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AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH-MEDIUM PRESS COVERAGE OF THE TREATY PORTS AS AN ISSUE IN IRISH NEUTRALITY, 1938-1943

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Thesis abstract

An Analysis of English-Medium Press Coverage of the Treaty Ports as an Issue in Irish Neutrality, 1938-1943.

The strategic importance of the ports on the west and southern coasts of Ireland had been recognised as early as 1791 when the British navy first established a naval base at Spike island, Cobh, Co. Cork.

Three of these ports, Queenstown (Cobh), Berehaven and Lough Swilly had been retained by the British under articles 6 and 7 of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. During the course of those negotiations the question of Ireland's position if Britain were involved in a war arose. However, regardless of the fact that British use of naval bases in the territory of the twenty-six counties would place Ireland in a compromising position vis-à-vis Britain's enemies, the retention of the ports by Britain was insisted upon as key points in the defence of the two islands. Their importance to the security of British trade routes, hence her survival, had been all too apparent during the U-boat crisis of 1917, when she was almost starved into defeat by Germany.

In 1936, Colonel Dan Bryan, in an appraisal of Irish Free State defence capabilities in the event of her involvement in war, was scathing. His report came to the conclusion that, in the event of invasion by a hostile power, the Irish Free State would only be able to resist for a few months.

The signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 25 April 1938, in which the treaty ports were returned to Irish control, was greeted with universal enthusiasm by both the British and Irish governments, the press of both countries and the people of both countries in general. There were some exceptions, notably Mr. Winston Churchill, but these were in the minority. From the British government's point of view, the return of the ports was 'an act of faith' to herald a new era of friendly relations between the two countries. The return of the ports recognised the total sovereignty of the twenty-six counties from British rule and can be recognised as one of the most important events in Irish 20th century history.

At the outbreak of World War II in September 1939 the Irish government under Eamon de Valera declared a policy of neutrality. Although the weak state of the Free State defence forces had not been addressed by that time and despite the memory of the Atlantic battle of 1917, there was no immediate alarm. The British were confident in their anti-submarine defences. At least, that was the line that was put forth to the British people through the newspapers. The true state of their anti-U-boat defences was not good. Despite the first months of the war seeing enormous losses of British merchant shipping during the first U-boat 'Happy Time', it was not until November 1940 that Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, voiced the 'grievous and heavy burden' denial of the Irish ports under the Irish policy of neutrality was having on the British war effort. It was at that point that the previous lack of concern about the loss of the treaty ports and the policy of neutrality maintained by the Irish Free State turned to fear and hostility directed towards Ireland. This was clearly discernable in newspaper articles pertaining to

the Irish ports issue and in letters to the editor of The Times. Through articles in the New York Times, its attitude can also be seen to have altered slightly from the belief that Irish neutrality was a good thing for Britain, to an attitude of annoyance and disdain for the Irish position.

The entry of the U.S.A. into the war in December 1941 was greeted by a host of articles in the New York Times and The Times leading a campaign against the Irish policy of neutrality and her retention of the treaty ports. While The Times refrained from overt hostility towards Ireland, the feeling of anger was unmistakable.

Hostility towards the Irish Free State and her policy of neutrality continued in the press for the next twelve months. As the allies continued to suffer heavy losses to the U-boats in the Battle of the Atlantic. the hostility of Britain and the U.S.A. towards Ireland continued and remained in evidence in the newspapers. However, from late 1942 there was a marked drop in both the amount of articles published by the allied press pertaining to the treaty ports and in their hostility. This coincided with the further perfecting of radar and the development of the High Frequency Direction Finder (Huff-Duff), both of which gave the allies a distinct advantage in the Battle of the Atlantic. As U-boat losses mounted and the threat of the severing of British trade links receded, pressure on Ireland and her position turned to acceptance. The assistance Ireland was giving Britain in terms of manpower, foodstuffs and intelligence was understood by the London and Washington governments and, as a result this acceptance filtered down to the newspapers and ultimately to the people of Britain and the U.S.A.

The importance of the treaty ports issue to both the Battle of the Atlantic and World War II in general, is undeniable. Without her trade routes, Britain would have been starved into submission by Germany very early in the war. It was the awareness of the possibility of that which had prompted the British negotiators in the 1921 Treaty to insist on retention of the ports. That the ports were returned to the Irish Free State in 1938 as 'an act of faith' by the then Chamberlain government, knowing that Ireland was militarily incapable of resisting an invasion, points to a British hope that in returning the ports, Irish gratitude would allow the British navy use of the ports in the event of a future war. With the political context in late 1930's Europe taken into account, this seems all the more likely.

The establishment of full Irish sovereignty in the twenty-six counties, which was vigorously defended by de Valera and his government despite all outside pressures to join the war on the allied side, especially with the above points taken into consideration, can be recognised as one of the most important and pivotal events in Irish history.

It is through the press that we can gain insights into the feelings and opinions of the Irish, British and the United States populations regarding the treaty ports issue and the impact it had on their lives during the war. The pattern of public opinion and how it changed at various stages of the war from acceptance of the return of the ports, to hostility and back to acceptance again, can be gleaned through the press. It is in the recording and analysis of this, which has not, to my knowledge, ever been attempted before, that this thesis gains its value.

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Contents

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ENGLISH-MEDIUM PRESS COVERAGE OF THE TREATY PORTS AS AN ISSUE IN IRISH NEUTRALITY, 1938-43

Introduction

This thesis analyses the newspaper coverage of the return of the ports of Cobh, Berehaven and Lough Swilly to the Irish Free State under the terms of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1938 and of the consequences of this decision from the early years of the war, up to July 1943. These ports were known as 'the treaty ports' and had been retained by Britain under Articles 6 and 7 of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921.

Under the treaty of 1921 Great Britain was afforded, in time of war or strained relations with a foreign power, rights of military usage of the ports of Cobh, Berehaven and Lough Swilly, as well as whatever storage and harbour facilities were required. When the Fianna Fail party under Eamon de Valera attained government in 1932 one of the aims of the government was to redress, as much as possible, the shortcomings it saw in the Anglo-Irish Treaty and obtain a greater degree of full sovereignty for the twenty-six county state. Allied to this was a concern that such a sovereign state would not become a pawn in any future war by the great powers. At a meeting of the League of Nations in Geneva 1936, de Valera had indicated his desire for the neutrality of Ireland. He said that:

> All the small states can do, if the statesmen of the greater states fail in their duties, is resolutely to determine that they will not become the tools of any great power, and that they will resist with whatever strength they may possess every attempt to force them into a war against their will.[1]

This statement was a clear indication that he, as the leader of a small nation, favoured this policy for Ireland. Shortly after signing the Agreement of 1938, de Valera stated that neutrality would be impossible without the possession of the ports.[2] As John A. Murphy states, 'the return of the ports made independence of action a reality: nothing else would have made neutrality feasible.'[3] When one takes into consideration that Britain had come within a hair's breadth of being starved into submission by the German U-boats in 1917, the importance of the ports as a lifeline

1 Mark Tierney, Modern Ireland– revised edition (Dublin, 1978), p.209.

2 The Irish Press, 1/6/1938.

3 John A. Murphy, Ireland in the 20th century (Dublin, 1975), p.95.

for the supply of foodstuffs and munitions becomes even clearer. However, a policy of neutrality, undoubtedly, created many problems for Great Britain. The ports on the western seaboard of Ireland had immense strategic importance for Britain, lying as she does between Ireland and the Continent. This was even more significant considering that, historically, Britain's military strength had been based upon her naval capacity.

However, the usage of these ports by the British navy in a European war, would have placed Ireland and her people at risk of attack or invasion by Britain's enemies. The return of the treaty ports in the Anglo-Irish Agreement of April 1938, as The Times put it 'completes the recognition of Irish sovereignty over the territory of the twenty-six counties'[4]. This recognition would allow the Irish Free State to follow its own foreign and defence policy independently of Great Britain.

While Irish neutrality during World War II has been written about by authors such as Robert Fisk, Eunan O'Halpin, Trevor Salmon, Dermot Keogh and T. Ryle Dwyer, no author has yet approached the question of the treaty ports as perceived by the English-medium press. None of the above authors attempted to take a case study on any one particular aspect of Irish neutrality. T. Ryle Dwyer did devote a section of his book Strained Relations: Ireland at peace and the U.S.A. at war, 1941-45 [5] to the Irish-American press opposition to U.S. entry into the war prior to its being attacked by the Japanese in December 1941. However, this is the only publication that has looked at press interpretation and influence at any stage during the war. To the best of my knowledge, nobody has yet addressed the subject of the strategic importance of the treaty ports as represented by the press during the war. It is this gap in existing knowledge that this thesis aims to fill.

Examining the evolving pattern of newspaper reportage over the period 1938-1943 gives access to contemporary wartime public opinion on this previously uncharted aspect of Irish neutrality during World War II, and allows us to trace the significance of the ports issue to the countries involved. The nature of such a study, which draws primarily from newspaper coverage of events and statements by the leading politicians and leaders of the time, necessitated that it be a detailed treatment of the newspaper coverage, capable of effectively assessing, comparing and coming to conclusions about how the five newspapers here examined viewed the treaty ports issue and how their opinions and the opinions of their respective readership changed

4 The Times, 26/4/1938.

5 T. Ryle Dwyer, Strained Relations: Ireland at peace and the U.S.A. at war, 1941-45 (Dublin, 1988).

regarding Ireland's policy of neutrality during the war. To maintain the unity of the theme it is also necessary to trace the issue chronologically in its entirety from the return of the treaty ports in April 1938 until their significance to the Battle of the Atlantic and the Allied war effort against Germany and the Axis powers declined in July, 1943.

For the purposes of this study The Irish Times, the Irish Independent, The Irish Press, The Times (London) and the New York Times have been selected for analysis. These were major media organs in Ireland, England and the United States. The Irish Times, the Irish Independent and The Irish Press were the three main national newspapers in Ireland at this time. The Times was one of the most important newspapers in Britain and its views were, traditionally, close to conservative party policies. The New York Times, traditionally quite a liberal newspaper, shall be employed to interpret shades of American opinion from the prospering emigrant population of New York on the issue of the treaty ports, especially after the U.S.A. entered the war in December 1941. Various extracts from other British and American newspapers have also been employed to complement the coverage of the main newspaper sources used.

In an overall appraisal, the question arises as to how well the newspapers served the public at the time? How powerful a role did the newspapers play in reflecting public opinion, in investigating issues of political import, in being an arm of government in times of crisis?

While radio was having an increasing impact on the public's knowledge of political affairs, the newspapers were still the main medium for the dissemination of information. Circulation figures at the outbreak of war for the three principal Irish papers have been calculated at about 290,000 copies. The Irish Independent was the clear leader with 150,000 copies, followed by The Irish Press with 110,000 copies and The Irish Times, a weak third, with between 20 and 30,000 copies.[6] In their coverage of the treaty ports issue in 1938, this thesis has noted emphases in keeping with the views of the traditional readership of the papers. The Irish Independent was associated with the Cumann na nGaedhael/Fine Gael party and had opposed the coming to power of Fianna Fail.[7] Indeed, The Irish Press was founded by Fianna Fail in September 1931 because of the bias towards it which the party detected in the media. The Irish Independent's treatment of the treaty ports issue at the time of the

6 Donat O'Donnell, 'The fourth estate- the Irish Independent,' The Bell, Vol,9, No.5, February 1945, pp.386-394, p.391.

7 Ibid, pp.390, 393.

1931 Anglo-Irish Agreement will be seen to have been limited and lukewarm. The Irish Press, which has been termed a 'government organ' at the time, gave much greater and more enthusiastic coverage to de Valera's achievement in winning back the ports,[8] as the thesis will demonstrate. The Irish Times was very much the newspaper of the Protestant, and of a growing number of the Catholic professional class, and its circulation was very limited in rural Ireland. Its editorial stance was generally critical of de Valera's government and had not altogether lost its earlier Unionist leanings.[9]

While the newspapers constitute the bulk of primary sources for this thesis, various reports and documents from the Irish military archives, as well as the personal papers of Colonel Dan Bryan, head of G2, the army intelligence section, during the war have been used. The aim of this was to establish how the military authorities viewed the issue of the treaty ports from an Irish defence perspective. These source materials are of a different character from the newspapers and are dealt with in a different way. Their use has helped to give the views of informed insiders on the issue as a part of Irish military preparedness. The Irish government Cabinet Papers relating to the treaty ports during the negotiations and the Emergency were also consulted but proved to be of limited use, as only Irish cabinet decisions are recorded and not minutes of what was discussed.

