman's Journal was less fortunate. Postal censors

declared one issue of the Freeman's Journal nonmailable in the month of February and virtually every issue for the month of March. The Gaelic-American also suffered repeated postal bannings.

Lamar withheld the February 16 and March 2 issues of the Freeman's Journal because of an article that had no direct connection to the Irish question. Authored by Amos Pinchot, the piece complained that the rich were not paying their fair share in taxes to support the war effort (the article appeared in both issues). Vance, J.A.H., and another censor, William Wadsworth, concluded that the article tended to incite class hatred.⁷⁸ The Post Office banned other March issues for, among other things, quoting Victor Berger, Socialist candidate for U.S. Senate from Wisconsin, and for reprinting an anti-war speech delivered on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives on Feb. 7 1917, by Congressman William E. Mason of Illinois.⁷⁹

Commentary on the Irish question attracted the usual condemnation. A page-one article by English author Hilaire Belloc was judged offensive by Assistant U.S. District Attorney H. Tweed because it advocated self-determination for Ireland after the War. "Its direct result," Tweed concluded, "is to dissuade Irish-Americans from enlisting and encourage them to evade the draft."⁸⁰ The March 30 issue of Freeman's Journal was banned because of a full-page photo layout entitled, "Second Anniversary of Ireland's

Glorious Easter Week--How the Irish Republic Was Established
`Mid Shot And Shell." Two of the photos depicted property
damage done by the British bombardment of Dublin during the
1916 Easter Rising. Vance observed:

The fact that an Irish Republic has not been
established has nothing to do with the case, nor
is there any reason for printing these pictures
except to incite antagonism to Great Britain . . .
this stupid and virulent anti-British newspaper
should not be permitted to pass through the mails.⁸¹

Attorneys J.A.H. and William Whalen supported Vance's
analysis:

It may be reasonably believed that these pictures
will tend to stimulate in the hearts of some, if not
all, of the Irish race, who receive this paper,
hatred of England, and England, being an ally of the
United States in this war, it is submitted they come
within the scope of the Espionage law.⁸²

The Gaelic-American was subjected to constant
harassment throughout February and March of 1918. As the
most radical and unrepentant Irish newspaper in America, the
Gaelic-American was a prime target for both the Justice
Department and the Post Office. Editor John Devoy had been
deeply implicated by the von Igel revelations of October
1917. Largely due to mainstream press reports, Devoy's
name--along with that Jeremiah O'Leary's (who by this point
was under federal indictment)--was synonymous in public
consciousness with disloyalty.

Postal records concerning the Gaelic-American are few
and fragmentary. It is difficult to determine which issues
were declared unmailable. What is certain, however, is that

distribution of the Gaelic-American was disrupted on a weekly basis by the Post Office. On Feb. 2, for example, the newspaper complained of a "comparatively heavy financial loss" but insisted that, if suppressed, it would go down with its colors flying--"the Stars and Stripes and the Green, White and Orange Tricolor of the Irish Republic."⁸³ Three weeks later the Gaelic-American again complained of harassment:

. . . pleading for Ireland's freedom and asking American sympathy for the Irish cause is no violation of American law. . . . It is absurd and unfair to suppress an Irish paper for publishing in full reports of speeches, the chief points of which have been already printed in all the daily papers of New York. . . . No newspaper dependent on subscriptions can continue to exist under such circumstances, and it looks as if somebody wants to put the paper out of business.⁸⁴

The Gaelic-American issued a call for support from its friends and readers.

The Irish World was also subjected to weekly scrutiny, although none of its February or March issues were barred. The Post Office received complaints about the Irish World from vigilante groups as far away as Hawaii.⁸⁵

Vance complained of the "offensive tone" of editorials in the Irish World.⁸⁶ He also complained that articles were ". . . deliberately calculated to wean away the loyalty of English subjects of Irish birth, or who are sentimentally attached to Ireland."⁸⁷

But the most feverish condemnations of the Irish World arose from W. H. Maxwell, the most committed of the

volunteer watchdogs at the Translation Bureau of the New York City Post Office. The focus of Maxwell's March ire was a letter which had originally appeared in the New York Evening Post and was reprinted in the Gaelic-American and the March 9 issue of the Irish World. That issue also contained a half-page feature announcing the "Great Catholic War Drive Is On." The article urged Catholics "to help the government win the war."⁸⁸

The offending letter, written by Irish poet and novelist, Padraic Colum, told of an incident in Cork City in the south of Ireland in which a girl was found naked and drugged, allegedly after having ingested American-made candies. The letter suggested that Allied troops--including American sailors--should be withdrawn from Ireland. Maxwell demanded that the papers be charged with criminal libel:

. . . even if the innuendo on the American sailors are of substantial foundation in fact. . . . Such publication should, in short, not be permitted under any circumstances as it tends to discourage enlistment.⁸⁹

On this occasion, however, Lamar declined to follow Maxwell's advice. Maxwell refused to let the matter rest. The following week he sent an indignant memo to Lamar which betrayed the extent of his eagerness to harass the press:

The function of this office, as you have repeatedly advised me, is to produce evidence out of the papers on which corrective legal action can be sustained. We have shown that there seems to be a purpose animating papers like the New York Evening Post and the Irish papers. . . . We have for a long time been very willing to shut out of the mails a lot of the miserable little hounds who print the foreign

language papers but we have never been willing to proceed against publications like the New York Evening Post [and the Irish papers]. . . . I am willing to devote my nights and my days to assisting the Department of Justice in bringing the publishers of the New York Evening Post and the Irish papers to justice.⁹⁰

In the months that followed, Maxwell would get his chance.

The Post Office also barred distribution in March of a pamphlet entitled, "Irish Men and Women Awake." The one-page manifesto, copies of which had been withheld from the mails by inspectors in Oakland, Boston, Jersey City, and Paterson, New Jersey, called upon Irish-Americans to lobby their senators and congressmen on Ireland's behalf. The pamphlet demanded that Ireland be included with Belgium, Poland and Servia as one of the small nations whose independence would be restored after the War. George A. Leonard, Chief Inspector at the Boston Post Office, dismissed the arguments supporting Irish independence and convinced Lamar to ban the pamphlet:

Ireland is not now and never could be considered as one of the small oppressed countries. . . . Ireland can under no condition of circumstances [sic] be classed with Belgium, Poland or Servia because these countries are seperate [sic] and distinct nationalities, who operate under their distinctive Governments . . . while Ireland is now and has been for generations part of the English government . . . it would be unwise and impolitic in this crisis . . . to antagonize England with a matter that is strictly local. . . . the persons who are interested in this scheme and who distribute these leaflets are as German as if they were German born.⁹¹

April 1918: The Conscription Controversy

In April, the Post Office again withheld issues of the Irish World, the Gaelic-American and the Freeman's Journal from the mails.⁹² And once again, through the intercession of powerful friends and a personal visit to Solicitor Lamar, Robert Ford won permission to file amended editions of the Irish World.

Most of the offending material concerned controversy surrounding a bill before British Parliament to impose military conscription in Ireland. The issue attracted a great deal of attention in both the mainstream and the Irish-American press.

Irish-American editors recoiled at the prospect of Irishmen being forced to fight in France beneath a British flag while thousands of British troops remained garrisoned in Ireland. Many Irish regarded British soldiers in Ireland as an alien army of occupation. Many also feared that forced conscription would accelerate the already severe depopulation of Ireland. Much of the mainstream press, however, equated opposition to conscription in Ireland as evidence of disloyalty and even treason to the United States.

Postal censors argued that negative commentary on the bill was contrary to American interests. L.J. Vance objected to discussion of conscription in virtually every issue of the Freeman's Journal and most issues of the Irish

World. Vance, for example, objected to two articles in the April 20 issue of the Irish World:

They both more or less openly counsel resistance to British rule and threaten the internal peace of the British Empire.⁹³

Vance, in a memo concerning the April 27 issue of the Irish World, argued that the anti-colonial struggle in Ireland could jeopardize the American war effort:

Ireland irrespective of the claims of its political leaders is a part of the British Empire, and it is subject to the laws enacted by the British Parliament. If it is wrong to apply conscription to Ireland, it is wrong to apply conscription to any part of the British Empire, and by direct inference it is also wrong to apply conscription to the people of the United States.⁹⁴

Assistant District Attorney William Wadsworth concluded that passage of a conscription bill for Ireland would have a salutary effect on the Allied war effort by enabling the U.S. government to force Irish aliens in America--who were exempt from the U.S. draft--to enlist in the British army:

The editorial regarding the conscription Act I believe to be illegal. . . . I submit this opinion, having in mind the Solicitor's injunction that the infractions of the Irish World must be more than a mere reiteration or expression of the innate antagonism of the Irish World for the English.⁹⁵

James K. McGuire, the influential ally who had proved helpful to Ford in January, interceded once again on behalf of the Irish World. McGuire met with Lamar. And in a "private" letter to Burleson, he drew attention to his own patriotic credentials by noting that he would have written sooner had he not been actively engaged in promoting the

sale of Liberty bonds within the Irish-American community. McGuire informed Burleson that reports similar to those in the Irish World had appeared in the mainstream press:

It looks absurd to many of your friends that these two issues [of the Irish World] so absolutely harmless should be barred from the mails while the American daily press is filled with the bitterest attacks on the English occupation or government in Ireland.⁹⁶

At least one censor shared McGuire's reasoning.

Assistant U.S. Attorney William Whalen disagreed with Vance and Wadsworth about the need to withhold the Irish World for reports about conscription. He warned that banning such material could set a dangerous precedent for the mainstream press:

To concur in their decision is to admit that the printing in the American Press, from time to time of what has been said in the British Parliament about the effect conscription will have in Ireland, comes within the purview of the Espionage Act, and therefore these American papers should be denied the use of the mails.⁹⁷

Whalen also disagreed with Vance's and Bigelow's objection to an April 20 editorial in the Freeman's Journal

. . . it merely states what Ireland's attitude is towards conscription, an attitude somewhat similarly expressed by other metropolitan newspapers and based upon . . . the expressed opposition by the different parties in Ireland to the proposed conscription bill.⁹⁸

Whalen, however, was overruled on both occasions. There is no record of any subsequent effort by McGuire to intercede on behalf of the Irish World.

The postal proscriptions had begun to take their toll. The Freeman's Journal, after weeks of almost continuous bannings, was under severe financial strain. The Gaelic-American was warned that it would be permanently barred from the mails if it continued to attack Great Britain. The Gaelic-American complained that the press bannings were part of a larger campaign to destroy the cause of Irish independence by silencing legitimate public discourse on the issue. The paper blamed British propaganda and a compliant mainstream press.⁹⁹

It is quite evident that the intention is to put the three Irish papers out of business for the benefit . . . of the British Oligarchy, even at the cost of serious injury to the United States. The action of Congress in placing this arbitrary power in the hands of one man enables that man . . . to destroy such small papers, while some of the great dailies, which he fears, boldly attack the government. . . . The action is that of a bully who smashes the small and helpless and cowers before the strong.¹⁰⁰

April was the last month, according to postal records, that issues of the Irish World were barred from the mails. But the campaign of control continued and issues were delayed on a weekly basis. In an April editorial, the Irish World insisted that support of Irish independence was compatible with loyalty to the United States:

The enemies of the Irish in the United States . . . [insist that] justice for Ireland at the present time is detrimental to the interests of America--that those in America who are true to Ireland are disloyal to the United States. Loyalty to Ireland has for 100 years been a guarantee of loyalty to the United States. . . . Because they ask that Ireland be entitled to self determination is no reason for

supposing that they are disloyal to the country that has espoused the cause of small nations.¹⁰¹

On the west coast, the San Francisco Leader had obstacles of its own to overcome. At the end of April, the paper issued a plea for support from its readers:

We are being accused of a lack of patriotism and failure to support the United States . . . just because we have been making a fair fight for Irish liberty.¹⁰²

The Leader, in response to its critics, would become increasingly shrill--and jingoistic--in its support of the American war effort in the coming months.

Notes to Chapter VII

¹"Notice to Our Readers," Irish World 26 Jan. 1918: 4.

²The Jan. 19 issue of the Freeman's Journal was later released for distribution without revisions on Jan. 23 on order of Lamar. Telegram, Lamar to Postmaster of New York, 23 Jan. 1918, file number 50107, Records of the Post Office Relating to World War One, box 116.

³Rankin was one of 50 members of the U.S. House of Representatives who voted against the War.

⁴No mainstream daily newspaper suffered postal restrictions during World War One although several carried material that was deemed in violation when it appeared in the Irish-American press. William H. Maxwell of the translation bureau of the New York City Post Office appealed unsuccessfully on several occasions for permission to proceed against the Hearst papers and the New York Evening Post.

⁵Established in February 1915, the Irish Voice ceased publication in November 1915. Agents with the Justice Department charged that the paper--which had been banned in Canada--was supported by German funds. Editor James L. Dwyer, a longtime Chicago newspaperman, denied the charges and insisted, "we will continue to condemn British hypocrisy and no one will stop us." It is unclear whether the paper failed due to government intimidation or lack of public support. See Literary Digest 31 July 1915: 201; "Investigate Irish Voice Chicago," New York Times 10 Dec. 1915: 3; "Irish Voice Offices Raided by U.S. Agents," Chicago Tribune 10 Dec. 1915: 1; "Chicago Irish Paper Raided," 25 Dec. 1915: 1.

⁶New York Times 16 Nov. 17: 5; 23 Nov. 17: 3.

⁷The list of newspapers that had at least one issue withheld from the mail during 1918 includes: the Irish World of New York, the Gaelic-American of New York, the San Francisco Leader, the Philadelphia Irish Press and the Advocate of New York and the San Francisco Leader. October and November 1918 issues of America, the Jesuit periodical, were banned because of a series of articles on the Irish question. Ironically, the articles were reprinted in 1919 as part of a U.S. House of Representatives hearing on the Irish issue. Carroll 114-15. A number of books and pamphlets dealing with issues of Irish-American concern were also declared non-mailable. A partial list of overtly Irish titles includes: "Robert Emmet;" "Irish Men and Women

Awake;" "Doing My Bit For Ireland," by Margaret Skinnider; "How Ireland Has Prospered Under English Rule and the Slave Mind," by Arthur Griffith (Griffith would become the first president of the Irish Free State in 1921); Ireland, by Katherine Hughes; Ireland's Case, by Seamus MacManus; and King, Kaiser, and Ireland's Freedom, by J.K. McGuire. Records of the U.S. Post Office Relating to the Enforcement of the Espionage and Trading With the Enemy Acts During World War One, file numbers 47789, 50832, 5133, 51365, boxes 13, 180, 113, and 189, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁸A provision of the Trading-with-the-Enemies Act, which became law on 6 Oct. 17, made it illegal to use private express companies for distribution of publications which had their second-class mailing privileges revoked. See James R. Mock, Censorship 1917 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1941) 140. See also "Mr. Burleson to Rule the Press," Literary Digest, 6 Oct. 17: 12.

⁹Postal records relating to Irish publications during World War One are disorganized and sometimes fragmentary. The most complete files are those relating to the Irish World. The box which is supposed to contain records relating to the Gaelic-American--a paper that faced severe restrictions--contains few of the same. The records relating to the Gaelic-American have presumably been lost, destroyed or misfiled. Postal officials and members of the Justice Department were often at odds over enforcement of the postal provisions of the Espionage and Trading-With-the-Enemy Act. See Johnson 53. Thus Justice Department records provide an often essential supplement to postal records.

¹⁰The estimated circulation of the Irish World in 1913 was 60,000. Ayers and Sons, Ayers Newspaper Directory (Philadelphia: Ayers, 1913) 640.

¹¹Peterson and Fite 94.

¹²There had been efforts to punish the press for publishing certain kinds of material during earlier periods in American history. The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 made it unlawful to criticize the government and anti-British Irish editors were a major target. Editors who were jailed or forced to go into hiding included John D. Burk, editor of the New York Time Piece, William Duane, editor of the Philadelphia Aurora, and Matthew Lyon, editor of Lyon's Republican Magazine. The Irish who fled Ireland after the failure of the failed United Irishmen revolt of 1798 constituted America's first sizable group of political refugees. See James Morton Smith, Freedom's Fetters (Ithica: Cornell UP, 1956) 173; also, Rex Syndergaard, "'Wild Irishmen' and the Alien and Sedition Acts,"

Eire/Ireland, vol. 9, number 1, 1974: 14-24. A number of Copperhead papers were punished during the Civil War. See Thomas L. Tedford, Freedom of Speech in the United States (New York: Random House, 1985) 41-59.

¹³The Comstock Act of 1873, Tedford 55-56.

¹⁴Espionage Act of June 15, 1917. Title I, section 3.

¹⁵Mock 132.

¹⁶Postmaster General Albert Burleson observed in his annual report for 1918: "In every case in which the department's course was reviewed in the courts its action has been sustained." Annual Report of the Postmaster General for the fiscal year ended June 30 1918, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919) 13.

¹⁷Newspapers actively campaigned against a provision which would have established a presidential censorship board. The provision was defeated by one vote in the Senate. When the amended bill became law, there was little comment in the mainstream press. Thelen 136. The Hearst newspapers campaigned actively against passage of the Espionage Act.

¹⁸In a letter to Daniel Cohalan dated 11 July 1917, LaGuardia stated: "When the Espionage Bill was before the House and I was endeavoring to have stricken out some very vicious provisions. . . . I found indifference where I expected active support. As you know, as it finally passed, the sending of money for use in Ireland's cause is illegal and the arranging in this country for any meeting or proceeding in connection with it is likewise unlawful. I pointed out at the time on the floor of the House that this was directed solely against the Irish movement and had, no doubt, been inspired by outside foreign sources." Quoted in Buckley 163.

¹⁹Quoted in Mock 132.

²⁰Memorandum, Lamar to postmasters, numerical file 191962, Department of Justice Subject-Classified File 9-12, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

²¹Lamar served as Solicitor, or chief legal officer for the U.S. Post Office from 1913-1921.

²²Donald Johnson, "Wilson, Burleson, and Censorship in the First World War," Journal of Southern History February, 1962: 48.

²³Cuddy, Irish America 149.

²⁴Johnson 50.

²⁵These included the Masses, the International Socialist Review, the American Socialist, the Appeal to Reason, and the Milwaukee Leader. Johnson 48.

²⁶Jensen 169.

²⁷In the days surrounding passage of the Trading-With-the-Enemies Act, the mainstream press was full of reports concerning alleged Irish-German plots.

²⁸Foreign-language newspapers could not publish without filing translations or, alternately, obtaining permit. Within days, the Post Office was flooded with 1600 applications for a permit. Mock 141. The translation requirement, which was authored by Senator William H. King of Utah, was responsible for the demise of "scores of German-language newspapers" that operated on marginal budgets. Luebke 242.

²⁹Literary Digest 6 Oct. 17: 12.

³⁰Some Irish-American newspapers carried occasional items written in the Gaelic language. The press' use of Gaelic was, however, more ceremonial than substantive.

³¹Masses Publishing Company v Patten, 245 Fed. 102 (1917).

³²President Wilson contacted the Postmaster General after receiving letters from Max Eastman and Gifford Pinchot. Fowler 114. Peterson and Fite 97. Later in the War, Wilson successfully interceded on behalf of the Nation, which criticized the slacker raids, and on behalf of World Today, which had criticized U.S. intervention in Russia. Norman Thomas, editor of World Today, was a former student of Wilson's at Harvard. Donald Johnson, "Wilson, burleson, and Censorship in the First World War," Journal of Southern History February 1962: 55-56.

³³Chafee 98.

³⁴The Sedition Act, an amendment to the Espionage Act which became law on 16 May 1918, further expanded the powers of the Postmaster General. On "evidence satisfactory to him," Burleson could declare unmailable any publication which criticized the president or any of the institutions of government. Peterson and Fite 215. Passage of the Sedition Act came in the midst of shrill demands in mainstream

newspapers throughout the nation for stronger laws against dissent following the lynching of Frederick Praeger. See Chapter 6. When the Sedition Act was signed into law, according to Mock, ". . . leading journals expressed no alarm over this new invasion of their tradition of freedom. They printed no long editorials upholding the sanctity of the First Amendment." Mock 53.

³⁵The opinion was published in pamphlet form for general circulation: "Interpretation of War Statutes," Bulletin No. 33 of the Department of Justice, Irish World 2 Feb. 18: 4. U.S. v Motion Picture Film "The Spirit of 1776," 252 Fed. 946 (D.C.S.D. Cal., 1917). See also Mock 179-180.

³⁶Goldstein v U.S. 258 Fed. 908 (C.C.A. 9th, 1919). Goldstein had worked with D.W. Griffith on the production of "The Birth of a Nation."

³⁷Chafee 67.

³⁸The Solicitor of the Post Office handled legal affairs for the postal service. The position was under the mantle of the Justice Department.

³⁹Some editors were willing to contact the government directly to expose what they saw as disloyalty in the leading Irish newspapers. Post Office and Justice Department files contain a number of letters of complaint concerning Irish newspapers from editors of mainstream newspapers. In a letter to Secretary of State Robert Lansing dated 20 Oct. 1917, which was forwarded to the Post Office, Bob Skinner, editor of the Evening Independent of Massillon, Ohio, wrote: "I am enclosing a few clippings to show you that a publication called "Irish World" is a pro-German publication masquerading under the name of Irish liberty. Its editorials are insulting to our government and to our allies." File number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office. Letter, Lamar to Patten, 5 Dec. 17, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office. A letter from John R. Rathom, editor of the Providence Journal and the Evening Journal, to Attorney General Gregory drew attention to criticism of the President in the 28 Feb. 1917 issue of the Gaelic-American. A letter from Elmer L. Schuyler, editor of the Globe and Bulletin of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, accused the Gaelic-American of sedition. File number 9-19-1738 (formerly straight numerical file 188967), Department of Justice-Classified File.

⁴⁰Solicitor William H. Lamar, "The Government's Attitude Toward the Press," Forum February, 1918: 129, 133.

⁴¹Lamar 133, 132.

⁴²Lamar 139.

⁴³Lamar 140.

⁴⁴Peterson and Fite 194-208. "Tar and Feathers for Coats," New York World 14 April 1918: 12. Mob violence and vigilante activity accelerated in the Spring of 1918. In the first six months of the year there were at least 35 incidents of murder attributed to vigilante violence. Peterson and Fite 200. The National Civil Liberties Bureau documented 164 incidents of mob violence during the war years. Harold Nelson, Freedom of the Press From Hamilton to the Warren Court (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967) 307-320. The most violent month was April 1918, the month after Lamar's article appeared in Forum.

⁴⁵John Lord O'Brian, head of the War Emergency Division of the Justice Department from 1917-1919 and Justice's man in charge of working with the Post Office to enforce wartime censorship laws, said this about Lamar: "The Solicitor of the Post Office Department, the man who had been a political boss in Maryland, was without any real qualification for censorship and a real reactionary. He was ruthless in excluding from mails newspapers or magazines which expressed anything like a radical point of view." Quoted in Buckley 180-181.

⁴⁶By autumn of 1918, according to Peterson and Fite, 75 newspapers were interfered with by the Post Office (Nelson states that the distribution of over 100 publications was affected. Nelson 254. "It was the little newspapers--the reform or radical publications--along with the foreign-language press, which were suppressed by the government." Peterson and Fite 95. The mainstream daily press were not interfered with. "It was hardly necessary to discipline American newspapers and magazines. . . . Most of the big influential publications were commercial undertakings conservative in outlook and thoroughly attuned to the war. They usually reflected the sympathies and interests of the wealthy, of the conventional, and of those in power." Peterson and Fite 93. Oswald Garrison Villard's New York Evening Post had some trouble. But even the Hearst papers, which often mirrored opinions for which Irish newspapers were proscribed, was not interfered with because of their power and influence.

⁴⁷"Would Have Us Anglicized," editorial, Irish World 25 Aug. 1917: 4.

⁴⁸In a sworn statement before U.S. District Court,

Postmaster General Burleson charged that Bull was barred because it "cast suspicion on the conduct and motives of the U.S." and because of attacks upon England. "O'Leary Opposed Ridder's Loyalty," New York Times 21 Sept. 1917: 3. John R. Rathom, editor of the Providence Journal and the Evening Bulletin of Providence, Rhode Island, had written to Attorney General Gregory to call his attention to "the increasing and very marked treasonable utterances" of Bull. Letter, Rathom to Gregory, 16 July 1917, Department of Justice-Classified File 9-12-18, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁹The September issue called for the impeachment of President Wilson. In a letter mailed out to its subscribers, the publishers of Bull claimed that the July and August issues were barred long after they were mailed. The government strategy, according to the letter, would be to argue that second-class mailing privileges could then be withdrawn because Bull--having missed two issues--was not a periodical and thus did not qualify for a second-class permit. Letter, Justice Department-Classified File 9-12-18. The Post Office successfully employed this strategy against Max Eastman's Masses.

⁵⁰"Whose Turn Next?" editorial, Leader 1 Sept. 1917: 1.

⁵¹Gaelic-American 25 Aug. 1917: 1.

⁵²See editorials, Western Watchman 30 Nov. 1917: 10; 7 Dec. 1917: 10.