There are a number of advantages in the utilisation of newspapers as primary sources on a subject of this nature. They deal with the current, evolving situation in an immediate, day-to-day manner. As a result, they convey the contemporary 'feel' of events and reactions to emerging stories. The range of newspapers provides a kaleidoscope of perspectives on particular events and stories as they emerge. In assessing this 'feel' of events the editorial line of each particular newspaper is of central importance. It provides the official views of the newspaper editorial staff and management on particular events. In their coverage of an event, reporters can focus on certain issues and place an emphasis on what they consider to be particularly important and wish to emphasise. This can be very revealing. Newspapers have access to sources of information which are not usually readily available to the public. They allow politicians to make statements on key current developments. They also allow the views of the public to be noted in response to various developments, through the Letters to the Editor section. Such letters reflect the idea of 'the pulse of the public' on various issues under review.

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8 Vivian Mercier, 'The fourth estate – The Irish Press,' The Bell, Vol.9, No.6, March 1945, pp.475-486, p484.

9 Vivian Mercier, 'The fourth estate – The Irish Times,' The Bell, Vol.9, No.4, January 1945, pp.290-297, p.293.

However, the issue of newspaper censorship must also be taken into account. During a time of crisis, in this case World War II, censorship of certain reports or opinions is often imposed, as a totally free press might be detrimental to the political pursuance of government policy. During the war, in Ireland that particular policy was neutrality and strict official censorship is a factor that must be borne in mind regarding the analysis of Irish newspapers in Chapters Two and Three. The Emergency Powers Bill, of 3 September, 1939 had the aim of securing public safety and assisting in the preservation of the state. Irish neutrality was seen as the only policy compatible with the interests of the state. As a result, political censorship was defined as a security mechanism, essential for the survival of the state and, hence, justified in all its excesses.[10]

Particularly revelatory of the nature of censorship in The Irish Press and governmental departments during the war is a memo from de Valera to General Mulcahy on 12 February, 1941 stating that 'written records are restricted to a minimum.'[11] This memo indicates the intention of the government to commit as little sensitive material as possible to writing. The treaty ports were one such issue and this explains the limited official documentation on the matter and also indicates that public discussion on the matter in the Dáil and elsewhere was not encouraged. Bearing this in mind, it is not surprising that the Irish newspapers found little official documentation to form the basis for articles. Further evidence of this 'blackout' can be seen in the Department of Defence archives and the remarkable lack of information or reports relating to the treaty ports during the Emergency.

It is very important that the restrictions placed on the newspapers during the war be highlighted and explained in order to point out a major obstacle to a more complete analysis of this issue. It also explains why The Times and the New York Times are particularly useful for coverage of the treaty ports issue during the early war years when their importance was most in evidence. The Allies' success in the

10 Donal O'Drisceoil, Censorship in Ireland 1939-45: neutrality, politics and society (Cork, 1996), p.6. Political censorship can be defined as 'political conditioning by negative propaganda, preventing the promotion of alternative ideas to those projected as the basis of the authority, legitimacy and policies of the government.' As Donal O'Drisceoil in his book Censorship in Ireland, 1939-45 asserts in referring to Ireland during the war, 'this was exactly the political role performed by emergency censorship in relation to both neutrality and the more general policies of government.' Ibid, p.6. From Nicholas Pronay, 'The political censorship of films in Britain between the wars' in Pronay and Spring (eds), Propaganda, Politics and Film, 1918-45 (London, 1982), pp.99-100. Donal O'Drisceoil, Op.cit, p.6.

11 '... impressed with the dangers inherent in multiplying documents dealing with matters to which you refer (defence) ... themselves rely in the main upon oral reports made by the responsible ministers...and written records are restricted to a minimum.' Administration, Volume 26, No.4. 'Furlong: Defence Conference 1940-45,' (Dublin, 1978), p.519. Quote found in Mulcahy Papers, U.C.D. Archives, p7/c/11/113.

Battle of the Atlantic by July 1943 greatly reduced the strategic significance of the ports for war purposes, as a result of which newspaper coverage of the issue diminished.

As well as wartime censorship, there are other limitations that should be borne in mind regarding the use of newspapers as primary sources. One needs to be alert to the value systems and ideologies of different newspapers. The same story can often be dealt with in very different ways, and different versions of a story often appear in the various newspapers. It must also be noted that newspapers can only report on what is publicly available or what can be investigated by reporters. For example, what a government or government representative might state in public and to the media may not necessarily be the same opinion as aired in the cabinet meetings. Often only part of an opinion or government strategy is stated. Also, while newspapers can provide us with a contemporary account of events and a 'feel' for the opinions of the time, there are inherent limitations in immediate reportage and comment. Often a newspaper can be too close to the issues and its coverage may lack an overview of events and the perspectives which can only be afforded by time.

In assessing newspaper perceptions of these questions, this thesis has been divided into three main chapters. Chapter 1 deals with media response to the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 25 April, 1938 whereby articles 6 and 7 of the treaty of 1921 ceased to have effect, returning the treaty ports to Irish control and recognising the sovereignty of the twenty-six counties of the Irish Free State. Notable in this chapter is the theme of the new era of good and friendly relations between Britain and Ireland being heralded by all the newspapers here examined. This was in spite of the clear strategic importance of the treaty ports to the defence of the islands of Britain and Ireland, and Ireland's minimal defence capacity, in the context of a threatening international climate. However, there is also the significant theme of defence co-operation between Britain and Ireland, an agreement which was widely expected by many of the papers. Both of these themes are of seminal importance to the analysis of the treaty ports issue during the war. Chapter 2 deals with the treaty ports issue from the outbreak of the war in the first week of September 1939 until December 1941. It revolves around the lack of concern seen in the British and American press about Ireland's position in the early months of the war and how that lack of concern dramatically changed in November 1940. Chapter 3, then, addresses the perception of the ports issue by the English-medium press from the entry of the U.S.A. into the war on 9 December, 1941 until the Battle of the Atlantic was recognisably won in July 1943. This chapter deals with British and American opinion and the press campaign against Ireland's neutrality policy and how these attitudes changed as crises

were overcome and it became clear that the Allies were winning the Battle of the Atlantic and the war. The final concluding section provides an interpretive overview of the key issues emerging from the thesis and gives an overall appraisal of how the newspapers under review served their readership during these years.

It is clear from the analysis that, as the life-and-death struggle of the great world conflict intensified, the issue of the treaty ports was a matter of major concern to the belligerents, which only eased when the allies seemed to have established superiority in the war at sea. Because of the significance of the treaty ports issue to the conduct of the war effort and to inter-state relations at this crucial period of history, it is hoped that this study makes a worthwhile contribution to our historical understanding of what was involved and of how the matter was handled by the key parties.

CHAPTER 1

THE RETURN OF THE TREATY PORTS AS PART OF THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT, 1938

The strategic context

Before examining how the English-medium press perceived the return of the treaty ports under the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 25 April 1938, it is necessary to evaluate the significance of the ports to the defence of the islands of Britain and Ireland and to contextualise the historic significance of the transfer of the ports from British to Irish control. Article 6 of the treaty of 1921 stated that the British forces would undertake Ireland's naval defence 'until an arrangement has been made between the British and Irish governments whereby the Irish Free State undertakes her own coastal defence.'[1] Article 7, Clause B stated that the Irish Free State 'shall afford to His Majesty's Imperial forces ... in time of war or strained relations with a foreign power such harbour and other facilities as the British Government may require for the purposes of such defence as aforesaid.'[2]

The inclusion of these articles in the treaty of 1921 was reflective of the important role the Irish ports had played in World War 1. All the three ports of Cobh, Berehaven and Lough Swilly had served as bases for the Royal Navy convoy escorts in the Atlantic. At one stage, when the entire British Grand Fleet was forced to abandon Scapa Flow due to the fear of submarines and mines, they retreated to the safety of the Lough Swilly anchorage.[3] While Lough Swilly and Berehaven had also acted as assembly points for the Trans-Atlantic convoys, Cobh's Spike Island was used as cover for warships moored between it and the mainland town, concealing them from the Atlantic. In Berehaven, when the American fleet arrived to join the British, the anchorage was so crowded that it was almost possible 'to walk from the island to the shore across the decks of battleships.'[4] When these factors are borne in mind, it is clear why Articles 6 and 7 were insisted upon during the 1921 treaty negotiations. In the event of another European war, for Britain not to have control of the ports would have been detrimental to her survival.

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1 Robert Fisk, In Time of War (London, 1994), p.18.

2 Ibid.

3 Robert Fisk, In Time of War, p.7.

4 Ibid.

The main threat to Irish sovereignty arising from these articles was Clause B of Article 7. The provision of 'harbour and other facilities as required' in time of war or strained relations effectively meant that Ireland could be sovereign only in peacetime. In time of war Ireland would become a base, as de Valera would often later put it, 'a Cockpit,' of the British Empire. The relinquishing of these articles represented a recognition of Irish sovereignty by the British government and effectively permitted the Irish Free State to follow her own course in international relations and politics without undue consideration for the international relations of Britain at any particular time.

It is now necessary to consider the state of the defences of the Irish Free State prior to the return of the ports in April 1938. In the event of European war in which Britain was involved, would the Irish Free State be capable of preventing its own occupation by forces hostile to Britain? Admiral Mahon, in the Science of Naval Strategy, U.S.A. of 16 September 1927, had said that Ireland, geographically, lay across and controlled the communications of Great Britain with the rest of the world apart from the North Sea and the Baltic. As a result, Ireland was a strategic location in the eyes of the British, Americans, French and Germans.[5] There was a need to fortify Ireland's harbours and estuaries in peacetime, with a view to being able to strengthen them in time of war.[6] In May 1937 Colonel Dan Bryan of G2, Irish military intelligence, wrote a paper reviewing the Irish defence situation. It was entitled 'Fundamental factors involving the defence of the Saorstat.' In it Bryan quoted a 'recent writer on the European state system' (unnamed) as saying 'the small states being impotent have no power interests of their own save the preservation of their independence and this they are able to protect, not by their own power but by fitting themselves into the power relations of their neighbours.'[7] Since Ireland had no defence force of any military significance, she certainly fell into this classification. Ireland had always been, and was still, despite being independent for fourteen years, reliant upon the protective cloak of Britain.

The lack of any particular Irish defence policy, as highlighted by Colonel Dan Bryan, was significant and it was successive Irish governments who were to fault. Considering the fact that the Irish Free State, an island nation, had no navy of any kind as late as mid 1940, it is appropriate to raise questions concerning British motives behind the return of the treaty ports in 1938.

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5 The Dan Bryan Papers, U.C.D. Archives, p.71/5, p.3.

6 Ibid, p.8.

7 Colonel. Dan Bryan, The Dan Bryan Papers, 'Fundamental Factors affecting the defence of the Saorstat' (1936, p.71/8, U.C.D. Archives), p.12.

Eunan O'Halpin in his book Defending Ireland – the Irish State and its enemies since 1922, states that Bryan's paper was 'dismissed as "pro-British" by the clique of officers whose ideas it countered. This may explain why it was never submitted by the chief of staff as an official submission on defence...' though '...it had been widely read within the army.'[8] Bryan pointed out the problems of Irish defence in a direct and uncompromising manner.[9] His concluding statement, 'it can, however, be accepted that the Saorstat with its own resources could not as an organised state wage war with any strong state except for a very short period,'[10] told of the Irish defensive position as it was in May 1936. Importantly, this was a position which had not been rectified by the time the last of the treaty ports was handed back to Irish control on 3 October, 1938.

Bryan's statements also give credence to British apprehensions about the return of the ports as voiced by Arthur Grenfell M.P. and Winston Churchill in The Times on 4 and 5 May, 1938,[11] of an invasion of Ireland by Britain's enemies. This problem was borne out by the fact that a recruitment drive to the Irish army was not begun until a state of 'Emergency' was declared by the Irish government on 4 June 1940. In short, the back door to Britain was, in April 1938, wide open for anyone willing to take an offensive initiative.