⁵³"Assuredly, We Are Determined," editorial, Chicago Citizen 26 Oct. 1917: 4.

⁵⁴Court

⁵⁵"O'Leary's Bull is Now the Canned Kind," New York World 17 Oct. 1917: 5. Bull, which first appeared in March 1916, never appeared again. Circulation was had climbed to 48,000 when it suspended publication. Buckley 182.

⁵⁶The indictments were based on material that had appeared in Bull, specifically "Progress of the War," which appeared in the August 1917 issue. The indictment charged that Bull contained "articles, poems, cartoons and pictures calculated and intended to create and promote insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny" in the armed forces. "O'Leary Indicted on Sedition Charges," New York Times 24 Nov. 1917: 3. See also, "O'Leary Indicted, Says He is Loyal American," New York American 24 Nov. 1917: 3.

⁵⁷O'Leary went on the run on the eve of his court

appearance. His flight inspired a nation-wide manhunt involving federal agents and the American Protective League and garnered massive attention in the daily press. On June 12, 1918, O'Leary was indicted again--this time on charges of conspiracy to commit treason, an offense which carried the death penalty. He was captured by federal agents a few days later. He was eventually tried and acquitted of all charges in 1919. In 1920, O'Leary ran for U.S. Congress in 18th district in New York as candidate for the Farmer-Labor Party. He would have defeated the Democratic incumbent, who won by 2,000 votes, if the Socialist Party had not drained off 5,000 votes. The New York papers did not report O'Leary's tally. David Shannon, The Socialist Party in America (New York: Macmillan, 1955) 158.

⁵⁸Lamar, as chief legal officer with the Post Office, made most of the decisions regarding Irish publications during World War One. Postmaster General Burleson did not play an active role in the control and censorship of the Irish press.

⁵⁹"Irish Papers Here Kept From Mail," New York World 23 Jan. 1918: 4.

⁶⁰"United Irishmen of City Protest Postal Ban," New York American 28 Jan 1918: 6.

⁶¹"New York Irish Weeklies Barred From Mails," Chicago Citizen 25 Jan. 1918: 1.

⁶²Quoted in New York Times 23 Jan. 1918: 4.

⁶³Memorandum, Vance to Postmaster Patten, undated, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁶⁴Memorandum, Bigelow to Postmaster Patten, undated, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁶⁵Vance used information gathered from Freeman's Journal and from the Irish World. On the Freeman's Journal, see letter to Col. R.H. VanDeman, War College, Washington D.C., 30 Jan. 18. See also, letter to District Communications Superintendent, Navy Yard, Brooklyn, N.Y., 28 March 18, file number 191962, Department of Justice-Classified File 9-12. Concerning the Irish World, see letter to District Communications Superintendent, Navy Yard, Brooklyn, N.Y., 28 March 1918; also, letter to Col. R. H. Van Deman, 11 April 1917, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁶⁶The difference of opinion between the Post Office and Justice apparently existed at all levels of management.

Johnson suggests that Justice often refused to defend cases that arose out of the actions of Burleson and Lamar. Johnson 53.

⁶⁷William H. Maxwell, Jr. was head of the Translation Bureau at the New York City Post Office. Louis J. Vance and Robert A. Bowen were his assistants. The three men were civilian volunteers who received \$1 annually for their services. Other translators received small salaries. Vance appears to have been in charge of monitoring the Irish World and the Gaelic-American.

⁶⁸In his annual report for 1918, Postmaster Burleson stated: ". . . the department had the benefit of the most valuable assistance patriotically volunteered by several hundred professors of modern language from the faculties and colleges and universities throughout the country. I desire to express my appreciation of their great service." Annual Report of the Postmaster General for 1918 13.

⁶⁹J.A.H. may have been James A. Horton.

⁷⁰Memorandum, J.A.H., 28 Jan. 1918, file number 50357, box 126, Records of the Post Office,

⁷¹Memorandum, Bowen to Mulker, 25 Jan. 1918, file number 50357, Records of the Post Office, box 126.

⁷²McGuire was prominent in the Democratic party, newspaper publishing and Irish nationalist circles. He owned a string of newspapers including the Syracuse Sun, the Scranton Truth and the Albany Light, and was chairman of the executive committee of the F.O.I.F. He was also author of The King, the Kaiser, and Ireland's Freedom (New York: Wolf Tone, 1916) which was banned from the mails in 1917.

⁷³Letter, Lamar to Senator James E. Watson, 1 Feb. 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁷⁴Letter, Ford to Burleson, 26 Jan. 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁷⁵Letter, Ford to Patten, 2 Feb. 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office. With a second-class permit, newspapers could be bulk-mailed at one cent per pound. When an issue of a periodical was declared non-mailable, it could not be mailed at any rate of postage.

⁷⁶Memorandum, Lamer to Patten, Jan. 29, 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁷⁷The Lincoln serial continued through Feb. 9. The

Feb. 16 issue carried a similar page-one feature on the life of George Washington.

⁷⁸Letter, Patten to Lamar, 11 March 1918, file number 50357, box 126, Records of the Post Office. Memoranda, J.A.H., Wadsworth, undated, file number 50357, box 126, Records of the Post Office.

⁷⁹Vance and Assistant U.S. Attorney H. Tweed, yet another press monitor, suggested that the March 9 Berger article would persuade readers that the war was for the benefit of capitalists. Memorandum, H. Tweed, undated, file number 50357, box 126, Records of the Post Office. Vance concluded that Mason's speech would inflame readers against the War. Memoranda, Vance to U.S. District Attorney, 8 March and 22 March 1918, file number 50357, box 126, Records of the Post Office.

⁸⁰Quoted in letter, Patten to Lamar, 16 March 1918, file number 50357, box 126, Records of the Post Office.

⁸¹Memorandum, Vance to U.S. District Attorney, 29 March 1918, file number 50357, box 126, Records of the Post Office.

⁸²Memorandum, J.A.H. and William Whalen, 2 April 1918, File number 50357, box 126, Records of the Post Office.

⁸³Editorial, Gaelic-American 2 Feb. 1918: 4.

⁸⁴Editorial, Gaelic-American 23 Feb. 1918: 4.

⁸⁵Letter, G.R. Carter, President, Hawaiian Vigilante Corps of the American Defense Society, to W.C. Peterson, Assistant Postmaster, Honolulu (letter forwarded to New York), 6 February 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁸⁶Memorandum, Vance to Wadsworth, 21 March 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁸⁷Memorandum, Vance to Wadsworth, 28 March 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁸⁸Irish World 9 March 18: 6.

⁸⁹Memorandum, Maxwell to Vance, 16 March 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁹⁰Memorandum, Maxwell to Lamar, 23 March 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁹¹Memorandum, Leonard to Lamar, 25 March 1918, file number 50832, box 13, Records of the Post Office.

⁹²Three issues of the Irish World were withheld although the paper filed amended issues which then were mailed. At least three issues of the Freeman's Journal were declared non-mailable. Evidence suggests that the entire press run of the Gaelic-American for April was barred from the mails--in each issue, the paper complained of censorship.

⁹³Memorandum, Vance to Wadsworth, 18 April 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁹⁴Letter, Vance to Lamar, 24 April 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁹⁵Memorandum by Wadsworth, no date, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁹⁶Letter, McGuire to Burleson, 27 April 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office. McGuire also successfully interceded on behalf of the April 6 issue. Ford was permitted to file an amended issue. Telegrams, Lamar to Patten, 5 April 1918; Ford to McGuire, file number 50107, Records of the Post Office, box 116. The April 6 issue was originally withheld because of "unfavorable comment on England's past and present treatment of the people of Ireland" and because of an editorial supporting home rule for India. The censors complained that the editorial could discourage the enlistment of "colored men" in the American army. Memorandum, J.A.H. and Whalen, 5 April 1918, file number 50107, Records of the Post Office, box 116.

⁹⁷Memorandum, Whalen to Lamar, 20 April 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁹⁸Memorandum, Whalen, 23 April 1918, file number 50357, Records of the Post Office, box 126.

⁹⁹Editorial, Gaelic-American 20 April 1918: 4.

¹⁰⁰Editorial, Gaelic-American 13 April 1918: 4. Whalen and J.A.H. recommended that the April 20 issue of the Freeman's Journal be withheld because it carried a reprint of this editorial. Memorandum, Whalen and J.A.H., file number 50357, Records of the Post Office, box 126.

¹⁰¹"Irish Character," editorial, Irish World 6 April 18: 4.

¹⁰²"Support Your Own Paper," editorial, Leader 20 April
1918: 4.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SUPPRESSIONS EXPAND

Introduction

The campaign against the Irish press intensified in the Spring of 1918 as more papers fell under the scrutiny of postal censors. Activity at the Post Office reflected a rising national mood of hysteria about the War in which the even the slightest intimations of dissent were taken as evidence of disloyalty.

The situation became worse after passage in May 1918 of the Sedition Act. An amendment to the Espionage Act of 1917, the new provision came in response to a dramatic upsurge in vigilante activity and to widespread public complaints that existing laws had failed to control dissent.¹ The Sedition Act made it illegal to

. . . willfully utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States, or the military . . . or the flag. . . .²

The Sedition Act also empowered the Postmaster General-- "upon evidence satisfactory to him"--to order mail returned to the sender if he thought it violated the Espionage Act. Such mail would be marked "Undeliverable Under Espionage Act."³ The mainstream press contributed to the national mood of suspicion. John Lord O'Brian, Assistant to the

Attorney General in charge of administration of the Espionage Act, recalled:

The general publicity given the statute through the newspapers . . . fanned animosities into flame, vastly increasing the amount of suspicion and complaints throughout the country.⁴

It was in this environment that the censorship of the Irish-American press entered its next phase. At the height of widespread and unsubstantiated press reports in May 1918 about yet another German-Irish plot to foment rebellion in Ireland, postal monitors began to withhold issues of two other Irish papers, the Advocate of New York City and the Irish Press, a Philadelphia weekly that had first appeared in February.⁵ The Post Office also banned a book entitled, Ireland's Case, an anti-English history of Ireland by Notre Dame professor Seamus MacManus.⁶ By year's end, the Freeman's Journal would be forced out of business. The Gaelic-American would survive on donations from its supporters. The Irish World, harried and harassed, would voluntarily submit to weekly pre-publication censorship of its galley proofs.

The Advocate

The Advocate, a small, moderate New York weekly devoted to Irish interests, first attracted the censors' attention because of an article about British politics by English author, H.G. Wells. In the May 11 issue, Wells praised the British Labor Party and criticized the Conservatives. The

issue was banned because a quote attributed to Wells: "Down with Kaiserism and Carsonism! They are two sides of the same evil thing."⁷ Sir Edward Carson was head of Ireland's Unionist Party, which sought to maintain the link with Great Britain. Censors at the Translation Bureau monitored subsequent issues of the Advocate and recommended that a number of issues be barred but only two other issues--18 July and 27 July--were declared unmailable.

A memo concerning the July 6 issue provides a window into the attitudes that prevailed among at least some members of the Translation Bureau. It also offers evidence of a racially charged atmosphere where ignorance of and antipathy toward the language and cultural practices of those groups other than Anglo-Saxon were commonplace. A press monitor identified only as L.H. advised an unnamed assistant district attorney:

I am sending you the ADVOCATE for July 6th. As I do not usually read the Irish papers, I am amazed to find how very Irish this one is. I should not call it Irish-American. It is filled with advertisements of dancing classes and dances and so on, with the names of various Irish counties and towns joined to them. The paper is full of curious words like "Cumann, nan and mBan" [sic]. Apparently the Irish are just as devoted to parts at least, of their language, as any Germans can be to theirs. I do not see how any German can be much less American. . . . In an article . . . which I have blue pencilled, we find the resolution to enjoy ourselves "despite the sorrow attached to our exile". [sic] This, I think, is very enlightening. . . . THE ADVOCATE strikes me as being anything butapatriotic [sic] American paper.⁸

Advertisements for Irish dances and the use of Irish words and place names evidenced a lack of patriotism to the United States. The same censor observed a month later:

The whole tone of the ADVOCATE is un-American though I would not call it particularly pro-German. It is addressed to people who seem to be in this country but not of it.⁹

The Irish Press

The Irish Press of Philadelphia faced its first press banning on May 18, the date of its eighth issue.¹⁰ The newspaper, which never achieved much circulation, had not yet applied for second-class mailing privileges.¹¹

Throughout the Summer and Autumn, postal censors objected to articles about conscription and to the usual expressions of anti-British sentiment. Irish Press editor Patrick McCartan, who had been arrested in 1917 but not tried for attempting to travel to Ireland using a false U.S. passport, had also attracted the attention of Military Intelligence.¹²

Banner headlines in the September 14 issue of the Irish Press announced, "Irish Republic To Register Its Citizens." The campaign to enroll so-called Irish citizens was designed to give credibility to assertions that Ireland had proclaimed its independence and to counter British army efforts to recruit British citizens living in the U.S. The effort attracted the attention of the Philadelphia U.S.

draft board, Military Intelligence, the Justice Department and the Post Office.

There was some disagreement over how to deal with the problem. The postmaster at Philadelphia withheld successive issues of the Irish Press in the latter months of the War pending further decision. Attorneys J.A.H. and Whalen at the New York Post Office recommended banning the Irish Press.¹³ The U.S. Attorney for Philadelphia argued that McCartan's activities did not warrant prosecution. And he offered an uncharacteristic endorsement of free discussion of the Irish question:

It would be far better certainly to have this registration of citizens of the Irish Republic go off as a joke rather than treat it seriously . . . our desire [is] not to martyrize [sic] these individuals, or interfere with the free discussion of what Ireland is entitled to politically. . . .¹⁴

The Post Office continued to withhold issues of the Irish Press weeks after the War.¹⁵ U.S. Attorney Francis Caffey, who brought indictments against Jeremiah O'Leary, monitored McCartan's activities until at least as late as April 1919.¹⁶

The Gaelic-American

By early 1918, the Gaelic-American had been effectively marginalized.¹⁷ Nearly every issue was being banned from the mails. Publisher John Devoy, along with Jeremiah O'Leary, was firmly established in public consciousness as the most intransigent of Irish nationalists in America.

Implicated by the von Igel revelations in the 1916 Easter Rising, Devoy was under regular scrutiny by the Justice Department.

The Gaelic-American responded to the postal bannings with a defiant lack of repentance. The paper insisted upon the inviolability of its Americanism and contrasted itself with the "disloyal" socialist and radical labor newspapers. The Gaelic-American implied that they rather than it deserved suppression.¹⁸

By early Summer, Devoy was under investigation at the highest levels of the Justice Department for his activities as editor and publisher. Despite the postal bannings, the Gaelic-American had been mailing the first page of each issue to city officials, members of Congress newspapers, university professors and others. Alfred Bettman, Special Assistant to the Attorney General, personally examined the June and May 25 issues and concluded that only one--that of June 22--was in violation of the Espionage Act.

Bettman's interpretation of the law was far different than that employed by the Post Office. Bettman concluded that the issues he examined were in compliance with the law because they did not ". . . expressly or impliedly [sic] suggest to the Irish-Americans to withhold their participation in the war."¹⁹ Those same issues, however, were withheld by the Post Office.

John Lord O'Brian recommended that Devoy be charged with contempt of court for criticizing in the June 22 issue of the Gaelic-American the prosecution of Jeremiah O'Leary and O'Leary's brother, John.²⁰ U.S. Attorney Francis G. Caffey, however, decided not to prosecute Devoy:

I felt that Devoy was actually doing no harm to the business the Government has in hand . . . the contempt proceeding, whether successful or unsuccessful, might play into his hands.²¹

Caffey said that he was gathering evidence for a "more serious charge" against Devoy but there is no evidence that Devoy was ever charged or prosecuted.

The Gaelic-American blamed its plight on British intrigue and anglophiles within the federal government and the New York mainstream press:

You are doing more harm to America in this war, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Ochs, Mr. Reid, Mr. Pulitzer, Mr. Burluson and Mr. Gregory by your persecution and your misrepresentation . . . than . . . German spies could do in 100 years. . . . [You are] making a mockery of President Wilson's Declaration that all peoples have a right to self-government and self-determination . . . and you are doing it to help England hold Ireland down, not to serve America.²²

The Gaelic-American, in an editorial quoted by the New York Times, called William Lamar, Solicitor of the Post Office, "a know-nothing and a bigot" and accused an unnamed assistant to Attorney General Gregory (a veiled reference to John Lord O'Brian) as being "the Irish scoundrel" it all.²³

The pressure on the Gaelic-American continued to mount. In mid July, the paper issued an urgent appeal for \$10,000

to stay alive.²⁴ Requests for donations to the Gaelic-American Defense Fund would be made every week until the end of the War.

The Post Office refused to relent. Second-class mailing privileges were withdrawn in September. "The Americanism of the paper," complained Bowen, "is very Gaelic."²⁵ On the eve of Armistice, the Gaelic-American issued a weary and, for Devoy, conciliatory editorial which asked President Wilson to "Call Off the Dogs:"

We are persecuted and our loyalty to America is impeached by Mr. Wilson's subordinates at the very time that our race, in larger numbers than ever before, is fighting magnificently for America on the battlefields of France. . . . [the] persecution is certainly not carried on without Mr. Wilson's knowledge, but it is not a question of fixing responsibility, but of putting an end to the state of things which works evil for the country. . . .²⁶

Devoy's gesture at conciliation was not answered. The postal proscriptions against the Gaelic-American remained in place long after the end of the War.

The Freeman's Journal

The Freeman's Journal faced continuous proscriptions throughout May. Postal censors barred issues for discussing conscription, the postal censorship, and the prospects of Ireland's post-war independence.²⁷ Vance complained that the Freeman's Journal refused to stop criticizing the Allies for their decision not to include the Pope at the Peace Conference. He also condemned the paper for repeatedly

reprinting an editorial about racial inequality and the War from the Brooklyn Times, an African-American newspaper.²⁸

Finally, after the thirteenth issue of the newspaper was withheld from the mail by the U.S. Post Office, publisher A. Brendhan Ford gave up the struggle and shut down the Freeman's Journal in its 78th year of publication. In a farewell editorial, Ford wrote that he had been "made to realize" that he could not speak "regarding self-determination of Ireland" or "in defense of the Vicar of the Prince of Peace."²⁹ The demise of the Freeman's Journal came just as Solicitor Lamar started the procedure to revoke the newspaper's second-class mailing privilege.³⁰

The Irish World

Conscription and criticism of Great Britain remained the central concerns of those who monitored the Irish World. But the civilian volunteers and assistant district attorneys at the New York City post office began to include marginal and often frivolous material on their lists of objectionable material.

One censor, identified only as C.P., complained of the "general tone" of the July 6 issue of the Irish World. He objected specifically to a short discussion on Esperanto, which was interpreted as an attack upon the English language, and to a page-one cartoon depicting Irish signers of the American Declaration of Independence, which he condemned as a "suggestive plea for Irish independence."³¹

Another censor, H.C. Smith, recommended withholding the June 8 issue of the Irish World because, among other things, it complained of "English-made lies" in the American daily press and carried an advertisement for the sale of "Irish Republican Flags."³²

The attacks at times became personal. In a May 25 memo, Assistant District Attorney Wadsworth suggested that a group of prominent advocates of Irish independence who were quoted in the Irish World--among them New York Supreme Court Justice John Goff--were "not men of great intellectual weight."³³

The most severe condemnations came from the pen of W.H. Maxwell, who turned his enmity toward even the most temperate statements of support for Irish freedom. Maxwell's antipathy toward Irish independence was unequalled at the Post Office. His reaction to a letter which appeared in the August 3 issue of the Irish World illustrates the degree of his disapproval.

Written by Mrs. William McWhorter, National President of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the letter appeared under the heading, "Plea to President by Irish Mothers." It argued that Irishmen had fought nobly for America since the Revolutionary War and that the Irish hoped for an American victory in the present conflict. The letter also noted that the Irish had sought Home Rule for 30 years without success and that the issue of conscription

should be submitted to the Irish people for determination. Mrs. McWhorter complained that the American press distorted the Irish position and she called upon the President to speak for Ireland at the peace conference.³⁴

Assistant District Attorney Whalen found nothing offensive in the letter and expressed some sympathy for the sentiments expressed:

There are no threats, express or implied . . . neither does it contain criticism nor resentment of anything this country has done with reference to the Irish question. It is a sympathetic plea to the President to consider Ireland's cause both from the standpoint of the aid Ireland has rendered this country in the past and what the sons of those, who came to our shores long ago, are doing now. . . . The allusions to England, when considered in the light of what really has happened in the British Empire and as reported in our daily press, are, in the opinion of the reader, harmless.³⁵

Maxwell dismissed the letter as a "cleverly designed attempt" to create discord between the United States and Great Britain for the benefit of Germany and he called upon Lamar to suppress the issue of the Irish World. He also expressed contempt for the suggestion of Irish independence:

. . . any Irishmen with a grain of sense will readily see that if Ireland were politically and in every way separated from Great Britain it would not be long before she would be in trouble.³⁶

Lamar accepted Maxwell's conclusions over those of Whalen. And he reluctantly agreed to permit the August 3 issue to be mailed only after the direct intercession of Robert Ford, publisher of the Irish World, who assured Lamar that no more such material would be permitted in his

paper.³⁷ Maxwell's condemnations of Irish-American nationalism apparently won favor with Lamar. Maxwell would play an ever more active role in censoring the Irish World in the coming months. There is no record of any subsequent involvement by Whalen in monitoring the Irish World.

Pre-Publication Censorship of the Irish World

By August 6, Maxwell was complaining of articles in the Irish World that were ". . . not altogether illegal in word but . . . thoroughly disloyal in intent and effect."³⁸ Ford had had enough. He could no longer endure the weekly ordeal of delays and uncertainties over what was permissible. Ford presented Lamar with an unusual request: he wanted permission for postal censors to examine the galley sheets of the Irish World before the paper went to print.

Under normal procedure, postal censors examined the paper only when it had been dropped off at the post office for distribution. Civilian readers at the Translation Bureau then made recommendations about the fate of each issue to assistant district attorneys. The attorneys offered recommendations of their own and forwarded both to Solicitor Lamar for final determination. If an issue was found to contain objectionable material, it could be barred from the mails or, if permission was granted, the paper could be withdrawn, the offending content removed and the

entire press run reprinted at great cost to the publisher and resubmitted for examination.

The new arrangement short-circuited that process. It also invested direct and unsupervised powers of pre-publication censorship with the civilian volunteers. The new procedure by-passed both the assistant district attorneys, who often offered more temperate analyses than the postal volunteers, and Lamar.

Lamar granted Ford what amounted to a special favor. He explained his reasons in a letter to Postmaster Patten:

I am writing you at this time more in a personal than in an official capacity. . . . The postal service is in no sense a censorship, but Mr. Ford, who is here, is very anxious to submit informally . . . advance sheets of his paper so that everything may be eliminated which should not be published I am willing that it be done in an informal way until Mr. Ford is able to locate the people on his paper who are responsible for letting this class of matter through and he says he will discharge them as fast as he locates them; and I thoroughly believe that he is sincere. . . .³⁹

The new arrangement, however, did not go into effect for several weeks. The August 17 edition, for example, was withheld until a paragraph which called for a negotiated peace was withdrawn and the entire run reprinted. Maxwell suggested that the author of the offending paragraph, a Mr. Johnson, be placed in an internment camp with the "rest of his German friends."⁴⁰

Maxwell was reluctant to assume the task of censoring the Irish World's galley sheets. He complained to Lamar

that the Post Office did not have sufficient manpower to "proof-read" the Irish World.⁴¹ Lamar replied:

. . . my object in making this arrangement was to bring some one in touch with Mr. Ford who could, for a few weeks, point out the character of the objectionable matter that somebody connected with his paper seems to be putting over on him. Mr. Ford protested so strongly a desire to do what is right that I felt moved to request the Postmaster to help him for a while in order that he might get on the straight road.⁴²

Although Maxwell questioned the efficacy of the proposed arrangement, he agreed to try it:

I personally take very little stock in his [Ford's] claim that he don't know what's right and what's wrong. However, if you want us to do it, we will do it.⁴³

Robert Bowen, another official at the Translation Bureau, soon began to complain along with Maxwell that Ford, despite the special favor afforded him, seemed unwilling to learn from his mistakes:

. . . only by a comparing of the succession of galleys could you learn how little the editor of the Irish World seems disposed to benefit by the censoring. . . . the Irish World accepts deletion very fully--even blindly--so blindly, indeed, that it repeats each week the offenses of the preceding week.⁴⁴

Bowen and Maxwell wrote to Lamar on a weekly basis throughout September and October to list Ford's offenses. Ford, for his part, continued to assure Lamar of his eagerness to comply with the law. Bowen made note of the paper's "docile amenability" in excising questionable

material. But he also advised Lamar of the papers unwillingness to learn from its mistakes:

. . . we have reason to conclude that but for this weekly censoring there would always be objectionable if not actually illegal matter in the published sheet.⁴⁵

Bowen's patience began to evaporate upon receipt of the first galleys of the Oct. 12 issue. He complained to Lamar of "tiresome lists" of arrests and searches of suspects in Ireland, information, he concluded, that could have no interest to the readers of the Irish World. He expressed doubt that the paper's editorial direction would ever change:

I fear our effort to make the Irish World mailable is much like the attempt to mop up the Atlantic Ocean with mop and pail.⁴⁶

Bowen wrote to Lamar four days later when he received the remaining galleys of the Oct. 12 edition. An offending article, written by a Rev. John Talbot Smith, contained a long and florid defense of the Pope's call for an end to the War. Bowen was vehement:

It was with a feeling of resentment and indignation toward Mr. Ford that I read this very disloyal article. His action in accepting it and submitting it for the censorship that you have been considerate in according him appears to me to place him beyond the pale . . . alike personally and as a publisher. I believe you will agree with Mr. Maxwell and myself . . . There is no genuine Americanism on the right side of his Irish hyphen. . . I have lost the last glimmer of faith in Mr. Ford's assurances that he does not mean to offend and has to be shown in what his offenses consist.⁴⁷

Lamar forwarded Bowen's letters to Ford and suggested that closer scrutiny of prospective articles could spare future embarrassment.⁴⁸ Ford replied that Dr. Smith, in addition to being president of the Catholic Actors' Guild of America, was arguably the foremost Catholic writer in the country. Smith's Americanism, Ford insisted, was above reproach:

Passing over Mr. Maxwell's and Mr. Bowen's strictures upon myself personally I am astonished that they have placed such an extraordinary construction upon Dr. Smith's article.⁴⁹

Armistice

Lamar ended the pre-publication censorship of the Irish World soon after armistice. Lamar advised Maxwell to inform Ford that he should no longer submit galley proofs for examination. Lamar also informed Maxwell that copy expunged from the upcoming Nov. 20 issue of the Irish World did not violate the Espionage Act and should be permitted.