The rationale for the return of the ports was given by the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, in response to Grenfell and Churchill. The Times on 6 May published his statement, made during the parliamentary debate:

> An unfriendly Ireland would mean that we would have to send troops to protect our rights in the ports. After most careful consideration of all the circumstances, and after due consultation with the chiefs of staff, we came to the conclusion that a friendly Ireland was worth far more to us in peace and in war than these paper rights which could only be exercised at the risk of maintaining and perhaps increasing a sense of grievance.... We do that as an act of faith, firmly believing that that act of faith will be appreciated by the people of Eire and that it will conduce good relations.[12]

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8 Eunan O'Halpin, Defending Ireland – the Irish state and its enemies since 1922 (Oxford, 1999), p.137.

9 '...the general lack of information or non-recognition of (the) existence of such a problem...is due to the fact that the external defence of the Saorstat has been in the practically unchallenged control of Great Britain for a long period...the Saorstat may be said to be not relatively but absolutely disarmed...(the public) do not realise that in the usual European sense the Saorstat can hardly be said to have a defence force at all. This condition is possible because the Saorstat lies within the sphere of British influence, and, in practice, the British forces intervene between it and all other possible external enemies.' Eunan O'Halpin, Defending Ireland..., pp.136-137.

10 Colonel Dan Bryan, The Dan Bryan Papers, "Fundamental factors affecting the defence of the Saorstat" (1936, p.71/8, U.C.D. Archives).

11 The Times, 4-5/5/1938.

12 The Times, 6/5/1938

That 'act of faith' can be read as a hope by the British government that, through the recognition of the sovereignty of the twenty-six counties, Irish gratitude would be faithfully returned in the event of another European war, Britain being allowed the use of the bases for naval and commercial purposes.

As already made clear by Colonel Bryan in May 1936, Ireland was not able to defend herself against an attack from any quarter. Due to the strategic naval importance of the ports, as highlighted at the beginning of this chapter, the ports of Ireland were of vital significance to Britain in time of war. It is important to bear this in mind as we assess the media treatment of the issue and their welcome for the Agreement in all its aspects. Considering the military weakness of Ireland, it made little strategic sense to give up such vital installations. It was probably the 'friendly relations' dimension, as put forward by both governments, which influenced the favourable newspaper interpretation of the Agreement, and an unstated expectation that a defence co-operation arrangement would be arrived at by both countries in the near future. Bearing in mind the contemporary European context in 1938 involving the rearmament of fascist Germany and Italy and the ideological divisions involved in the Spanish Civil War, the political climate was a very threatening one. The stage seemed set for imminent war. Thus, the transfer of the ports occurred at a period when the governments of both countries were conscious of this threat.

The Irish Times on 5 April, published an article covering a move for a vote of censure by Arthur Greenwood, Labour M.P., against the Chamberlain Government, because he believed that the government was unable to stop the drift towards war.[13] It was recognised in parliament that the war clouds were gathering, and some were of the opinion that the Chamberlain Government was unable to stop the drift towards it. For some, this highlighted the significance of the 'act of faith' being made by the British on the return of the treaty ports in April 1938.

Press coverage of the ports issue in the Anglo-Irish Agreement

The above points about the strategic significance of the treaty ports, the importance of the ports for Irish sovereignty and the threatening war climate, raise a number of questions regarding the press coverage of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Did the press openly welcome it? Did the newspapers see it as a new era in the relations between Britain and Ireland? Did they perceive military alliance for the joint defence of the isles in the event of war? Or, did they see the return of the treaty ports as a gamble

[13] The Times, 5/4/1938.

that might be extremely dangerous to the defence and survival of Britain and Ireland, in any future European war?

The coverage of the negotiations in The Irish Times throughout April 1938 reflected the people's traditional Anglo-Irish inclination with little real discussion of the factors involved. An article of 11 April stated that both sides saw the importance of co-operation in defence and that, if a trade arrangement could be made, there were hopes that an agreement regarding defence would follow.[14] 12 April saw a report, which recorded that Lord Craigavon, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, was in London. Significantly, the article reported rumours 'that Northern Ireland regards the defence side of the negotiations as being of very great importance.'[15] However, that was the only reference to a possible defence agreement in The Irish Times that day. All the other articles on the negotiations concerned the possible trade provisions.

As regards the Northern Irish position, the New York Times of 12 April headlined an article, 'Ulster asks protection – Northern Ireland cabinet fears trade accord with Dublin.' This headline, and the article that followed made it clear that Ulster was very worried about the Dublin–London negotiations.[16] It must be stressed that it was trade accords that dominated all newspaper coverage of the negotiations at that time. It was almost as if the possibility of a defence agreement was unimportant to the English-medium press. However, Northern Irish apprehensions are very important in the lead up to the actual agreement. While a trade accord with Dublin would have had an adverse effect on the profits of Northern Irish farmers, it would not have been enough to worry the Belfast government. The possibility of an ending of partition and a return of the treaty ports would have been weighing heavily on the minds of some Northern Irish politicians and Unionists. They too, could see the war clouds gathering.

The Belfast Telegraph was another paper that expressed concern about the issues being discussed. It said on 14 April that, 'the frequent calling into consultation of Northern Ministers is an indication that Ulster interests are involved.' The article pointed out that 'Lord Craigavon and his colleagues, however, are not inexperienced, and there is every confidence that they will make a bold stand to safeguard the rights

14 The Irish Times, 11/4/1938.

15 The Irish Times, 12/4/1938.

16 The article quoted a Mr. J. Milne Barbour as saying, 'Whenever we hear of Dublin's negotiating with London we always feel in a position of a Christmas turkey overhearing discussion on whether it is to be boiled or roasted.' The New York Times, 12/4/1938, p.12.

and privileges of Ulster as an integral part of the United Kingdom."[17] This article suggested that changes to the partition settlement was the principal fear of Northern Ireland.

On 14 April, The Irish Times editorial wondered what the delay in concluding a settlement was. The editorial, continued, 'it would appear from these statements that there must be something more difficult than mere trade details to cope with."[18] The Evening Standard of the same day highlighted what The Irish Times seemed loathe to mention, the ports issue, stating that 'the most contentious issue is the ports."[19] That article went on to state that Thomas Inskip, a British minister for defence, had told de Valera that since the development of air power had made the treaty ports decline in importance, there was more chance of getting them back.

On 18 April, the first inkling of the overriding desire for a mutual agreement between the isles and a new era of good relations between the two countries appeared. The Irish Times' London Letter of that day stated, 'All this talk of peace and settlement reminds people that the one settlement many people in this country and in Ireland desire to see is agreement between Britain, Eire and Northern Ireland.'[20] That an agreement was reached was finally announced on 23 April. The Irish Times published an article about the futility of the Economic War, noting, 'to some extent each government has been cutting off its nose to spite its face.' The article expressed the hope that Ireland's trade, defence and future position in the Commonwealth had been decided, adding that if there had only been a trade agreement, it would rejoice anyway.[21] Clearly, The Irish Times saw trade and not defence as the most important factor of the Agreement because it saw Ireland as remaining part of the Commonwealth in the future. However, no details were printed as the Agreement was not released until the 26 April. This article was very positive in its greeting of the Agreement, as were all English-medium newspapers.[22]

While most of the speculation about the Agreement covered the possible trade aspects, The Irish Times did speculate that the partition question had been shelved and that Eire was to play a part in Britain's armament programme. It suggested that the Irish Army would be enlarged, modernised and coastal fortifications would be

17 The Belfast Telegraph, 14/4/1938.

18 The Irish Times, 14/4/1938.

19 The Evening Standard, 14/4/1938.

20 The Irish Times, 18/4/1938.

21 The Irish Times, 23/4/1938.

22 It had said that the 'Tories are not into Machiavellian plots and the Irish are not like the anthropophagy or men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders.' Ibid.

erected with materials provided by Britain, further evidence that The Irish Times saw the defence aspects of the Agreement as co-operation in the defence of the Isles.

The Irish Independent of 23 April went through a 'Diary of the Anglo-Irish Conference,'[23] from the time when the negotiations opened on 12 January until the Agreement was signed. One gets a strong impression of the delight of this newspaper regarding the Agreement, though most of its articles pertained to speculation on the trade aspects. However, the newspaper did print letters to the editor supporting a neutral stance for Ireland in any forthcoming war.[24] The Irish Press also expressed its delight about the Agreement. It stated that the issues discussed had been the land annuities, trade and the ports, with partition a no-go area. It discussed each in turn. As regards the ports, Articles 6 and 7 of the 1921 treaty were printed to point out to the reader exactly what the issue was. Perhaps in this, The Irish Press was reflecting the aims of its founder, Eamon de Valera. The wider examination by The Irish Press of all the issues involved, notably the ports, at this stage with the Agreement still unpublished, could be seen as a preparation of the readership for the dissemination of the governmental stance on the Agreement.

Whereas The Irish Times and the Irish Independent tended to report exactly what politicians said in their articles or in editorials, The Irish Press exhibited a type of investigative journalism. In contrast to the other papers, writers in The Irish Press included their own opinion or analytical comment at various points throughout at article. It is noteworthy that The Irish Press was alert to the ports issue and its implications for defence policy. On 23 April it asked the question in an article, 'Have the Anglo-Irish talks resulted in any agreed policy about defence?' In answer, the writer stated, 'it is a highly important issue, as many feel that submarine and air bases in Eire might play a very vital part if a European war should break out.'[25] The question of Ireland's position in a future European war was finally being raised directly, whereas, in the cases of The Irish Times and the Irish Independent, the issue had been noticeably avoided.

The Times, as with the Irish newspapers, greeted the Agreement with enthusiasm. It highlighted some key dates as pivotal in the course of the negotiations. In the course of this 'Diary' treatment The Times stated that between de Valera's visits to London in late February and early March, 'he had informed the press that no

23 The Irish Independent, 23/4/1938, p.12.

24 The Irish Independent, 23/4/1938, p.12. From the Irish Independent, 26/2/1938.

25 The Irish Press, 23/4/1938.

settlement of the political problems was possible, and that there would be no agreement on partition or defence.'[26] That statement, as reported by The Times, made it clear that the Evening Standard of 14 April was right when it had said that 'the most contentious issue is the ports.' In the light of those statements, that The Irish Times editorial of 14 April wondered what the delay was in concluding an agreement is an indication that either The Irish Times was not alert to the diplomatic/defence issues being negotiated or that it did not wish to highlight the ports issue because of its potential weakening of Commonwealth links, to which much of its readership was attached.

The New York Times headline of 23 April effectively speculated on the provisions of the agreement.[27] Unlike The Times and the three Irish newspapers, the New York Times, detached by 3,000 miles of ocean, openly published its speculation on the Agreement. Speculation it was and nothing more, evidenced by the fact that the land annuities had, in fact, not been waived.

The New York Times coverage very much emphasised the historical dimensions involved for Anglo-Irish relations. Its article of 23 April opened by stating that the Agreement would be signed at the same table as the treaty of 1921. It continued, 'However, the new treaty will bring immense and almost universal relief in both countries. Two enemies of past generations are determined to be friendly neighbours at a time when real friendships in Europe are more precious than ever before...'[28] This highlighted the significance of the Agreement in the current European context. A sub-headline, 'Defence is major question,' was followed by the warning that until the Agreement was released, it would be impossible to know just how prominently defence would feature. However, it concluded '...that in the new atmosphere of friendliness an Anglo-Irish defence agreement would be possible in a few months time.'[29] This style of investigative journalism, teasing out the principal issues and how they affected the respective parties, makes the New York Times reportage of the treaty ports issue particularly important. This newspaper's

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26 The Times. 23/4/1938.

27 The headline stated, 'British and Irish will sign accord ending long feud – formal ceremony on Monday – tariffs will be modified and annuities waived – partition issue remains – treaty ports return to Eire in defence program – credit is given to MacDonald.' The New York Times, 23/4/1938, p.1.

28 Ibid.

29 'Two months ago, after the second series of Anglo-Irish conversations in London, Mr. de Valera suggested that the two sides could not agree on defence and that their agreement would be confined to trade matters. But from the start of the negotiations there never was any obstacle from the British side to a withdrawal from the treaty ports if safeguards could be obtained. Apparently Mr. de Valera has now been able to convince the British that their naval interests would not suffer and that the return of the ports would be abundantly worthwhile, if only as a gesture of friendship and confidence...' The New York Times, 23/4/1938, p.1.

correspondents were not afraid to address what they saw as the issues, and say what they thought. Accordingly, it serves as a useful barometer of American opinion on the issue.