The offending material suggested that Ireland's claims should be placed on an equal footing with the claims of other subject nations at the impending peace conference. Lamar also advised Maxwell to inform Ford that it would be up to him to observe the requirements of the Espionage law:

Some such statement seems to be necessary for otherwise he might think that all restraint had been removed and I do not wish him to get any such idea in his head.⁵⁰

Maxwell's reply to Lamar, co-signed by Bowen, offers clear evidence of their eagerness to employ arbitrary standards in their censorship of the Irish World, standards

well beyond any legitimate concern for wartime security. It also demonstrates their willingness to transcend the law in the execution of their duties at the Translation Bureau. The War was over. So too, presumably, was the need to impose pre-publication censorship upon the Irish World in the interests of national security. Yet Maxwell was reluctant to relinquish his censor's quill:

I should be sorry to have you feel that in the blue-pencilling of the proof hitherto I was under the impression that the material so indicated was contrary to the Espionage Act. I felt, however since we were guiding the Irish World, that we might as well get some benefit to ourselves out of the process. Indeed, the Irish World acted upon interrogation marks as obediently as upon deletion.⁵¹

Robert A. Bowen continued to monitor the Irish World at the Translation Bureau until at least as late as April, 1919, five months after the end of the War.⁵² Self-appointed patriotic organizations and vigilantes continued to complain to the Justice Department about the Irish World and other Irish-American newspapers as late as August, 1921, nearly three years after the last shot was fired in the European War.⁵³

President Wilson ordered an end to postal censorship on 27 Nov. 1918 and Postmaster General Burleson promised to comply. There is no evidence that Burleson directed postmasters to end the censorship before the summer of 1919.⁵⁴

There is evidence, however, that competing intelligence agencies promoted conflicting analyses about the danger of Irish activities even after the War. The dispute carried all the hallmarks of an inter-agency turf war.⁵⁵ Francis Caffey, federal attorney in charge of prosecuting Irish activists, warned: "I am convinced that the situation is becoming quite serious."⁵⁶ Charles DeWoody of the Bureau of Investigations minimized the threat:

We have maintained confidential operatives among the inner group of radicals and the Department has been fully advised by reports of the exact status of the situation . . . I see no necessity for any action by the Department other than to continue to maintain a close watch over the situation.⁵⁷

John Lord O'Brian finally concluded in January, 1919, that investigation of Irish activities had become "a routine matter to be attended to by the New York Office of the Bureau of Investigation."⁵⁸ J.A.H., attorney at the New York Post Office, also concluded that the need to withhold the Irish newspapers ended with the War:

. . . now that the crisis has been passed the writer fails to perceive wherein the Espionage Act is violated in publishing the matter upholding the cause of Ireland to establish a republic.⁵⁹

But the suppression of Irish publications continued. Although Lamar released the Irish World from weekly scrutiny, the postal restrictions remained in place for other Irish periodicals and publications. The Irish Press and Gaelic-American were still banned from the mails. The

Gaelic-American complained that it was being withheld without cause:

The war is over and Creel has announced the end of censorship but the post office, at the demand of the Department of Justice, which is a nest pestiferous knownothings, keeps it in full blast in the case of the Gaelic-American.⁶⁰

On Jan. 14, 1919, the Post Office banned a pamphlet entitled, "How Ireland Has Prospered Under English Rule and the Slave Mind, by Arthur Griffith."⁶¹ Finally, in February 1919, the Gaelic-American was once again permitted to circulate through the mails. The World War One censorship of the Irish-American press had lifted.

Irish Press Reactions to the Postal Censorship

Irish-American newspapers--those that suffered postal exclusions and those that escaped the War unscathed--reacted in different ways to the governmental campaign to control opinion. No newspaper was immune. The Gaelic-American, uncompromising and rebellious, never wavered in its contempt for British presence in Ireland and British influence in the U.S. The Gaelic-American's refusal to conform to the demands of its critics proved nearly fatal. Support for Ireland's independence, the paper and insisted, was no crime. The Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register, which also declined to temper its attacks upon Britain, was forced out of business.

The Irish World chose a more conciliatory and pragmatic path. Following the initial postal bannings, the Irish

World enlisted the aid of powerful intermediaries and sought conciliation through negotiation. When that effort failed, the paper endeavored to cooperate with its censors.

Although it faced no postal exclusions during 1918, the San Francisco Leader was profoundly affected by the campaign to control opinion. The Leader, which like most Irish-American papers had initially opposed the War, became strident in its support of the American war effort. The Leader's efforts to demonstrate its loyalty to the United States became, in the end, a headlong descent into jingoism. The paper attacked every real and imagined manifestation of German influence with a rancor formerly reserved for "Anglomaniacs." Shortly before the end of the War, in an editorial against a proposal to establish an appointed school board, the Leader observed:

It is engineered by the huckster bigots, profiteers, uplifters, sex hygienists and birth controllers who pose as intellectuals in San Francisco. It is fathered by a department--the Bureau of Education--which has always been suspected of being completely controlled by German thought. It is a barefaced . . . attempt to Prussianize our schools.⁶²

The Leader flaunted its loyalty and "Americanism" in hopes of enlisting mainstream American support for Ireland at the post-war peace conference. But in doing so it succumbed to the same spirit of vigilantism and bigotry it had once so passionately decried.

Other Irish-American newspapers tried to distance themselves from the more radical elements in the nationalist

community while at the same time insisting upon the legitimacy of Irish national aspirations. The Western Watchman, for example, condemned Jeremiah O'Leary as a hothead but argued that his indictment on federal charges should be not be allowed to impede the effort on behalf of Ireland's independence:

Americans of Irish descent and extraction should see to it that no band of English loan sharks be allowed to prejudice American opinion.⁶³

The Watchman also objected to a U.S. government publicity bulletin which it said reduced the Irish question to one of enemy propaganda.

We find no fault with the bulletin for asserting that German propagandists have taken advantage of the Irish question. . . . But we vigorously protest against an official publication virtually proclaiming that there is no Irish question.⁶⁴

To the Watchman--and to much of America--Catholicism was an inseparable part of Irish identity. Efforts to link Irish nationalist aspirations to pro-Germanism, according to the Watchman, smacked of anti-Catholic bigotry.⁶⁵

The most complex response to the postal proscriptions of 1918 came from the conservative Chicago Citizen. The Citizen, which continued to promote constitutional nationalism long after that strategy had been discarded by other Irish newspapers and by the Irish-American community at large, went to torturous lengths in its attempts to protect the reputation and tenuous status of the American-Irish.

The Citizen tried to accomplish this in two ways: by distancing itself as far as possible from the more uncompromising activists within the nationalist movement who, the paper insisted, brought down shame and disrepute upon the Irish; and by insisting that loyalty to America demanded that Irish-Americans suspend--at least for the duration of the War--their ancestral hatred of Great Britain.

The Citizen expressed guarded dismay at news of the initial banning of the Irish World in January 1918. But it failed to mention the Gaelic-American or the Freeman's Journal which were withheld the same day. The Citizen also condemned Jeremiah O'Leary, publisher of Bull, in terms that could have easily come from the columns of the New York Times:

. . . such individuals do not speak for the Irish race and can never represent them. The Irish race are law-abiding: they are not socialists, they are not 'agin the government' here in America. . . . We shall not and cannot be misrepresented by these snakes in the grass.⁶⁶

The Chicago Citizen concluded--like the postal censors--that condemnation of Great Britain and support for the campaign to achieve the independence of Ireland were incompatible with loyalty to the United States: "We hold that American citizens cannot support the Sinn Fein cause without disloyalty to this country."⁶⁷

Yet for all its efforts to maintain respectability in the eyes of mainstream America, the Citizen could not shake

free of its own antipathy towards Anglo-Saxon influence. The Citizen struggled to reconcile what it saw as its wartime responsibility to support Britain with its duty to stand behind Ireland and to challenge Anglo-Saxon attacks upon the reputation and position of the Irish in America.

The Citizen employed a convoluted logic to its analysis of mainstream press accounts about opposition in Ireland to conscription. The Citizen argued that reports of opposition to forced conscription slandered the reputation of the Irish on both sides of the Atlantic. The Citizen aimed its attacks not at Britain--which proposed conscription--but at the American press which reported it. The Citizen absolved Britain of all responsibility. The Citizen praised England even as it reviled the Anglo-Saxon presence in America:

The common enemy of the Irish race is not in England. The rattlesnake of bigotry was scotched . . . long ago in England by the great democracy which has shown itself so nobly in every effort for fair play in its sister democracy in Ireland. . . . The common enemy of the Irish race went abroad upon the face of the earth . . . [it is] . . . a snake that deposited its eggs upon the "fruitful" rock of Plymouth Rock. . . .⁶⁸

Ironically, a number of Irish-American papers were condemned by postal censors for printing reports about conscription similar to those which the Citizen condemned in the mainstream press.

The paper accused the mainstream press of a "conspiracy of silence" regarding Irish contributions to the American war effort.⁶⁹ The Citizen also condemned the mainstream

press for printing unsubstantiated reports of German-Irish plots.⁷⁰ Above all else, protecting the image of the Irish in America was the primary concern of the Chicago Citizen.

Conclusions

The postal censorship campaign of 1917 and 1918 had a profound effect upon the Irish-American press. Two publications--Jeremiah O'Leary's Bull and the Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register--were forced out of business. The Gaelic-American and the Irish Press barely survived the War.

Irish newspapers responded in contrasting ways to the campaign to control opinion. If nothing else, the postal censorship shattered the tenuous solidarity that existed among most Irish newspapers. The Gaelic-American defied--with a nearly suicidal resolve--government efforts to dictate the acceptable limits of expression. At the other extreme, the Leader warded off charges of disloyalty by embracing a slavish jingoism. The Citizen traveled even further beyond the pale by condemning wartime agitation in support of Irish independence and sanctioning the postal censorship.

The Irish World, more pragmatic, chose conciliation over confrontation in its search for a response to the postal suppressions. In a desperate attempt to end the costly and time-consuming weekly negotiations with its postal overseers, the Irish World became an active agent in

its own control by requesting pre-publication censorship of its galley proofs.

The efforts of the press watchdogs at the New York post office also had a dramatic impact upon the editorial content of the Irish World, the Leader and the Gaelic-American during 1918. The number of editorials in the Irish World and the Gaelic-American plunged by over forty percent compared to the previous four years. The number of editorials containing anti-British or anglophobic sentiments fell in each of the three papers. The Irish World and the Gaelic-American dealt with the War during 1918 by avoiding comment on it, although both newspapers regularly carried ads promoting the sale of war bonds. At the same time, expressions of loyalty to the United States rose dramatically in the Irish World, the Leader and the Gaelic-American.⁷¹

It is more difficult to assess the effects of the postal censorship upon the broader body of Irish-American opinion. Some suggest that most Irish-Americans supported the government's campaign to suppress dissent.⁷² Many Irish elites and those most assimilated disassociated themselves from the anti-colonial struggle the moment the U.S. entered the War as an ally of Great Britain.