The Irish Times, on 25 April, the day the Agreement was signed, seems to have been absolutely oblivious to the significance of the return of the ports. It provided much coverage, as did all the three principal Irish newspapers, of the Irish delegation's send-off from the North Wall, Dublin Port and their arrival in Euston Station, London as greeted 'by 1,000 Irishmen waving flags.' It said that it had no details of the Agreement except that the treaty ports were to be returned to Ireland and that Ireland would accept defence help if necessary.[30] This was the extent of analysis on the ports in The Irish Times on 25 April.

It is interesting to note the same interpretation was given in other English newspapers as represented by the following quotations. The Daily Herald of 25 April stated that 'the agreement is framed on the assumption of friendship and mutual confidence, not the old assumption of hostility and mutual suspicion.'[31] The News Chronicle of the same day stated, 'it is worth far more to us to have the genuine friendship of the whole country than to have the barren right to occupy a few ports surrounded by possibly unfriendly territory.'[32] In this, the British press can be seen to have been well aware of the significance of the defence issues, pointing out that friendship between the two islands was the paramount thing, far more than rights to the treaty ports.

The Irish Independent of 25 April published an article outlining the broad terms of the Agreement stating, with regard to the defence aspects, that Eire would build up a strong defence system which would cost a good deal of money. The costs involved would later become an issue of debate in this newspaper. Most importantly for the perception this newspaper had towards the Agreement, it stated, 'it is said here that a great bond of friendship and understanding has developed between the two leaders.'[33] Clearly, the Irish Independent saw the Agreement as signifying a new friendship between the leaders of two countries with a history of bitter past relations.

30 The only thoughtful piece of journalism was in some speculation about eight military lorries that had left Derry the night before, for forts Dunree and Leenan on Lough Swilly. The article speculated that the lorries were to bring the British garrisons back to Derry. However, the official response was that it was only a routine journey. The Irish Times, 25/4/1938.

31 The Daily Herald, 25/4/1938.

32 The News Chronicle, 25/4/1938.

33 The Irish Independent, 25/4/1938.

The Dublin correspondent of The Times reported on the reception of the Agreement in Ireland. He stated:

...when it was announced on Friday night that an agreement had been reached between the British and Irish governments a feeling of intense relief swept through Eire.

He continued:

There is a feeling that, whatever may be the terms of the new pact, it is better than none and it will help eventually to bring about those better relations between the countries which have been so necessary in recent years. It is not unlikely that de Valera will return to Dublin with one definite political achievement to his credit. He probably will have secured control of those ports which were ceded to Great Britain under the Anglo-Irish treaty of 1921 but whether or not the concession will be unconditional remains to be seen.[34]

Here, as with the New York Times and The Irish Press, we can see a brand of journalism willing to investigate the issues. That the correspondent mentioned the question of the ports' 'unconditional' return, suggests that The Times may either have had the inside line on the Agreement provision, or the correspondent had an excellent grasp of the implications of the issue. In the light of their coverage of the Agreement in anticipation of its being published, The Irish Times' lack of analysis and paucity of addressing of the ports issue can be seen as a very inadequate response, or perhaps some dissatisfaction with the issue. That the Irish Independent was aware of the Irish defence position in relation to Europe and the belief of some of its readers of what policy Ireland should adopt in any forthcoming war, has already been established. But it is noteworthy that this paper, too, gave inadequate treatment to an issue of significant importance in Anglo-Irish relations.

The point must be stressed that The Times correspondent of 25 April pointed to 'better relations between the countries.' That was a theme that appeared again and again in all of the newspapers, and would later be reiterated at the handing over of the ports themselves. It was probable that this line was being put to journalists in various briefings. The Nottingham Journal of 25 April, was a possible exception to the general view. It was guarded in its greeting of the Agreement when stating 'we show reciprocal confidence in withdrawing our rights of defence over certain key ports in the expectation that in the future Eire will arrange her own military services in such a way that they will operate to our advantage in time of war.'[35] Clearly, this newspaper perceived the handing back of the treaty ports as a gesture, on the understanding that Ireland would assist Britain in the event of a future war in which Britain was involved. However, it was cautious in its acceptance of that understanding. It did not embrace the Agreement with the trust and faith of the other newspapers.

34 The Times. 25/4/1938.

35 The Nottingham Journal. 25/4/1938.

The attitude and political stance of The Irish Times became clear on 26 April, the day the Agreement was made public, when the paper congratulated de Valera who 'displayed gifts of true statesmanship when he went to London.' It commented that the ports in British control were a substantial limitation on Irish sovereignty and that their return represented a complete change of front in London. It went on to say that the Admiralty recognised Irish sincerity and gave the ports back as 'an act of faith,' but its Anglo-Irish stance was unmistakable when stating, 'we believe Ireland's best interests lie in a defence pact with Britain.'[36] This statement illustrated just why there had been a negligible coverage of the ports issue and its significance. The idea of Ireland no longer being under the protective wing of Britain was a cause of worry.

The Irish Independent, on 26 April, identified the main points of the Agreement, including the return of the ports. It stated that there had been an 'atmosphere of much cordiality' at the signing and that there was no actual defence agreement; rather, an understanding had been arrived at. One reporter cited the new bonds of friendship as very important for the defence of the isles.[37] He concluded, in other words, that the old dictum of 'England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity' is dead[38] The Irish Independent recognised Irish sovereignty, as attained through this Agreement, but urged defence co-operation with Britain as the way forward.

The Irish Press on 26 April, printed the headline, 'British to leave the ports.' Its political correspondent wrote in referring to the ports, the 'Agreement removes perhaps the more dangerous potential causes of quarrel between the two countries.'[39] The Irish Press clearly viewed the hand-over of the ports as the major issue, signifying the freedom of the twenty-six counties from any occupation force and the freedom of the Irish Free State to follow its own course in the world.

On 26 April The Times published the full text of the Agreement, as had the other newspapers. However, it is in its coverage of the ports issue that we can gain a particular insight into the views of the British political establishment. The Times explained that:

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36 The Irish Times, 26/4/1938.

37 'The bonds of friendship that have now been forged between the two countries which gave promise of close and friendly co-operation, which would be highly valuable as far as defence was concerned. The defence measures have regard to the fact that it is not in Ireland's interests to see Britain conquered, nor is it in Britain's interests to allow Ireland to be attacked.' The Irish Independent, 26/4/1938.

38 Ibid, 26/4/1938.

39 The Irish Press, 26/4/1938.

...under the treaty of 1921 the defence by sea of Great Britain and Ireland was to be undertaken by the Imperial forces until an arrangement had been made by which the Irish Free State undertook her own coastal defences, and the government of the Free State agreed to give necessary harbour facilities to the navy. These provisions now cease to have effect...[40]

In another article about the ports The Times stated, as previously quoted, that their handing back 'completes the recognition of Irish sovereignty over the twenty-six counties.'[41] In these statements, The Times explained the issue to its readers and recognised the situation that Britain no longer had any rights, military or otherwise, in the twenty-six counties. Later in that article, the writer stated that 'the most interesting and, in some respects, the most important feature of the Agreement is that relating to the ports.'[42] The writer pointed out that the symbolism of British troops leaving the Free State was important for de Valera and the Irish people. It referred to the tremendous goodwill that British generosity had earned in not attaching any conditions to their return.

The New York Times of 26 April was very thorough in its examination of the Agreement.[43] Its correspondent Ferdinand Kuhn junior wrote: 'The far-reaching agreement...promises to bring more friendly relations than at any time since the 700 year feud of Englishman and Irishman began... Britain now knows she can count on a friendly Ireland at her back, and incidentally, on a vital source of food supply in case of a European war.'[44] The importance of good relations with Ireland to Britain's survival in war was not lost on him as he pointed out the 'priceless symbol' of the return of the ports.[45] However, he highlighted that the hand-over was unconditional and both sides had denied any further understanding that the Royal Navy would be allowed to use the ports in time of war.[46] This last sentence is particularly important as it illustrated that the correspondent of the New York Times, in tune with the general opinion in London, believing that the 'act of good faith' shown by the British government in returning control of the treaty ports to Ireland was predicated on the

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40 The Times, 26/4/1938.

41 Op.cit.

42 The Times, 26/4/1938.

43 It published an article by Ferdinand Kuhn Junior cabled from London with the headline, 'British and Irish sign three year accord on trade, defence – broad agreement settles the principal points of conflict between the two countries – Dublin pays £10,000,000 – London surrenders control of three treaty ports – tariff war is ended.' The New York Times, 26/4/1938, p.1.

44 The New York Times, 26/4/1938, p.1.

45 'The symbolically outstanding feature of the agreement today was Britain's surrender of her rights over the Irish ports of Cobh (Queenstown), Berehaven and Lough Swilly where she has been entitled to keep coast defences and maintenance parties. Now she agrees to turn them over to the government of Ireland, "together with the buildings, magazines, emplacements, instruments and fixed armaments" at those ports. de Valera thereby wins a priceless symbol that Britain refused to yield to Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith in 1921.' Ibid.

46 Ibid.

use by Britain of the treaty ports in times of war. Overall, this article can be considered very pro-Irish in its content.

There was, however, another question that came into play regarding the ports. On the 28th the Irish Independent quoted de Valera as pointing out during a speech in the Dáil that the ports had been handed back unconditionally and that the Irish government would modernise them if necessary, finishing by stating that Irish territory would not be used as a basis for attack upon Britain.[47] However, the Irish Independent gave much coverage to a point of information from William Cosgrave, the leader of the Fine Gael opposition. He was of the opinion that the Agreement was welcome but that they would have been better off had the Economic War not been started. He maintained that they could have got the ports back six or seven years previously but that they did not pursue them because of an estimated cost of £350/500,000 to modernise and maintain them.[48]

Cosgrave's statement deserves credence. Under the terms of the treaty of 1921, a conference was to be called five years later to discuss the possible return of the ports. This conference was duly called by the Cosgrave government of the time, but was concluded almost immediately after it was opened. Because they did not want the financial burden of the ports at that time.[49]

De Valera stated on 28 April that freedom means money and 'this agreement, at any rate, means to see that these (the ports) are modernised if necessary, because these harbours and these points are of obvious strategic value.' Cosgrave responded that 'the agreement made no provision for the cost which would be entailed by their responsibilities in these ports, and that, to some extent, this diminished the cash value of the settlement.'[50]

On the 30th Paddy McGilligan, of Fine Gael, was reported as thinking that soon the cost of the ports would be realised and also that having the ports without a navy was like having a needle without thread. His asked, 'was Ireland going to have its own navy, was it going to act in unison with any other navy?'[51] This was a fair and important point, a navy being the most important defence asset to any island nation and that was something about which The Irish Independent was acutely aware. It was

47 The Irish Independent, 28/4/1938.

48 The Irish Independent, 28/4/1938.

49 The Irish Independent, 30/4/1938.

50 The Irish Independent, 28/4/1938.

51 The Irish Independent, 30/4/1938.

the absence of this military asset that led the newspaper to believe that defence co-operation with Britain, especially regarding her navy, was the obvious next step in ensuring the safety of Ireland.

The New York Times, article on 26 April, written by Hugh Smith, drew attention to the Fine Gael arguments. Smith stated that the return of the ports had removed another of de Valera's grievances with the British which would bring joy to the nationalists to whom sovereignty was more important than markets. However, he said, the majority of people would not be particularly excited by this as the Cosgrave government had previously discussed this issue with the British but had been reluctant to shoulder the cost of modernising and maintaining them.[52] This article can be seen as a playing down of the achievement of de Valera, as was the case with the Fine Gael representatives. Published two days prior to the publishing in The Irish Independent of the Fine Gael arguments, this article is an illustration of how sharp Hugh Smith was regarding the ports issue. He was well aware of the provisions pertaining to it, and of the significance of the issue to Irish sovereignty and to British defence.

The Irish Press editorial of 30 April was a good summation of how the Agreement was greeted by The Irish Press, and endorsed the sense of unity being promoted.[53] Significant was The Irish Press hint, '...no one can say today what catastrophe may engulf the nations tomorrow.' There were many with fears in England about the losing of the Irish ports. The Times is probably the best newspaper available to reflect these fears. On 28 April, the paper quoted de Valera's statement 'that the three ports would be modernised to serve mutual defence, but there was no secret agreement about that.' He repeated 'that Irish territory would not be used for attack on Britain.'[54] Considering the welcome with which the Agreement was received by The Times, combined with the publishing of the above speech, it is clear that, as far as this newspaper was concerned, Britain could be safe in the knowledge that the Irish Free State government was determined to reinforce her coastal defences and that Britain was

52 The New York Times, 26/4/1938.

53 Under the title 'Opening of new era' it stated: ...with one dissentient the London agreement was approved by the Dáil yesterday, and by that act it might be said that an important chapter of our history has closed... The old dividing lines have gone forever...in the three days debate...fundamental agreement on all the great national issues which was manifest...there was real harmony... In our judgement, there could be no better omen for the future of our country than the existence of that state of feeling... We are passing through one of the most fateful epochs in the world's history. It is a time when no one can say today what catastrophe may engulf the nations tomorrow. At such a juncture the Irish people should stand as one man together. They should make it their aim to be prepared for any emergency, ...to conserve our freedom and to defend our shores. The Irish Press, 30/4/1938.

54 The Times, 28/4/1938.

safe from Ireland allying with her enemies at any stage. Thus, as this newspaper and the other previously cited British newspapers saw it, with the exception of The Nottingham Journal, any British apprehensions about the ports hand-over could be allayed.

While The Times clearly took the stance of the British government on the ports issue, it should be noted that there was some debate in the House of Commons following the Agreement in which dissenting voices were raised. Much of this debate has been cited previously.[55] However, the importance of the debate means that further reference to it is required at this point. Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's explanation of why the ports were returned[56] had not allayed the fears of Arthur Grenfell, Labour M.P. He had said that he would like to know something about prospects of independent or joint action to secure safe and exclusive access to the narrow seas, which surrounded these islands. He was seriously concerned with the question of defence and said that everybody wanted to know far more about the terms of the Agreement.[57]

Winston Churchill's fears were expressed under the sub-headline, 'The broken treaty.' He said that the House had been told that the Agreement had ended the age long quarrel between Britain and Ireland but that this was not true as de Valera had said that he would never rest until partition was swept away. Therefore, the real conflict had yet to come... He continued, referring to southern Ireland in the Great War, 'undoubtedly we enjoyed the friendship and comradeship of the Irish nation at that time, but that did not prevent the dark forces of the Irish underworld from trying to strike us in the back in the most critical and dangerous period of the struggle.'[58]

Most importantly, Churchill said that to lose Lough Swilly would mean that the British fleet would have to operate out of Lamlash or another of the Scottish ports, which would cut 200 miles off the radius of operation of their fleet. He said that he believed there was a great deal of substance to de Valera's declaration that the Irish people would resent the landing of an enemy on their shores and that their main desire would be to rid the country of such an intruder. 'But what guarantee is there that a sovereign Irish republic would not declare neutrality if we were engaged in war with a powerful enemy?'[59] It must be said, that from a British defence viewpoint, Churchill displayed gifts of remarkable foresight.

55 Op.cit, The Times, 4-6/5/1938.
56 Op.cit, The Times, 6/5/1938.
57 The Times, 6/5/1938.
58 The Times, 6/5/1938.
59 Ibid.

That debate continued in the House of Commons for some days. Sir Ronald Ross, Londonderry Unionist, was, on 11 May reported by The Times as saying 'our safety had depended on the use of those ports for the protection of our food supplies. We were told that it was an act of faith that we should again be able to use them.'[60] In reporting this debate The Times, acting as the newspaper of record, represented the views of a substantial proportion of the British ruling class.

The New York Times did not pick up on the Commons debates. On 28 April it had published a headline, 'Britain will guide arming of Ireland – experts of other countries are also expected to plan vast defence program.' It said that, 'although the Anglo-Irish Agreement will make Ireland responsible for her own protection, British experts and British war material are expected to play an important part in building up Dublin's defence forces.' The article continued, highlighting the nature of the Irish coastline and the threat of U-boats using parts of it as bases or points of refuge.[61] However, the New York Times did not realise, though Churchill guessed, that Ireland's intended policy, under de Valera in the event of European hostilities, would be one of neutrality.

It is clear from an analysis of the English-medium press' greeting of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of April 1938 that all were pleased about it. There was an almost universal greeting of it as ushering in a new era of good relations between Britain and Ireland. That the British cession of the ports as 'an act of faith' was based upon an expectation that the British navy would be allowed to use the ports in time of war is probable. That The Irish Times and the Irish Independent saw defence co-operation with Britain as the best and only way forward, seems to be the case. Although, in an ideal world, the Irish Independent, being moderately nationalist in tradition, would have hoped for neutrality, it did not think that such a policy would be practicable. The Irish Press, of course, accepted the Agreement with open arms, seeing in it the final freedom of the twenty-six counties, while the New York Times, reporting from a distance, acknowledged this too.

Generally speaking, there was little concern over the return of the Irish ports. Friendly relations were seen as far more beneficial than a barren paper right. However, there were dissenters, as reported in The Times of May 1938, and Hugh

60 The Times, 11/5/1938.

61 'The problem of defending the Irish coast is similar to that of protecting Britain... The British Admiralty's nightmare of the use of the coast of Ireland for enemy submarine bases seems to have vanished. Ireland is determined to follow her own policy and decide for herself whether she will aid Britain. It is likely Dublin will stay out of any war in the Far East involving Britain.' The New York Times, 28/4/1938, p.1.

Smith of the New York Times was also aware of the possible implications of the return of the ports with the war clouds gathering over Europe.

Coverage of the hand-over of the ports

The coverage of the actual hand-over of the ports will now be examined. The aim of this is to see if there were any further concerns aired before the war began and examine how the ports issue was perceived by the English-medium press at this stage.

While the three treaty ports were returned on different dates; 11 July for Cobh, 29 September for Berehaven and 3 October for Lough Swilly, all the newspapers concentrated their attention on the return of Cobh. As the first port to be vacated by the British, this was generally seen by the English-medium press as the day of the ports' return.

Details of the hand-over were first published on 9 July, listing the chronology of events as a changing of the guard with the remnants of the British garrison leaving on the motor launch Inisfallen for Fishguard, before de Valera, his ministers and invited guests would arrive an hour later to hoist the tricolour.

All the three principal Irish newspapers covered the event, The Irish Times on 12 July stated that the transfer had passed off with little ceremony. De Valera had arrived by special launch from the mainland town of Cobh to Spike Island an hour after the British troops had changed the guard with the Irish Free State army, and the tricolour was hoisted at 6.20 p.m. over Fort Westmoreland and at 8 p.m. over forts Camden and Carlisle. At the same time (6.20 p.m.), volleys were fired in salute in all the Irish army barracks in the country. De Valera then left Cobh for Middleton, Co. Cork, to open a volunteer hall.[62]

There was a degree of triumphalism on the part of some Irish newspapers at the hand-over. The Irish Press on 11 July published a half page article entitled 'Spike Island changes flags today.' This article ran through the history of the island from the time it was a monastery until modern times.[63] On 12 July the front page headline was, 'Ireland regains territory – Taoiseach hoists tricolour on harbour forts.'[64] The article went through the details of the hand-over and was accompanied by a picture of the British troops waving goodbye from the deck of the Inisfallen. Even the language employed in

62 The Irish Times, 12/7/1938.

63 The Irish Press, 11/7/1938, p.8.

64 The Irish Press, 12/7/1938, p.1.

the article had a touch of a 'colour' piece to it – 'The sun, as if reluctant to withdraw its glory from the scene, was going slowly down towards Kinsale when he (de Valera) touched the cord and the flag of Ireland ascended gracefully, buoyantly in the light breeze and remained dominating Cork harbour.'[65] This sense of occasion was again evident when dealing with the changing of the guard.[66] Such a report was, of course, in stark contrast to that of The Irish Times, which had reported a 'simple ceremony, almost too simple.'[67]

The Irish Independent, too, on 11 July, had published a large article with a picture of Spike Island entitled, 'The chequered history of Spike Island' running through its long history.[68] In its coverage of the actual hand-over, it was much more low key than The Irish Press. The essence of the report came in the opening few lines. It said, 'on the 17th anniversary of the truce of 1921, another chapter in Irish history was written. At 6.20 this evening history was made when the British flag was lowered from Fort Westmoreland on the island during the changing of the guard, and Irish sentries mounted duty there for the first time.'[69]

It is interesting to note the different perspectives each of the respective principal Irish newspapers had on the same event. The rather bland reportage by The Irish Times illustrated a reluctance to see the hand-over as an important event in Irish history, reflecting the paper's Anglo-Irish traditions. This was in strong contrast to the glorious occasion as described by the nationalist Irish Press. That the Irish Independent described the ceremony as a historic moment of significance for Ireland and her people, again confirmed the paper as one of moderate nationalist persuasion.

The Times on 12 July greeted the hand-over with the headline, 'Cork forts handed over – Irish flag broken by de Valera.' The article described the scene, 'amid the booming guns the last British troops stationed at Spike Island, Cork harbour, this evening handed over custody of the island and adjoining fortifications to the troops of Eire. For more than 150 years the British flag has flown there... The British flag had flown over it as one of the main defence works on the southern coast.'[70] Thus, The Times saw the hand-over as a historic moment in the histories of both countries as they strove towards a new era of good and friendly relations.

65 Ibid.

66 The article said that as the British troops sailed out of the harbour, 'The silence was broken by the thunder of a full salute of twenty-one guns, and the crowds broke into enthusiastic cheering.' Ibid.

67 The Irish Times, 12/7/1938.

68 The Irish Independent, 11/7/1938.

69 It headlined, 'British troops evacuate Spike Island – Irish army takes over the forts – thousands of people watch historic ceremony.' The Irish Independent, 12/7/1938.

70 The Times, 12/7/1938.

Hugh Smith of the New York Times wrote: 'amid scenes of great public jubilation, Great Britain today handed over Spike Island, one of the most important fortified forts in Southern Ireland, to the Irish people.' He described the ceremony and noted that seventeen years previously, with the Black and Tan war taking place, such a scene would have been unbelievable.[71]

This representation of the hand-over is, again, reflective of the good relations between the islands that had occurred as a result of the April Agreement. All the newspapers recorded the cordial fraternising between the two garrisons, outgoing and incoming. The English-medium press, as a result of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 25 April 1938, perceived only good things as coming out of it for the future relationship between the two countries. The question was, with the war clouds gathering over Europe, would this new relationship last?

In conclusion, one notes that the timing of the return of the ports was particularly interesting. They had been retained in 1921 for their strategic importance in the event of a future war. Now, with such a war impending, the British handed back the treaty ports to Ireland. Their thinking was that, in doing so, they would foster a new era of friendly relations and Irish gratitude would lead to Britain being allowed use of the ports, consentingly, by Ireland in time of war.

It is interesting that The Irish Times and the Irish Independent paid relatively little attention to the ports and overall defence aspects of the Agreement. The Irish Press gave greater and more incisive coverage to these issues, which suggests that it was linked to, or influenced by, de Valera's goals. The Times and the New York Times were unequivocal in their greeting of the Agreement. Both recognised the possible strategic consequences of the ports hand-over, particularly the New York Times, but both perceived an improvement in the relations between the two countries as being far more important in the long run.

Generally, all the English-medium newspaper coverage of the Agreement and the return of the ports was positive. However, there were some objections such as those in the House of Commons by Grenfell and Churchill. The Nottingham Journal

71 His article was headlined, 'Britain hands over Spike Island to Irish; Troops fraternise after flag comes down' and continued: 'While the troops of both countries stood to attention, facing each other, bugles sounded and the Union Jack that had flown on Spike Island since the British occupied it in 1790(1), was lowered... Here as the British quit Spike Island was enacted a scene significant of the new friendly relations between the countries. Irish officers fraternised cordially with the British and as the tender moved away with the British troops on deck, the Irish army band played "God save the King," while the troops were at salute. Seventeen years ago, with the bitterness of the Black and Tan war abroad, such a scene seemed unbelievable.' The New York Times. 12/7/1938, p.1.

too had been guarded in its analysis of the return of the ports. The argument was abroad that Chamberlain's policy of appeasement was not in Britain's interest, and the ports issue was regarded by some as smacking of an appeasement approach. These doubts are important as they illustrated an acknowledgement that war was coming and that the Chamberlain Government's 'act of faith' might not work out as had been hoped.

The examination of the newspaper coverage of the actual hand-over of Cobh showed that the newspapers were united in recognising that a long chapter in the history of the isles was being closed and another about to begin. Even though some newspapers, such as The Irish Times, did not exhibit the enthusiasm of The Irish Press at the return, all were aware that they were witnessing a significant moment in the history of the two islands.