Yet the evidence is far from clear. The more extreme elements of the nationalist movement were either silenced or were forced to moderate their activities. The Ancient Order

of Hibernians went into hibernation and the Friends of Irish Freedom retreated to the shadows.

But other organizations arose to carry the banner. The Irish Progressive League came into being and remained active throughout 1918. At the height of the May suppressions, 2500 delegates gathered at the Irish Race Convention in New York City to proclaim Irish loyalty to America and to insist upon inclusion of the Irish question at the post-war peace conference. The so-called Mother's Mission also collected 600,000 signatures in the Spring and Summer of 1918 on a petition presented to President Wilson condemning British misrule in Ireland.⁷³ And at least one new newspaper--the Irish Press--came into being.

Despite the pressures of the war years, Irish-American hostility toward Great Britain remained undiminished. As soon as the guns fell silent in Europe, Irish-America mobilized to demand a hearing for Ireland at the peace conference. 25,000 gathered on Dec. 10 at Madison Square Gardens to celebrate Self-Determination Week and to demonstrate their support of Irish independence.⁷⁴ Following the Versailles conference (which failed to address the Irish question), Irish-Americans organized in great numbers to help defeat President Wilson's proposal for a League of Nations.⁷⁵

This contradictory evidence suggests that Irish-Americans during the War were torn between their devotion to

Ireland and their need to demonstrate unquestionable loyalty to the United States. Some endorsed the suppression of Irish-American publications.⁷⁶ At War's end, others no doubt longed only to forget that, when tempers were high, their loyalty to the United States had been challenged. Shortly after armistice, the Citizen observed:

Whether the censorship was or was not too strict during war times will remain a debatable question. . . . A mistake has occurred and there is no remedy for it. The less said the better.⁷⁷

Postal censors wielded vast powers in the name of wartime security. Yet there is no evidence that even a single issue of an Irish-American newspaper was withheld for endangering the war effort by discussions of troop movements, ship schedules or battlefield strategies, or through blatant attempts to obstruct military enlistment. The Irish press was suppressed rather for its criticism of Great Britain, its advocacy of self-determination for Ireland, and for its unrelenting complaints about Anglo-Saxon influence in America. In the hysteria of the times, such expressions were taken as evidence of disloyalty to the United States.

Irish-American newspapers, like many other sectors of American society, had lobbied loudly on behalf of American neutrality and had joined forces with German-Americans to keep the U.S. out of war. Many Irish-American newspapers hoped for Britain's defeat and some gave vocal support to Germany in the early days of the conflict. Prominent

nationalist leaders also attracted suspicion because of their activities. John Devoy of the Gaelic-American and Jeremiah O'Leary of Bull had been implicated along with German agents in planning the 1916 Easter Rebellion.

But the evidence demonstrates that the Irish-American press and the vast majority of Irish-American nationalist leaders supported--or at least did not obstruct--the war effort following the U.S. entry into the conflict. Nevertheless, the Gaelic-American remained barred from the mails long after the end of the War. As late as April 1919, five months after the cessation of hostilities, employees at the Translation Bureau continued to monitor the Irish World.⁷⁸ The censors at the U.S. Post Office had an agenda--however vague and unfocused--that transcended legitimate concern for wartime security. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the postal censorship campaign of World War One was Postmaster Burleson's insistence that it was benign. In his report for the year 1919, Burleson observed:

A policy of great liberality was adopted as to criticism and the free expression of opinion not directed against the national welfare.⁷⁹

The disruptions of the war years reverberated through the next phase of American history. The wartime suppressions legitimized the wholesale control of dissent and set the stage for the coercive response to the Red Scare of the early 1920's.⁸⁰ Suspicion of the foreign-born carried over from the war years and led to the immigration

restriction laws of 1920 and 1924, thus ending the largest sustained folk migration in modern human history.

Notes to Chapter VIII

¹Despite its misgivings about the Sedition Act, the Chicago Tribune observed: ". . . certain communities, growing impatient with the seeming inability of the government to cope with sedition, espionage and sabotage, have not hesitated to administer rough and ready justice of their own. . . ." "New Censorship," editorial, Chicago Tribune 13 April 18: 6.

²Quoted in Peterson and Fite 215. The Sedition Act was signed into law on 16 May 1918. It was repealed on 3 March 1921. The Espionage Act of 1917 was never repealed and remains in force. Chafee notes that the original Espionage Act, despite its wide scope, required proscribed news reports and commentary to have at least some connection with military recruitment. The 1918 provision ended that requirement. Chafee 67-68. "It is clear that dissent of nearly every imaginable form was to be silenced or punished under this bill." Peterson and Fite 216.

³Peterson and Fite 215.

⁴Quoted in Chafee 68.

⁵The Advocate, published by John C. O'Connor, was a moderate Irish-American weekly. The Irish Press was edited by Dr. Patrick McCartan, a naturalized American citizen who was a special emissary to the U.S. from the self-proclaimed "Irish Republic." The Irish Press appeared on the scene in February to fill a void that was created when the Gaelic-American began to be barred from the mails. The appearance of the Philadelphia newspaper annoyed John Devoy, editor of the Gaelic-American.

⁶One postal censor advised: "For all I know everything stated in this book may be true, it might even be unprejudiced, still, the book ought not to have been published at the present crisis." Memorandum, Louis How to Lamar, 14 May 1918, file number 51233, box 180, Records of the Post Office.

⁷See memoranda, dated and undated, regarding the 11 May 1918 issue, file number 50957, box 241, Records of the Post Office.

⁸Memorandum, L.H. to Assistant U.S. Attorney, 5 July 1918, file number 50957, box 241, Records of the Post Office.

⁹Memorandum, L.H. to U.S. Assistant District Attorney,

2 August 1918, file number 50957, box 241, Records of the Post Office.

¹⁰The Irish Press described itself as "A Journal of Irish News, Irish Opinion and Irish Literature published in the interests of an Independent Ireland." Whalen and J.A.H. observed: "The news matter contained in this publication is similar to that published in the New York Irish papers. It is faithful to Irish traditions and unsparing in its criticism fo British traditions." Memorandum, Whalen and J.A.H., 23 May 1918, file number 50963, box 242, Records of the Post Office.

¹¹Individual copies of the Irish Press were mailed under one-cent stamps, the first-class rate. The largest mailing of the paper, according to postal records, was 50 copies.

¹²The Justice Department was engaged in a tug of war with Military Intelligence over the latter's role in domestic surveillance during the War. Jensen 122-124. M. Churchill, Chief of Military Intelligence for the War Department, complained to the Post Office on at least two occasions about the Irish Press. Churchill was critical of an article that accused Teddy Roosevelt's son Kermit of "hyphenism" for choosing to join the British army. Letter, Captain R.J. Malone for Col. M. Churchill to Lamar, 12 Aug. 1918, file number 50963, box 242, Records of the Post Office.

¹³Memoranda, J.A.H./Whalen, 27 Sept, 1918, 15 Nov. 1918, 6 Dec. 1918. file number 50963, box 242, Records of the Post Office.

¹⁴Letter, U.S. Attorney, Philadelphia, to Attorney General Gregory, 25 Oct. 1918, file number 525, Justice-Classified File 9-12.

¹⁵An attorney for the Irish Press wrote the Post Office "to protest vigorously the withholding of three December 1918 issues after having been allegedly assured that they could be mailed first class. Letter, Michael Francis Doyle to Alexander M. Dockery, Assistant Postmaster General, 3 Jan. 1918 [sic], file number 50963, box 242, Records of the Post Office.

¹⁶Letter, Caffey to John Lord O'Brian, Special Assistant to the Attorney General in Charge of War Work, 16 April 1919, file number 16144, Justice-Classified File 9-12. Caffey was government prosecutor in the Abrams case and later a federal judge. Chafee 113.

¹⁷Sean Cronin, Washington's Irish Policy 1916-1986. (Dublin: Anvil, 1987) 19.

¹⁸Editorial, Gaelic-American 4 May 1918: 4.

¹⁹Memorandum, Bettman to John Lord O'Brian, undated, file number 188967, Department of Justice Mail and Files Division, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

²⁰Letter, O'Brian to Francis G. Caffey, U.S. District Attorney for New York, 1 July 1918, file number 188967, Justice Department Mail and Files Division. Caffey was in charge of the prosecutions of the O'Leary brothers. John O'Leary was being tried for aiding his brother's flight from prosecution on charges relating to his activities as publisher of Bull.

²¹Letter, Caffey to the U.S. Attorney General, 3 July 1918, file number 188967, Department of Justice Mail and Files Division.

²²Editorial, Gaelic-American 27 July 1918: 4.

²³"Waging War on Ireland and Irish Citizens, Gaelic-American 6 June 1918: 1. See also, "Sinn Fein Attack on U.S. Government, New York Times 7 June 1918: 24.

²⁴Gaelic-American 13 July 1918: 1.

²⁵Memorandum, Bowen to U.S. Assistant District Attorney, 18 Sept. 1918, file number B-511, box 74, Records of the Post Office.

²⁶"Call Off the Dogs," editorial, Gaelic-American 19 Oct. 1918: 4.

²⁷See various memoranda dated and undated concerning May issues of the Freeman's Journal, file number 50357, box 126, Records of the Post Office.

²⁸The editorial was entitled, "Can't Expect Us To Cringe To Whites And Fight Germans." Vance stated: "This stuff is designed to incite racial feeling between the Negroes and whites in this country." Memorandum, Vance to U.S. District Attorney, 24 May 1918, file number 50357, box 126, Records of the Post Office. As a young man Ford worked for a time on William Lloyd Garrison's Liberator, the abolitionist newspaper.

²⁹William Hard, "Mr. Burleson, Espionagent," New Republic XIX (10 May 1919) 43.

³⁰Letter, Lamar to Third Assistant, Division of Classification, 24 June 1918, file number 50357, box 124, Records of the Post Office.

³¹Memorandum, C.P. to Assistant District Attorney, 3 July 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

³²Letter, H.C. Smith to Assistant District Attorney, 5 June 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

³³Memorandum, Assistant District Attorney Wadsworth, 25 May 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

³⁴Mrs. McWhorter led a drive which gathered 600,000 signatures in support of including the Irish question at the post-war peace conference.

³⁵Letter, Whalen to Lamar, 2 August 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

³⁶Letter, Maxwell to Lamar, 31 July 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

³⁷Letter, Lamar to New York Postmaster, 6 Aug. 18, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

³⁸Letter, Maxwell to Assistant District Attorney, 6 August 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

³⁹Letter, Lamar to Patten, 14 August 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁴⁰Letter, Maxwell to Assistant Attorney General, 14 August 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁴¹Letter, Maxwell to Lamar, 26 Aug. 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁴²Letter, Lamar to Maxwell, 30 Aug. 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁴³Letter, Maxwell to Lamar, 3 Sept. 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁴⁴Letter, Bowen to Lamar, 19 Sept. 1918, file number 51107A, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁴⁵Letter, Bowen to Lamar, 2 Oct. 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁴⁶Letter, Bowen to Lamar, 5 Oct. 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁴⁷Letter, Bowen to Lamar, 9 Oct. 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁴⁸Letter, Lamar to Ford, 16 Oct. 1918, file number 50107, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁴⁹Letter, Ford to Lamar, 23 Oct. 1918, file number 50107A, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁵⁰Letter, Lamar to Maxwell, 24 Nov. 1918, File number 50107A, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁵¹Letter, Maxwell and Bowen to Lamar, 25 Nov. 1918, file number 50107A, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁵²Letter, Bowen to Lamar, 10 April 1919, file number 50107A, box 116, Records of the Post Office. Bowen also took it upon himself to continue to monitor and complain about Irish newspapers in some cases after armistice. He complained about the Advocate at the end of November 1918: "The Advocate is always a gentlemanly Irish paper. It is not, however, without its determined influence to foster anti-English feeling." Memorandum, Bowen to Assistant District Attorney, 29 November, 1918, file number 50957, box 241, Records of the Post Office. In June, 1919, Bowen wrote: "As a reminder of 'happier' days I send the current issue of 'The Gaelic-American' containing an editorial attack on the President. Lest we forget the Irish papers I read them regularly, and my opinion of them undergoes no change from its frequent past expression of contempt." Memorandum, Bowen to Lamar, 12 June 1919, file number B-511, box 74, Records of the Post Office.

⁵³Letter, Henry L. Henry, Executive Secretary of the Guardians of Liberty, New York City, to Attorney General Harry M. Daugherty, numerical file 191962, Department of Justice-Classified File 9-12. An anonymous letter complained in July, 1919, that the Leader was anti-British and was presumably therefore anti-American. A postscript advised, "This is a Roman Catholic paper." Letter, "A hundred per cent American" to Lamar, postmarked 7 July 1919, file number B-369, box 48, Records of the Post Office. A Chicago resident wrote to the Post Office in 1920 to complain of attacks against President Woodrow Wilson in the Chicago Citizen. Letter, Charles A. Lucus to Postmaster General, 6 Feb. 1918, file number B-214, box 53, Records of

the Post Office.