CHAPTER 2

ISSUES IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE WAR SEPTEMBER 1939 TO DECEMBER 1941

The impact of censorship

On the outbreak of World War II in September 1939, the Irish Free State adopted a policy of neutrality towards the conflict. The recognition of the Irish Free State's neutrality presented a serious problem for Britain. As Anthony Eden, Dominions Secretary in the new war cabinet, said, 'we do not want formally to recognise Eire as neutral while Eire remains a member of the British Commonwealth' as this would be in conflict with the 'constitutional theory of the indivisibility of the crown,'[1] The strategic disadvantage in which Britain had put herself by returning the treaty ports to Ireland in 1938 had not yet been recognised. The problem, at this point, was one of symbolism and constitutional politics.

The period dealt with in this chapter, September 1939 to December 1941, was a particularly important one in the Battle of the Atlantic. Immediately after war was declared on Germany by Britain and France on 3 September 1939, the German U-boats went to work. The first few months of the war saw the U-boats enjoy their first 'Happy Time,' when merchant ships were unescorted and virtually defenceless. A daring U-boat attack, as early as 14 October 1939, highlighted the significance of sea routes in the prosecution of the war. In this attack, U-100 made its way into the British naval base at Scapa Flow, north of Scotland, and sank the battleship H.M.S. Royal Oak. The most remarkable thing about it was that the U-boat plus its crew actually managed to make its way out of the port unmolested and back to Germany to a hero's welcome.

Despite the crisis of 1917 during World War I and the lessons which it was presumed had been learned from it, the convoy system was not in operation by late 1939, contrary to politicians' statements in contemporary British newspapers. In fact, it was not until mid to late summer 1940 that the convoy system was properly organised. In the meantime, U-boats had great success in the Atlantic despite the Lend-Lease programme between Britain and the U.S.A. and it can be said that in this period of the war the Battle of the Atlantic was definitely going in Germany's favour.[2]

1 Robert Fisk, In time of war, p.110.

2 See Appendix A.

Considering these facts and the help the ports would have been to Britain at that time, it would seem likely that the loss of the treaty ports of Cobh, Berehaven and Lough Swilly, caused much anguish and regret among the naval hierarchy and politicians during those early months. However, British politicians remained upbeat in their statements to the media. They cited the convoy system, which they insisted would be perfected by the end of 1939 and they even played down the significance of a U-boat entering the biggest and most important naval base in the isles, sinking a battleship and actually getting out again. This is likely to have caused great concern within the Admiralty, but, significantly, it did not surface in the media.

An illuminating example of British naval opinion regarding the Irish ports and the problem that their denial to the Allies represented, was written by Nicholas Montserrat, himself an ex-Royal Navy officer who had served throughout the Battle of the Atlantic. It was effectively a statement of regret, yet it summed up the significance of the Irish ports issue to the Battle of the Atlantic in a decisive manner.[3]

It must be borne in mind that censorship of newspaper coverage of wartime events became very pervasive and of key importance to the theme of this thesis. Because of this, it is necessary to understand how it was conducted and how it influenced the media treatment of developments.

Censorship in the Irish media was imposed immediately on the declaration of war, and was further tightened in July 1940. While censorship also operated in Britain and in the United States, after it entered the war on 9 December 1941, it was of a different character. Both Britain and the U.S. were at war, so censorship dealt with potential harmful pieces affecting their war efforts and plans. As stated in the introduction, censorship in Ireland was adopted as a defensive measure. In Ireland, as a neutral country, the process would be to try to steer a line so that no belligerent would be seen to gain an advantage. As such, the coverage of sensitive issues regarding Ireland's neutrality would be safeguarded. Discussion of the treaty ports issue was one of these and, as a result, Irish newspaper coverage of the ports issue from early 1941 was scant and indirect.

3 'But from the naval point of view there was an even more deadly factor: this was the loss of the naval bases in southern and western Ireland... To compute how many men and how many ships this denial was costing, month after month, was hardly possible, but the total was substantial and tragic. From these bases escorts could have sailed further out into the Atlantic, and provide additional cover for the hard-pressed convoys; from these bases, the Battle of the Atlantic might have been fought on something like equal terms.' Nicholas Montserrat Nicholas, The Cruel Sea, p.160, (London, 1951).

This however, was not the position for the foreign press and it is important to track and analyse the references to the treaty ports in such media. Their coverage of the ports issue was relatively extensive, particularly at pivotal periods. On the issue of Ireland's neutrality and the denial of allied use of the Irish ports, clear changes in stance are discernible. The New York Times' acceptance of Irish neutrality at the start of the war changed to open hostility after America's entry into the war on 9 December 1941. In The Times' letters to the editor, both hostile and moderate, understanding of the Irish position co-existed with an editorial leaning towards the governmental opinion on the matter. Due to censorship, however, the arguments evident in these two allied newspapers were given little coverage in the three principal Irish newspapers.

While at the outbreak of the war censorship was highlighted in the Irish press, it was not discussed in any meaningful way. The Irish Independent of 7 September reported a British Ministry of Information statement that 'it will not always be desirable to publish news of the destruction or damage of enemy submarines by our naval or air forces. Because no news is published it must not be assumed that no successes have been achieved. The Admiralty will release information whenever it is deemed advisable.'[4] This is very helpful in analysing press coverage of the Battle of the Atlantic and, consequently, the Irish ports issue. The issue of censorship was accepted by the Irish press as a necessary wartime measure. As a result, the ports issue only rarely appeared in the Irish newspapers throughout the war period.

Foreign newspapers, however, were critical of Irish censorship measures. The Times of 2 October 1939, published an article from its Dublin correspondent in which it had a headline, 'Eire's attitude to the war – task of official neutrality – stringent censorship,'[5] wrote a not entirely friendly article about the Irish policy of neutrality. As intimated by the headline, his objection was to the 'stringent censorship' enforced. However, he did point out that it was a necessary requirement if neutrality was to be maintained. In spite of that realisation, his dislike for these restrictions again surfaced on 13 May 1940, when he referred to 'the vigilant eye of the censor in Eire'[6] in a satirical manner.

The New York Times was much more direct in highlighting the problems of censorship in Ireland for newspaper publishing. In an article of 2 July 1940, while reporting governmental discussions between Britain, Northern Ireland and Eire on the possibility of a united defence scheme for Northern Ireland and Eire, a scathing

4 The Irish Independent, 7/9/1939, p.8.

5 The Times, 2/10/1939, p.5.

6 The Times, 13/5/1940, p.2.

comment on censorship from Raymond Daniell appeared.[7] It must be stated that these discussions did not appear in any of the three Irish newspapers under review throughout this period. That such discussions on defence co-operation with Britain would have been censored is not surprising considering their obvious sensitivity as to the observance of neutrality. However, this is important as it illustrated, through a contemporary reporter, the extent of censorship in Ireland at this time.

On 31 January 1942, the New York Times' Dublin correspondent reported that 'the newspapers made only scant mention of the U.S. troops arriving (in Northern Ireland) and consistent British press demands that Eire turn over bases to the Allies have seen little light in the censored press.'[8] This statement is pivotal in that it illustrated, clearly, what was and what was not making the headlines in Ireland. Events of seminal importance to Ireland and to the defence of her policy of neutrality were not receiving attention in the Irish press. This, in effect, was keeping the Irish people very much in the dark about their position and the dangers to them, of the war.[9-10]

The establishment of the neutrality policy

At the outbreak of the war in September 1939, there was very little analysis of the ports issue itself. Understandably, newspapers were concerned with setting out Ireland's position in this crisis. While de Valera had, from early 1938, maintained Ireland's desired policy of neutrality in any future European war, this desire had to be disseminated to the international community with the aim of its recognition by the

7 'There has been a complete blackout on information as to the nature of the discussions that have been proceeding. In the past week Ireland has tightened up on censorship so drastically that even mention of the subjects (a defence co-operation scheme) has been forbidden in the Irish local papers, and correspondents have been unable to discuss it in cables abroad.' The New York Times. 2/7/1940.p.5.

8 The New York Times. 31/1/1942, p.1.

9-10 There are many intercepted letters that can be found in the Department of Defence Press Censorship files. Two of the most notable of these were written by J.T. Gwynn, The Manchester Guardian correspondent in Dublin in early February 1942. The answer to the question of whether the letters were ever received in Manchester is that they are still in the press censorship file, and were never published. There are many other letters that were pulled by the press censor. However, those of J.T. Gwynn are probably the best examples to illustrate the thoroughness of Irish censorship.

9 In his first letter Gwynn wrote 'the Dublin press now throws little light on Ireland's views of foreign affairs as by means of censorship regulations the freedom of the press has been entirely sacrificed to the cult of a strange God "neutrality" ... de Valera ... would not hesitate to appeal to the evil memories of the past to induce Ireland to defend her neutrality as against England's desire to secure anti-submarine bases on the Irish coast... Consequently, Ireland is today willing to fight England to defend her own freedom or the freedom of Europe.' Department of Defence Archives, press censorship file no: 2/106.

10 In a subsequent letter Gwynn wrote, 'I am asking the censor's permission to make you this explanation. I responded to your request for a report of Irish reactions to Churchill's reference to the Irish ports by a wire which amounted to an attack on our neutrality policy and also on the censorship rules in so far as they virtually prohibit criticism of that policy in the Irish press. The censor ... further informed me that a similar attack on the neutrality policy might be regarded as of a treasonable nature and might render me liable to prosecution under one of our Public Safety Acts...' Department of Defence Archives, press censorship file No: 2/106.

belligerents. The Irish Times editorial of 2 September 1939, set out the situation in Ireland as it stood. It stated:

> For the moment, at any rate, we in Ireland have the good fortune to be remote from the turmoil of Europe's strife, ...but there are few hearts today that will not bleed for tortured Poland... The British people are facing the supreme crisis of their history with admirable calm. In the event of war Eire will remain neutral, in pursuit of de Valera's declared policy, and we can only hope that the Irish government will be able to maintain it. Yet, it would be absurd to think that the people of this little country can remain entirely indifferent to the fate of their powerful neighbours. For richer or poorer, for better or for worse, the destinies of our two islands are bound inextricably together. If Great Britain should be conquered and God forbid that she should be conquered, Ireland, inevitably would be encompassed in her downfall.[11]

This was a very realistic statement of the situation.

A solidifying of Ireland's position, which would have put many minds at ease, was the printing in all three principal Irish newspapers, on 4 September, of Germany's acceptance of Irish neutrality. This had been given by the German Minister, Edouard Hempel to de Valera on 31 August. Hempel informed de Valera that Ireland's neutrality would be respected so long as it was adhered to, and de Valera re-affirmed Ireland's wish to remain neutral and at peace with all countries.[12]

In The Times of 9 September, its correspondent described a curiously apathetic mood in Dublin, with de Valera's policy of neutrality accepted generally. He pointed out that, while there was a keen interest in events in Europe, the visitor would hardly realise there was a war in Europe at all. He stated that, 'Dublin opinion is strongly in favour of de Valera's neutrality policy, but the more intelligent elements of the community recognise that the maintenance of this policy is likely to become more and more difficult as time goes on.' The article concluded, 'From the British point of view it is more than probable that Eire's neutrality is the best possible policy that de Valera's government could possibly have adopted. Those who wish to fight for the Commonwealth will fight ... and with the progress of the war the fundamental ties that bind our two islands together will tend to become stronger rather than weaken.'[13]

From this article it is clear that this correspondent was not unduly worried about the problems Irish neutrality might create. That he saw a strengthening of the ties between Great Britain and Ireland as a result of Irish neutrality, is a throw-back to the attitude of April 1938, that a friendly, sovereign Ireland would be of far greater benefit than a hostile Ireland in time of war. We can see here The Times taking an

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11 The Irish Times. 2/9/1939, p.2.

12 The Irish Times. the Irish Independent. The Irish Press. 4/9/1939.

13 The Times. 9/9/1939.

important, optimistic outlook in the early stages of the war. To print articles about the possible dangers of not having the use of the Irish ports could, at this stage, only have been negative for the morale of the British people as they went to war with Germany for the second time in twenty-five years.

The New York Times was different in its approach. As early as April 1939, articles about discussions between the Irish Free State, Northern Ireland, Great Britain and the U.S.A. about the ending of partition had appeared. In an article on 9 April 1939 the headline stated, 'Deny any Irish deal involving aid to U.S. – de Valera and Kennedy (the American ambassador to the Court at St. James, England) disclaim any knowledge of war-aid parley...' This reported The Sunday Times as stating that discussions on partition were taking place and 'that if such a solution could be reached for a united Ireland, maintaining an external association with the British Empire, the armed forces of the United States should receive, by treaty, certain accommodations in Ireland in wartime.' However, when the reported negotiations were brought to the attention of Premier Eamon de Valera his only observation was 'I have no knowledge of such negotiations.'[14]

In its coverage of the outbreak of the war, the New York Times published an article on 2 September which stated, the 'prospect is not good. Even if Eire escapes the horrors and ravages of war the prospect before the citizens in the event of a prolonged conflict is far from cheering."[15] The next day the subject of Ireland in the war was addressed. The article was headlined by 'Neutrality voted by Dáil at Dublin – de Valera gives partition as reason but hears strong opposition in session – ... – dependence of Ireland upon convoys of the Royal Navy for its trade is noted.' With de Valera reported as citing partition as the reason for the neutrality policy, perhaps there was, indeed, some substance to the reported discussions of 9 April. However, the writer expanded on this headline by pointing out 'just how far Ireland can maintain her neutrality and send food supplies to Britain is a question that is exercising many minds here...de Valera himself admitted in the Dáil that the preservation of neutrality while having close trade relations with Britain would present many difficulties and delicate problems..."[16]

Whereas, there was understanding of Irish neutrality in The Times, as it believed that it benefited British interests, the New York Times refrained from approving or disapproving of the Irish policy and instead looked into the issue of how long it could conceivably last.

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14 The New York Times, 9/4/1939, p.27.

15 The New York Times, 2/9/1939, p.2

16 The New York Times, 3/9/1939, p.15

Focus on all-Ireland defence issues

Due to censorship, nothing of any real import to the ports issue appeared for the first ten months of the war. It was not until 4 June 1940, when it was clear that France would fall to the German Blitzkrieg, that a state of emergency was declared in Ireland. All of a sudden, the three main Irish newspapers provided a huge amount of coverage to the question of Irish defence, but only in the drive for recruits to the army. The Irish Times editorial of 1 June 1940, entitled 'Aux Armes!' and followed with 'The Minister for Defence issued a late-night broadcast appeal for recruits to the national forces. We hope it has hit home.'[17] The Irish Press of 2 June headlined page one with 'citizens asked to enrol at once – "defend the nation, Eire wants men",'[18] while the Irish Independent of 4 June reported '12 new battalions – Irish army plans' and highlighted 'a satisfactory response to call for recruits but no figures available.'[19] The ensuing campaign calling for recruits to the army was immense, but as regards the issue of the ports, even when it was clear Britain would shortly stand alone against Germany, not a word was written.

The Irish Independent of 6 June 1940, printed a speech by James Dillon, deputy leader of Fine Gael, in which he stated that Ireland was 'in immediate danger of invasion, which must be resisted if our people were to be protected from carnage of the most horrible kind.'[20] On 3 June The Irish Times published a Radio Eireann broadcast by de Valera in which the danger to Ireland was made abundantly clear. He said, 'Our nation is in danger – immediate imminent danger... If violation of our territory promised an advantage, our territory will be violated, and our country made a cockpit.'[21] While the Irish ports had not yet been brought into the equation in a public way, the strategic importance of Ireland to both belligerents was lost on no one. The Irish Press editorial of the same day entitled, 'Defence,' commented on de Valera's speech saying that Ireland was in imminent danger of attack.[22] However, for coverage of the important ports issue we must turn to the foreign press.

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17 The Irish Times, 1/6/1940, p.6.

18 The Irish Press, 2/6/1940, p.1.

19 The Irish Independent, 4/6/1940, p.11.

20 The Irish Independent, 6/6/1940, p.7.

21 The Irish Times, 3/6/1940, p.5.

22 'If anything were wanting to bring home to our people the gravity of the times we live in and the perils which menace this island, it was supplied by the message which An Taoiseach broadcast to the nation on Saturday (1 September) night. The danger of which he spoke is not something that is vague or remote; on the contrary, it is definite and imminent.' Editorial, The Irish Press, 3/6/1940, p.6.

The foreign press, led by The Times was much more pointed regarding the issues pertaining to Ireland's danger. As early as 13 May, its Dublin correspondent mentioned a denial by de Valera of an alleged plan to restore the bases to Britain. The article was headlined 'Military bases in Eire – reported purchase by Britain denied.'[23] This awareness of the issue of Irish defence was pursued in later days with an article on 21 May headlined, 'Eire reservists called up,'[24] on 27 May, 'Eire to form security force'[25] and the next day with, 'War footing for the army of Eire.'[26] With hard fighting going on in France, the most likely concerns for The Times were the weak back-doors to England.

While The Times, on 3 June, also reported de Valera's radio broadcast with 'de Valera on danger of invasion,'[27] perhaps the most interesting and useful analysis of the Irish problem came from the editorial of the New York Times on 1 June. Its headline was 'The danger to Ireland – de Valera has acted none too soon in calling for emergency defence measures throughout Eire.' The headline made clear the opinion of the article. It proceeded to run through the Irish defence statistics, listing the numbers of permanent army personnel as around seven thousand and commented that 'their air force is hardly enough to merit the name.' It pointed out finally that:

> Now that they can see the danger, the Irish see also that they are appallingly unprepared to meet an invasion of the Norwegian model... The present danger to Ireland is all the greater for two reasons. The first is that a German invasion of Great Britain – already being openly predicted by the Germans and awaited by the British would have more chance of success if German aircraft could use Irish landing fields.[28]

The second reason was cited as the I.R.A. and possible Fifth Column activities.

While the ports had, still, not been raised directly in the public arena, the strategic importance of the island of Ireland to any invasion of Britain was not lost on anyone. With the impending fall of France, the future position of Ireland, despite her acknowledged position of neutrality by the German government, was, at this stage, becoming an issue of particular concern within the English-medium press. Perhaps the sense of panic that can be seen setting in amongst the various newspapers is best illustrated by The Irish Times editorial of 8 June, appealing, almost in desperation,

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23 The Times, 13/5/1940, p.2.

24 The Times, 21/5/1940, p.6.

25 The Times, 27/5/1940, p.3.

26 The Times, 28/5/1940, p.3.

27 The Times, 3/6/1940, p.10.

28 The New York Times, 1/6/1940, p.14.

for southern Unionists to join any of the Irish defence forces.[29] The immediate danger to the island was unmistakable. Political views and religious beliefs no longer mattered in the face of an all-encompassing appeal for the defence of the homeland.

The month of June 1940 saw all five newspapers, reviewed in this thesis, recognise the danger to Ireland, the three principal Irish papers uniting behind the recruitment campaign. This was, however, predictable, considering the Blitzkrieg's advances into France. An interesting article entitled, 'Belfast rejects appeal for united Irish command' appeared in the New York Times on 18 June. It explained, 'a suggestion that Northern Ireland should join with Southern Ireland under a united command for the defence of Ireland met with a flat "No" today in reaction voiced by The Belfast Newsletter. The suggestion was made yesterday at a united Eire meeting in Dublin.'[30] The Times took up this question on the 25th, reporting 'The defence of Ireland – suggestions for unity.'[31] The raising of this question signified a definite effort by the English to redress the problem of Irish neutrality and is central to the analysis of the Irish problem at this period of the war. Interestingly, though, no word of these questions whatsoever appeared in any of the three principal Irish newspapers, probably due to the strict censorship.

This question continued in The Times for quite some time. The Belfast correspondent of The Times reported on 1 July a speech by Craigavon to an Orange Order meeting in Co. Down where he stated that the safety of the U.K. was the supreme consideration to everyone in the two islands. He said that if an all-Ireland parliament had been in existence at the outbreak of hostilities, Britain would be facing an all-Ireland neutrality. The Unionists would be a minority and British troops would only have been able to land on Irish soil by force.[32] Another important article addressing the issue of the North Atlantic trade routes and the Irish ports was published in the same newspaper on 2 July. It was headlined 'Unite in Ireland.' An important and far-seeing discussion followed. The writer asked, 'who was to get the ports of Ireland first. Was it

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29 'This paper has been associated popularly with the protestants and the so-called ex-Unionists of Ireland. To them we make a special appeal. To the protestants and ex-Unionists of the twenty-six counties we say, "join up in one or other of the Irish defence forces; give the lie to the nonsense that has been talked of you; show, by your conduct, that your sense of nationality had been at least as true and as sincere, as deeply-rooted and as highly aspiring, as that of the many who have traduced you. Your traditions are among the noblest on earth. Show yourselves worthy of them". ' The Irish Times, 8/6/1940, p.6.

30 The New York Times, 18/6/1940, p.8.

31 The article had elaborated, 'In the Northern Ireland Parliament, J. Beattie (Socialist, Pottinger Division, Belfast) suggested there should be a defence council for Eire and Northern Ireland,' with Lord Craigavon responding, 'The defence of the United Kingdom is a matter for the military authorities and we cannot co-operate in that way.' The article further reported a statement made by the Reverend Dr. Little, a Unionist M.P., that it had been put to him in the House of Commons in London that, 'could not the two Ireland's come together for the duration against the common enemy?' The Times, 25/6/1940, p.3.

32 The Times, 1/7/1940, p.2.

to be Hitler?' He continued to say that Britain was already blockaded in the North Sea and in the Channel. If Germany obtained the Faroes, Shetlands or Iceland, the North Atlantic trade routes would be at risk and its control of Ireland would completely surround Britain. He was of the opinion that only a united Ireland defence policy could counter this threat and that a diplomatic success here, would look well in the U.S.[33] The writer of this article was well aware of the potential dangers of a German Ireland and one cannot but get the feeling that the writer, himself, was hoping desperately for a united Irish defence policy.

The New York Times of 30 June reported 'Viscount Craigavon said today he was prepared to "enter into the closest co-operation" with Prime Minister Eamon de Valera of Ireland on matters of defence "provided that he takes a stand as we are doing on the side of Britain and the Empire..." but that he should undertake "not to raise any issues of a constitutional nature".'[34] Just below this article its Dublin correspondent reported that 'Well-informed Dublin sources tonight discounted the possibility of a compromise on the partition issue between north and south Ireland in the interests of a united defence against possible aggression.'[35] It would seem that the question had now ended, yet, on 2 July the New York Times published another article written in London by Raymond Daniell. His opinion was clear when he stated that:

> Neutral Ireland (Eire), unprepared for war, wracked by factionalism and suspicious of Great Britain, is causing increasing concern among those charged with the duty of maintaining this country from invasion and maintaining communications with the rest of the empire and the world... There have been many conversations recently in London, Dublin and Belfast in an effort to find a formula whereby British or Allied troops can garrison the threatened country without offending Irish sensibilities... An unofficial suggestion is that it is argued that Polish, French and Czech troops, mostly catholic, would be more acceptable to the people of Ireland than British troops, who were only recently regarded as enemy soldiers. There has been a complete blackout of information as to the nature of the discussions that have been proceeding... de Valera is again blackmailing the British government to end partition and this at the very moment when an enemy is at our gates...[36]

That Raymond Daniell was anti-Irish neutrality is clear. However, he did show the mounting importance of the issue of Irish neutrality in the British war effort and the significance of these reported negotiations.

Reports of the question of a united Irish defence scheme continued in the New York Times with article headlines on 3 July of Ireland 'held ready for united defence – aide of de Valera tells British Dublin will accept aid,'[37] and on 4 July it printed, 'Lord

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33 The Times, 2/7/1940, p.9

34 The New York Times, 30/6/1940, p.1.

35 Ibid.

36 The New York Times, 2/7/1940, p.5.

37 The New York Times, 3/7/1940, p.4.

Beaverbrooke's Evening Standard declared today that "Ireland is in peril and her peril is ours".'[38] The Times gave less coverage to this question, probably due to its military and political sensitivity, preferring instead to publish articles such as one on 4 July, 'Ports of Eire under military control,'[39] or, on 5 July reporting from parliament 'Period of splendid hope – Churchill on our island strength.'[40] On 8 July it published an article with the headline 'Northern Ireland's resolve – policy of neutrality unthinkable'[41] and on 9 July, 'Eire and Ulster – de Valera's proposal for union.'[42] This was, indeed, an important question for British security and her war effort. The relatively extensive coverage of the question in the New York Times could be seen as surprising, considering the United States was at this point neutral and 3,000 miles away. But, it must be remembered that there was a large Irish-American population living in and around New York who would have wanted to see how these issues were developing in diplomatic circles. It was also known at the time that President Roosevelt favoured a policy of joining with Britain in her stand against Germany.