If anything, letters to the federal government complaining about Irish nationalist activity in the U.S. increased in number and intensity after the end of the War. See file number 191962, Justice-Classified File 9-12.

⁵⁴Donald Johnson 56-58. See also, Jensen 241. Johnson and Jensen state that postal censorship did not completely disappear until Warren Harding appointed William H. Hays as postmaster general in 1921. The Milwaukee Leader and New York Call, for example, were withheld by Burleson 13 months after the end of the War. Chafee 104.

⁵⁵John Lord O'Brian complained: "There is a distinct difference of opinion in the reports forwarded here regarding the danger of these Irish activities." Letter, O'Brian to Caffey, 11 Dec. 1918, file number 191962, Justice-Classified File 9-12.

⁵⁶Caffey based his conclusions on information from Military Intelligence. Caffey and Military Intelligence wanted John Lord O'Brian to appoint an overseer to coordinate all activities against Irish activists. Letter, Caffey to the Attorney General, 27 Nov. 1918, file number 191962, Justice-Classified File 9-12. Also Letter, Caffey to Attorney General, 19 Dec. 1918, file number 191962.

⁵⁷Letter, DeWoody to Caffey, 23 Dec. 1918, file number 191962, Justice-Classified File 9-12. DeWoody was agent in charge of the manhunt for Jeremiah O'Leary, publisher of Bull, in May and June. Caffey prosecuted O'Leary.

⁵⁸Letter, O'Brian to Caffey, 9 January 1919, file number 191962, Justice-Classified File 9-12.

⁵⁹Memorandum, J.A.H., 27 January 1919, file number 50963, box 242, Records of the Post Office.

⁶⁰Gaelic-American, 23 Nov. 1918: 1. The complaint about the Justice Department was probably off the mark. More often than not the assistant district attorneys tried, often unsuccessfully, to temper the censorious tendencies of the civilian volunteers with the Translation Bureau. Also, the final word concerning postal proscriptions rested with Burleson and Lamar rather than Justice. Devoy mistakenly believed that John Lord O'Brian, head of the War Emergencies Division at the Justice Department, was chiefly responsible for the suppression of the Irish press. Jensen suggests to the contrary that O'Brien and Alfred Bettman, his second in command, were moderating influences during the months of censorship. Jensen 116, 170 and 210.

⁶¹Letter, Lamar to Patrick L. Quinlan, Secretary, Irish Progressive League, 16 July 1921, file number 51365, box 189, Records of the Post Office. Griffith became the first president of the Irish Free State in 1921.

⁶²"Prussianizing Our Schools," editorial, Leader 12 Oct. 1918: 4.

⁶³Editorial, Western Watchman 21 June 1918: 10.

⁶⁴Bulletin #35 was distributed by the Division of Four Minute Men of the Committee on Public Information for use between 26 August and 7 September, 1918. The bulletin identified the Irish question as one the "five major types of enemy propaganda." The bulletin stated: "The Irish question . . . has always been made a prolific subject for propaganda designed to alienate American opinion from our great associate, Britain, on the the grounds that so long as Ireland is not 'free,' all talk about a war for democracy and for self-determination must remain mere hypocrisy, ignoring Britain's officers to meet almost any reasonable agreement." "Where Did You Get Your Facts," editorial, Western Watchman 30 Aug. 1918: 10.

⁶⁵"Blindly Protestant," editorial, Western Watchman 11 Oct. 1918: 10.

⁶⁶"Jeremiah O'Leary and Lehane," Chicago Citizen 21 June 1918: 1.

⁶⁷"Sinn Fein And Ourselves," Chicago Citizen 18 Oct. 1918: 1.

⁶⁸"Stand Together For Ireland In Her Hour of Trial," Chicago Citizen 10 May 1918: 10.

⁶⁹The Citizen accused the mainstream press of conspiring to eliminate from war casualty lists the names of Irish soldiers. "Irish Names Deleted By Newspapers," editorial, Chicago Citizen 20 Sept. 1918: 4. This was a recurring complaint in July. For example, see "A Conspiracy of Silence," Chicago Citizen 19 July 1918: 1.

⁷⁰"Mendacity and Misrepresentation Are Now Weapons," Chicago Citizen 5 July 1918: 1.

⁷¹This information is gleaned from data drawn from a content analysis of a random sample of editorials from issues of the Irish World, the Leader and the Gaelic-American from the years 1914-1918. Mick Mulcrone, "On the Razor's Edge: The Irish-American Press 1914-1918," thesis, U of Oregon, 1988, 41-59.

⁷²Buckley contends: "Irish-Americans, caught up by nationalistic fervor, applauded the American government's wholesale infringement of their civil liberties in its extraordinary campaign to suppress the dissenting element with the United States." He also argues that the failure of the Irish-American newspapers to discuss the Zimmerman note of 1917, their relentless agitation for Ireland, and their demands for civil liberties in America ". . .reduced them to an almost infinitesimal minority." Buckley 387, 119.

⁷³The petition campaign was orchestrated by Mrs. Mary McWhorter of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Carroll 114.

⁷⁴Buckley 208. "Irish By Wireless Appeal to Wilson," New York Times 11 Dec. 1918: 14. Subsequent mass gatherings took place in Brooklyn, Chicago and other parts of the country. New York Times 15 Dec. 1918. Self Determination Week was celebrated immediately after, and no doubt in answer to, Britain Day. See "British Flags Tomorrow," editorial New York Times 6 Dec. 1918: 14.

⁷⁵The Irish objected to the League proposal mainly because of Article X which would sanctioned the existing territorial borders of League members. U.S. approval of the League would have thus endorsed Ireland's position as part of the British empire. The Irish also lobbied against the League to express their disapproval over Wilson's failure to insist upon including the Irish question on the agenda at the peace conference. Ward concludes that the Irish played a "vital role" in the defeat of the League and that they expended more energy fighting the League than in helping Ireland. Ward 85. President Wilson observed: "The hyphens are the knives that are being stuck into the treaty." Quoted in Lichtman 101. Cuddy suggests that, had Home Rule been granted to Ireland in 1914, the League of Nations might have been approved in the U.S. Cuddy, Irish-America and National Isolation 42.

⁷⁶An Irish-American censor at the New York Post Office sent a revealing memo to Solicitor Lamar concerning Ireland's Case, a history of British rule in Ireland written by Seamas MacManus, a professor at Notre Dame. After noting that the contents of the book were likely true and perhaps unprejudiced, the censor added: "I come of a pious Irish Catholic family, and personally I have the greatest sympathy with Ireland; but she must not be allowed to interfere with our victory over Germany. This book is an attempt to interfere; it is anti-patriotic and highly incendiary and most dangerous and deserves no fate by suppression." Letter, Louis How to Lamar, 3 August 1918, file number

51233, Records of the Post Office.

⁷⁷"Flood Gates of Criticism Open," editorial, Chicago Citizen 29 Nov. 1918: 4.

⁷⁸Letter, Bowen to Lamar, 10 April 19, file number 50107A, box 116, Records of the Post Office.

⁷⁹Burleson, Annual Report of the Postmaster General for the Year 1918 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919) 13.

⁸⁰The U.S. Post Office kept up its vigilance against dissent after the War ended. The Postmaster General's Report for 1919 stated: "[the]. . .character of the disloyal matter found in the mails since the signing of the armistice has differed materially from that which the department dealt with during the prosecution of the war. It is now of a radical, revolutionary type. . .There has been a marked increase in revolutionary propoganda in both English and foreign languages. The department has endeavored to deal with this matter in the most expeditious manner." Burleson Report of the Postmaster General 112-113.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

America, in the second decade of the 20th century, was an unfinished society. Transformed by mass immigration, challenged by marginal groups which clamored for inclusion, the nation searched for a definition of itself. The years surrounding World War One witnessed an abandonment of faith in America's capacity to weld its divergent elements into a coherent whole. The war years marked a period when, as John Bodnar observed, the dominant "vision of national unity and solidarity excluded notions of ethnic diversity and tolerance."¹

Ideas about cultural and political pluralism were forced into retreat. Vast sectors of the public, led by a governing elite and a compliant mainstream press, demanded conformity to a crabbed conception of American identity and adherence to an increasingly narrow range of attitudes and opinions. Dual loyalty was suspect. Hyphenism--other than the Anglo-Saxon variety--was condemned.

The Irish-American press of 1914-1918 contended against powerful forces in hostile environment to assert Irish identity and to win a hearing for Irish aspirations. In the

absence of a sympathetic or comprehending mainstream press-- only the Hearst papers offered understanding--Irish newspapers articulated Irish concerns and battled against a resurgence of Anglo-Saxonism in a struggle to secure a place for the Irish in America. Most of all, the Irish press gave a hearing to issues that were ignored or misrepresented by the commercial daily press.

Irish newspapers practiced an adversarial brand of journalism. The commercial daily press, in its search for the broad middle, dismissed the concerns of marginal groups such as the Irish and, more often than not, defined the national interest in terms of the status quo. Irish newspapers, by contrast, were journals of advocacy and complaint. Irish papers gave voice to immigrant concerns that were ignored by mainstream press and offered alternative and oppositional interpretations of the news.

Irish newspapers were integral parts of the communities they served. Editors and writers were bound to their readers by ties of blood, culture and a shared historical experience. Irish newspapers provided critical forums through which the passions, insecurities and longings of the immigrant Irish and their offspring could be articulated and reconciled. In one sense, individual newspapers appealed to different constituencies within the heterogeneous Irish community in support of competing agendas. In another, they were but separate voices in a collective cry for acceptance.

For all their differences, Irish newspapers were united in their devotion to the Irish-in-exile, their disdain for British dominion over the old country, and their distrust of Anglo-Saxon influence in the new.

Irish-American consciousness was shaped by and reflected in the Irish-American press. Anglophobia was the central expression of Irish-American identity as articulated by the press. A well-spring of historical consciousness, anglophobia provided an ever renewable source of solidarity. It bound the Irish together in a sense of community that overwhelmed barriers of class, geography and generational differences.

However faulty and fraught with contradictions, anglophobia offered simple solutions to complex concerns. It explained the second-class status of the Irish; it served as a weapon against perceived misrepresentations in the mainstream press; and it provided an answer to demands for conformity to an Anglo-Saxon conception of American identity. Most of all, it soothed feelings of inferiority. Anglophobia was at once an assertion of Irish distinctiveness and a demand for understanding.

Anglophobia found its most coherent and sustained expression in Irish-American support for an end to Britain's colonial rule over Ireland. Irish nationalism was tolerated as long as the United States and Great Britain remained at odds. In a sudden convergence of events, the Irish national

struggle entered its final revolutionary stage even as Anglo-Saxonism began to surge forth and gather new strength in the U.S. The mainstream press and America's Anglo-Saxon elite condemned Irish-American support of the 1916 Easter Rising and castigated Irish efforts to keep America out of World War One.

America's entry into the War as an ally of Great Britain forced the issue to crisis. Irish-American attitudes about the War were inexorably entangled with the Irish national question and the Irish-American press struggled to reconcile Irish loyalty to the United States with Irish devotion to the old country. Attacks by the mainstream press increased. Irish agitators were driven from the streets of New York City and Boston. Irish nationalist organizations retreated to the shadows. Some Irish papers fell silent. Others continued to lobby loudly on Ireland's behalf even when such exhortations were taken as evidence of disloyalty.

The Irish issue became a site of ideological struggle. In its battle to be heard, the Irish press accused mainstream newspapers of pro-British bias. Irish newspapers insisted that advocacy on Ireland's behalf was consistent with American political traditions and pointed to President Wilson's proclaimed support for self-determination for small nations as an American war goal. Irish nationalism, they argued, stood not in opposition to American nationalism, but

was, rather, an extension of it. The mainstream press, for its part, condemned Irish nationalism as an aberrant, alien force which threatened America's close ties with Great Britain and undermined the American war effort.

In a larger sense, the debate about the Irish question which played out in Irish and in mainstream newspapers--and in the subsequent postal censorship--was part of a broader discourse about the nature and future course of American society. Was America to be based upon a shared commitment to civic culture where divergent groups come together in democratic participation? Or was American identity a consequence of cultural, racial or religious conformity where previous identities and ethnic loyalties are erased?

The 1918 postal censorship of the Irish-American press was an extension of the climate of suppression that infected the nation. Irish newspapers were often proscribed for their "general tone." Postal censors assumed broad, draconian powers and declared open season on the Irish press in the name of national security. Yet Irish newspapers were banned for discussions of issues that were similar to those that had already appeared in the mainstream press.

While it is easy to document the postal censorship and measure its effects, it is more difficult to determine why the loose cannons at the Post Office exercised their duties with such vigor and with such little protest from either their superiors or from the public.

William H. Maxwell and his coterie of civilian volunteers at the Translation Bureau of the New York City Post Office followed an agenda that went beyond the mandate of law. Solicitor Lamar, in the early months of censorship, personally supervised their activities regarding Irish newspapers. Certain assistant U.S. district attorneys also made some attempts to restrain Maxwell and his minions. But by the middle of 1918, the civilian volunteers, unpaid and largely unmonitored, had free rein to censor and suppress Irish publications for arbitrary and often frivolous reasons.

Public statements from officials at the highest level of government contributed to the climate of suspicion and vigilantism regarding the Irish. President Woodrow Wilson's contempt for the nationalist aspirations of the American-Irish was well established and widely known long before the U.S. entered the War. His anti-hyphen speech in 1914 at the unveiling of the Barry monument, his participation in the anti-hyphen campaign of 1915, and his public exchanges with Jeremiah O'Leary during the 1916 election helped brand the Irish as one of the most disloyal elements in America.

Much of the blame for the World War One postal suppressions must be placed at the feet of Woodrow Wilson. Despite pleas from the Department of Justice for a public statement during the worst months of vigilante activity, Wilson remained silent. When he did respond, it was too

little and too late. Wilson's most serious shortcoming was his failure to oversee Postmaster General Burleson's implementation of the Espionage Act. The lack of oversight and concern for civil liberties filtered down through the ranks of the Post Office and, with some exceptions, the Department of Justice.

British propoganda also played an important part in fomenting anti-Irish sentiment. Britain maintained a powerful public relations machine in the U.S. The pro-British posture of the mainstream press ensured that British efforts to shape public opinion fell upon fertile ground.

The most decisive factor in creating a climate which led to the suppression of the Irish-American press was the willingness of large sectors of the mainstream press to give credence to unsubstantiated rumors of German/Irish plots and to equate Irish nationalist aspirations with disloyalty to America. Even the Hearst newspapers--no friends to the British--became unwitting participants. Powerful mainstream newspapers--most notably the New York Times--stirred up public hysteria against the Irish and helped create a national climate in which advocacy on Ireland's behalf became evidence of disloyalty--and even treason--to the U.S. Ironically, at the very moment that Irish papers were being banned in New York, two New York Irishmen, as Daniel Patrick Moynihan has pointed out, were being enshrined in American popular culture as symbols of American patriotism--"Wild

Bill" Donovan for leading the gallant troops of the "Fighting 69th" in the Argonne; George M. Cohan for popularizing the American anthem of World War One, "I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy."²

A number of unanswered questions remain concerning the World War One censorship of the Irish-American press. This study--like any study--is limited by the documentary evidence upon which it depends. The evidence falls into three major categories: Irish-American newspapers; mainstream newspapers; and records of the U.S. Post Office and the Department of Justice. Each of these categories suffers its own shortcomings.

The Irish-American Press

The sample of Irish-American newspapers was chosen in attempt to assemble a representative cross-section of the Irish-American press, subject to what was available on microfilm. Yet the five newspapers in this study represent but a small portion of the vast curriculum of the Irish-American newspapers in 1914-1918. More attention needs to be focused on the smaller, marginal Irish papers, particularly those that were published in the Midwest and the Rocky Mountain states.

Class issues also need to be addressed. The Irish papers in this sample were avowedly middle-class in orientation. Each, in fact, proclaimed its Americanism by distancing itself from socialist and radical labor

newspapers. Yet this was a time when Irish were active in both the labor and socialist movements. An effort needs to be made to uncover the newspapers and periodicals that presumably gave voice to Irish involvement in working class movements. Some scholars suggest that Irish nationalism gave focus to working class complaints that produced political radicalism in other groups. That assumption warrants further attention.

One of the goals of the study was to recover, to the degree that such an effort is possible, the contours of Irish-American thought during 1914-1918. The Irish-American press provides a rich and varied source of information. But it is far from complete. The records of the myriad of local and national Irish-American organizations provide a potentially rich source of information. Also, Irish organizations flooded Congress and the executive branch with a flurry of petitions during the years surrounding World War One. These petitions offer a largely unmined body of data concerning Irish-American aspirations and strategies.

A fuller explication of the role of the press in both local and national Irish-American communities is also needed. This study generally restricts its attention to the editors and content of their newspapers. Other dimensions of the Irish-American press deserve scrutiny. How did ordinary people use the Irish press? What role did it play in their lives? Who were the journalists who worked on

these papers? What was their role and status in their respective communities?

The relationship between the Irish press and the presses of other marginal groups need to be more fully explored. Irish and German papers, for example, cooperated to combat Anglo-Saxonism before the War. During the neutrality debate they often reprinted each others' editorials. Cross-cultural cooperation between Irish and other immigrant newspapers in advancing an alternative pluralistic vision of America is warrants further attention. Also, despite the support that some Irish papers gave to other anti-colonial struggles and to black rights, there is evidence that the vision of cultural and political pluralism advocated by the Irish press was less than totally inclusive. This question demands attention.

Finally, what was the interrelationship between the Irish press of America and the nationalist newspapers of Ireland. Irish-American papers often reprinted editorials from Irish papers. Britain banned Irish-American papers from Ireland during and after the war years so they were presumably seen as both influential and threatening. The relationship between Irish papers in the old country and the new needs further study.

The Mainstream Press

The sample of mainstream daily newspapers is burdened by many of the same deficiencies that affects the sample of

Irish-American newspapers. An attempt was made to include mainstream newspapers from the same geographical locales as the Irish papers in order to reconstruct the discourse that took place concerning Irish issues. The Literary Digest was also consulted to get some sense of the national commentary that was devoted to Irish concerns.

A larger, more inclusive sample of mainstream papers would enhance the study. The present sample is skewed towards papers from large metropolitan areas because that was where Irish papers were published and presumably where mainstream papers devoted more attention to Irish matters. This assumption needs to be investigated.

One of the major conclusions of this study is that the mainstream daily press--with the exception of the Hearst papers--supported the status quo regarding the Irish question and sanctioned the suppression of alternative or oppositional interpretations. This tendency should be explored in other contexts.

Finally, the relationship between the mainstream press and the Irish-American press (and the newspapers of other nationality groups) needs to be more fully explored. The immigrant press can only be fully understood in that context. The Irish-American press of 1914-1918 stood not as an immigrant supplement to the mainstream press, but as its adversary. A war of ideas was being waged. Is the relationship between the immigrant press and the mainstream

press adversarial by definition? To what extent do the attitudes and ideas articulated in the immigrant press percolate into the mainstream media? These questions need to be examined in other time periods and in other contexts.

Postal and Justice Department Activities

Postal records at the National Archives relating to the World War One censorship of the Irish-American press are poorly organized and often fragmentary. Records concerning the Gaelic-American are either missing or misfiled. A complete examination of the 400-plus boxes of postal records should be undertaken.

The available records detail the day-to-day activities of those who monitored and controlled the Irish-American press. But a number of questions remain to be answered. Who were the civilian volunteers and the assistant district attorneys who censored Irish publications? Were they motivated by an agenda beyond that which can be deduced from the documents they produced? Finally, the censorship of the Irish-American press needs to be explored in the larger context. How did the treatment accorded Irish publications compare to that of other immigrant and dissident groups?

Implications of the Study

Nearly one hundred years before the onset of World War One, French philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville toured America to discover the secret of its burgeoning experiment in

democracy. De Tocqueville marveled at the number and diversity of newspapers. He remarked that public discourse and debate flourished in every corner of the nation. And he warned of the potential tyranny of the majority.

The events surrounding World War One confirmed de Tocqueville's worst fears. The nation entered a convulsive period in which freedom of speech and of the press came under severe pressure.

The meaning of the First Amendment, like American society, was largely unformed. It was out of the cauldron of the war years that modern interpretations of the First Amendment began to emerge.³

During World War One, the suppression of free expression reached its highest level in the nation's history. Due process was abandoned. Vigilantes scoured cities, towns and villages across America in search of "sedition." Civilian volunteers at the U.S. Post Office assumed summary powers of censorship. Dissent was proscribed. The nation fell under the rule of men and not of law.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the World War One repressions was the role of the mainstream press. Powerful daily newspapers supported the agenda of America's governing elite who defined the nation's interests in its own terms. The mainstream press encouraged vigilantism by failing to condemn it. It attributed the harassments, the

tar and featherings, the lynchings to the federal government's failure to control dissent. The mainstream daily press whipped up public hysteria and railed loudly against the expression of alternative or oppositional opinion. When the postal censorships began, the silence of mainstream press was deafening.

In the end, it was the small and defenseless papers--the foreign-language, the radical-labor, the pacifist, and the Irish--that were silenced. Free speech became the province of the powerful; suppression, the fate of the weak.⁴

The experience of World War One carries an important warning concerning the status of free expression. Simply put, alternative or oppositional viewpoints that might otherwise be tolerated come under severe attack during times of national stress such as wartime. It is during such pathological periods that free expression is most vulnerable.

The experience of World War One also carries important lessons about the character and function of the mainstream and alternative presses and their relationship to each other. Mainstream and alternative presses practice fundamentally different kinds of journalism and appeal to different audiences.

Commercial daily newspapers are first and foremost businesses. Their goal, in the pursuit of profit, is to

deliver a heterogeneous mass audience to advertisers. Economic imperatives require commercial newspapers to be omnibus publications, to be all things to all people. As a consequence, they avoid controversy and gravitate toward the middle of the ideological landscape in pursuit of consensus, especially in times of national stress.⁵

The mainstream press is often privy to the corridors of power and enjoys a special relationship with the governing elite. That relationship is symbiotic: mainstream newspapers depend upon official sources and serve as forums for the expression of dominant viewpoints. Power pays homage to power--the commercial press has a vested interest in maintaining the status quo because it benefits from it.

The alternative press, by contrast, is often more dependent upon subscriptions than advertising revenue. It appeals not to a mass audience of potential consumers, but to a small audience of potential activists. The primary goal of the alternative press is not profit--although profit is essential to survival--but social, political or economic change.⁶

Alternative newspapers do not avoid controversy, but embrace it. They are journals of advocacy whose guiding mission is to transform the status quo rather than maintain it. The alternative press exists because the mainstream press fails to address the needs and concerns of marginal groups in society, be they social, racial or political.

There is also an intimacy between alternative newspapers and their readers that is not possible in other large urban publications. Editors and journalists are often members of the communities they serve. In the case of the ethnic press, they are bound together by common ties of blood, culture, and shared historical experience.

The alternative press, by definition, challenges accepted orthodoxies and offers interpretations of events and issues that are at odds with the norm. Such deviance is tolerated in times of relative calm. But in times of times of societal stress, when the differences between mainstream and alternative viewpoints become amplified, self-proclaimed guardians of moral or ideological purity arise to demand conformity to a narrow conception of acceptable opinion. Public discourse becomes distorted. In the absence of strong protections, censorship is the inevitable result--its victims are always the weak, the marginal, the disenfranchised.

The marketplace of ideas, if it is to have any meaning, requires a commitment to the protection of adversarial and offensive expression and to the existence of a vibrant alternative press. Truth can never emerge from discourse when part of the conversation is silenced.

Notes to Chapter IX

¹Bodnar 80.

²Moynihan and Glazer 244-245.

³Schenck v. U.S., 249 U.S. 47 (1919) upheld the conviction a socialist for distributing an anti-war leaflet. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes formulated his clear and present danger test. The clear and present danger test was applied in Frohwerk v. U.S., 249 U.S. 204 (1919) and Debs v. U.S., 249 U.S. 211 (1919). Abrams v. U.S., 250 U.S. 616 (1919) is noteworthy for the Holmes/Brandeis dissent which articulated the marketplace of ideas concept. Gitlow v. New York, 268 U.S. 652 (1925) incorporated the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the First Amendment.

⁴Size and influence provided immunity from censorship. The Hearst newspapers expressed many of the same sentiments as Irish-American newspapers but escaped censorship. As Peterson and Fite observed: "Hearst could criticize President Wilson, he could say the war was an economic struggle, that Ireland ought to be free, and that England could do no right--he could say these things and not be prosecuted." Peterson and Fite 94.

⁵The evolution of the mainstream commercial press is discussed in Gerald Baldasty, The Commercialization of the News in the Nineteenth Century (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1992).

⁶In many ways the Irish-American press of 1914-1918 more closely resembled the Party Press of the early 19th century. Irish papers promoted coherent political agendas and often depended upon subscriptions, patronage and at times donations to survive.

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