The question of a united defence policy for Ireland was brought to a conclusion in both The Times and the New York Times on 12 July. The Times printed a headline of 'Joint defence of Ireland – Ulster offer rejected,' continuing, 'In the Northern Ireland Commons yesterday Viscount Craigavon referred to the question of a united defence of all Ireland. De Valera, he said, had definitely rejected his offer. That ended the matter so far as he was concerned. It was finished. It would not be raised by him again.'[43] In a further statement, Craigavon said that Northern Ireland had not the constitutional power to enter into a compact with Eire and it was open to Eire to approach the Imperial government for military aid. As he saw it 'Eire's security can best be assured by taking the one step that could make military co-operation effective – the abandonment of neutrality and a declaration of full association with Britain in waging the war.'[44] The New York Times, too, printed the same statement that the matter was finished under the heading 'Irish defence aim ended for Ulster – matter of joint action with Eire "finished" says Craigavon.'[45] The press coverage of this question was effectively drawn to a conclusion through a report by The New York Times

38 The New York Times, 4/7/1940, p.2.

39 The Times, 4/7/1940, p.4.

40 The Times, 5/7/1940, p.2.

41 The Times, 8/7/1940, p.2.

42 The Times, 9/7/1940, p.4

43 The Times, 12/7/1940, p.2.

44 Ibid.

45 The article said that 'Lord Craigavon's statement followed the disclosure in London that British efforts to reach a defence agreement with de Valera had collapsed and that the British war cabinet was drawing up its own plan to countercheck any attempted German invasion of Ireland.' The New York Times, 12/7/1940, p.4.

Dublin correspondent on 6 July. This stated de Valera's opinion as, 'Come what may, Eire is determined to preserve her neutrality and stay out of the war if humanly possible.'[46] This opinion and this aim were diametrically opposed to what Lord Craigavon, as leader of Northern Ireland, wanted. As such, no defence co-operation policy was possible.

It is not surprising that this question was not raised in the Irish press. The coverage of the issue by The Times and the New York Times reflected English and American opinion on the issue of Irish neutrality and how it was not in their interests. The appearance in The Irish Press of discussions regarding possible joint defence could also have alerted Germany to a possible wavering of Irish neutrality, and might have weakened resolve to respect it. However, coverage in the British and American press could be regarded as propaganda and was not the responsibility of Irish sources.

The Treaty Ports as an issue of dispute

The issue of the Irish ports was trenchantly raised by Prime Minister Winston Churchill on 5 November 1940, when, in a parliamentary speech, he stated that '...it was a grievous and heavy burden that Britain is not at liberty to use the south and west coasts of Ireland for the refuelling of our flotillas and our aircraft and it is one that should never have been put on our shoulders.'[47] In saying that the denial of the use of the ports should never have been placed upon their shoulders, he pointed to his opposition to the return of the ports in 1938, when he realised the immense disadvantage in which Britain would be placed if events in Europe deteriorated into another war.

The Irish Times editorial of 6 November, entitled 'Dangerous Talk' highlighted Churchill's comments in the House of Commons. It also drew attention to Lees Smith, a Labour M.P.'s statement that 'Germany now had ports to the west of theirs (Britain's), and those ports were on the west coast of Ireland,' while Tinker, another Labour M.P., 'announced, with magnificent ambiguity, that "the position regarding the west coast of Ireland was deplorable".'[48] To these comments the editorial replied, 'The British

46 The New York Times. 6/7/1940.

47 The Irish Times. 7/11/1940. p.6.

48 The Irish Times. 6/11/1940, p.4.

parliament has a reputation for fairness, and this sort of talk does no credit to it...'[49] This editorial, coming from the traditionally Anglo-Irish leaning Irish Times is significant as it illustrated the loyalty of the paper to the policy of the Irish government and its desire not to offend governmental opinion.

Further to this, on 8 November The Irish Times published an article on the current arguments about Irish neutrality and the ports, with the headline 'Submarine fuel story – a lie,' in which de Valera, in reply to Churchill, said, 'it is a lie to say that German submarines or any other submarines are being supplied with fuel or provisions on our coasts...and I say further that it is known to be a falsehood by the British government itself.'[50] Hence, to this question of the Irish position in the war, de Valera set the story straight and indirectly accused the British government of allowing rumours, damaging to Ireland, to circulate among the upper echelons of British power, rumours that would inevitably have filtered down to the working classes, thus turning more and more of the British population against Ireland and putting enormous pressure on the de Valera government. Specifically, on the important question of the ports, de Valera continued his statement, and made the position abundantly clear by saying:

> ...I am now come to the question of our ports. There can be no question of handing over these ports so long as this state remains neutral. There can be no question of leasing these ports. They are ours. They are within our sovereignty, and there can be no question, so long as we remain neutral, of handing them over on any conditions whatsoever. Any attempt to bring pressure to bear on us by any of the belligerents – by Britain – can only lead to bloodshed...we shall defend our rights in regard to these ports against whoever shall attack them, as we shall defend our rights in regard to every other part of our territory.[51]

With this statement, in response to Churchill's, and the dismissal of the rumours of Irish assistance to German U-boats, de Valera had clarified the Irish position. He pulled no punches in underlining that Irish neutrality was not for sale and that it was being correctly observed.

What must be noted about this 'crisis' is the unequivocal stance of The Irish Times on the side of the Fianna Fáil government. This newspaper can be seen to have been fully supportive of de Valera and, to a certain extent, vigorous in its admonishment

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49 '...A fortnight ago Lord Snell administered a snub to the Reverend Dr. Little, Unionist member of Co. Down, who had alleged that German submarines were being supplied from the territory of the twenty-six counties. The British government, said Lord Snell, had no evidence that there was any truth in these allegations... They are at liberty, like Churchill, to regret what they please, Great Britain, of her own free will, returned the 'Treaty Ports' into Irish custody. If the exigencies of war have given her any cause to regret that action, any of her citizens is at liberty to say so. It is quite another thing to prefer mischievous and unsubstantiated charges against a nation and government which have made their attitude clear beyond doubt.' Ibid.

50 The Irish Times. 8/11/1940. p.5.

51 Ibid.

of the British comments. As discussed earlier, this can be seen as illustrative of the Irish government's call for unity among the people of Ireland in order to defend the country. It is representative of the old political conflicts being laid aside and unity among the people taking place in the face of the common dangers to the entire population of the twenty-six counties of Ireland.

The Irish Independent, during the same period, published the speeches both of Churchill and de Valera. However, adding depth to the opinion of the British parliament, it printed an article on 6 November entitled 'The Irish ports: views of other MPs. Here, Lees Smith was quoted as being of the opinion that 'if we could have the use of Berehaven and Lough Swilly the whole position would be transformed in a night.' Sir Archibald Southby (Conservative) said, '... nobody doubted that if it suited him Hitler would use Eire as a base, and as the British were fighting for their lives, and incidentally for Eire, they had a right to the use of Irish bases. It passed the comprehension of the man in the street why they should not have them.' Sir Annaley Somerville (Conservative) urged the government 'to seek some arrangement with Eire whereby that country could nominally preserve its neutrality and yet allow the use of Irish harbours to the British fleet.' Obviously, he did not quite grasp the requirements of impartiality as imposed by a policy of neutrality. Hore Belisha (L.Nat) 'contended that if it were possible for the British Empire to hand-over bases to America, it was possible, without any loss of prestige, for Ireland to give Britain back the bases which she once held.'[52] Yet again, it is clear that certain MPs did not fully understand that the ports issue was not a question of imperial-like prestige, but rather of a nation's right to pursue an independent policy, which it believed would best save it from wartime destruction.

While the Irish Independent's reportage of these prominent opinions can be seen as just reporting the issue as various people saw it, and this piece certainly did not occupy a dominant position over other elements of the news, it can also be seen as a defence of the Irish position. The printing of many views hostile to Irish neutrality had an effect of strengthening the resolution of its readership regarding the defence of Ireland and her wartime neutrality.

On 7 July the Irish Independent published 'London press views' in which The Star referred to 'The restraint with which Churchill referred to our loss of bases on the west coast of Eire' as not disguising the seriousness of the situation.[53] In the world of political and diplomatic language, there had been no restraint in Churchill's statement.

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52 The Irish Independent, 6/11/1940, p.8

53 The Irish Independent, 7/11/1940, p.5. From The Star, 6/11/1940.

On 9 July the Irish Independent reported The News Chronicle editorial of 6 July stating, 'the problem of defence is complicated by the fact that we are deprived of the use of bases on the west coast of Ireland, and the country will be whole-heartedly behind the Prime Minister in the strong words he uttered on this aspect of the problem.'[54] The Yorkshire Post editorial of the same day commented, 'why should Eire not restore to us the use of these bases for the duration of the war? Because she insists on the fictitious "neutrality," which is in fact assured her only by the protection of the British navy.'[55] The naval correspondent of the London Evening Standard of 7 November was of the opinion that, 'now there is one obvious counter that would possibly wipe out this great enemy, however, that is an arrangement by which Eire could allow Britain the use of the strategic bases at Berehaven and Lough Swilly.'[56]

In publishing these opinions, the Irish Independent showed an adept ability to highlight Britain's hostility to Irish neutrality and their annoyance at not being able to use the Irish ports at this time. It is also clear from these press extracts, that the vast majority of British newspapers, and as a result, probably the majority of the British people, did not understand the requirements of neutrality, nor why Ireland could want to follow its own course. This is, however, not surprising when viewed from a British viewpoint as it fought for its survival, having just recently returned the ports, the lack of which was now recognised as impeding Britain's war effort.

As The Irish Times published parliamentary opinions of the ports issue, the Irish Independent published the opinions of the British press on the question. Both of these sections of reportage provide a window to what both the ruling classes and the working man, the reader of the Evening Standard and provincial newspapers such as the Yorkshire Post, were thinking at this time. Clearly discernible is a sentiment of hostility among British opinion towards the Irish problem, but there was also a sense of panic.

The coming-out of this hostility at this point is interesting. It is almost as if, whereas in July 1940 the issue of the defence of Ireland as a whole was recognised as a major problem that badly needed addressing, the highlighting of 'the grievous and heavy burden' of the denial of the Irish ports brought home what the true issue was. Britain's Imperial power and European security had always been based upon a strong navy.

54 The Irish Independent, 9/11/1940, p.3. From The News Chronicle, 6/11/1940.

55 The Irish Independent, 9/11/1940, p.3. From The Yorkshire Post, 6/11/1940.

56 The Irish Independent, 9/11/1940, p.3. From The London Evening Standard, 7/11/1940.

An examination of material in The Irish Press also displays coverage of British attitudes towards Irish neutrality and the ports issue. In an article published on 7 July entitled 'British journal and Irish bases' written by The Daily Telegraph political correspondent, said that 'Among MPs of all parties there is unanimity in urging the government to examine again the question of naval and air bases in Eire.'[57] While this article was moderate, in comparison with those printed in the Irish Independent the arrogance of its phraseology was unmistakable. It was not up to the British government to re-open this question. They might approach de Valera but if he refused, there was nothing the British could do about it. Again, this can be seen as The Irish Press, a nationwide, nationalist newspaper, highlighting British hostility and an underlying panic regarding Irish neutrality and the question of the Irish ports.

The Irish Press editorial of 8 November was vigorous in its defence of the Irish position. It highlighted Churchill's expression of regret about the ports, of three days earlier, and the press demands for their return to Britain that followed. The editorial underpinned that 'it is essential, therefore, that the position in relation to these ports should be immediately understood and the Taoiseach made it quite plain.' It concluded by stating:

...Any surrender or lease of the ports to one belligerent would be equivalent to our lending ourselves to an act of war on the other belligerents. That would end our neutrality forthwith...

De Valera continued to attack the press campaign in Britain and the U.S. against Ireland's withholding of the ports. He said that those who advanced this attack could not, at the same time, claim to fight for the freedom of enslaved peoples. He was astonished that these attacks were echoed in the U.S. press, a country which had recently voted to keep out of the war. However, if these press attacks were a prelude to aggression against Ireland, he said the Irish people would fight with all their strength.[58]

Indeed, this impression of foreign hostility to Ireland's stance was clear throughout The Irish Times, the Irish Independent and The Irish Press coverage of the issue. The Irish newspapers, despite their traditional allegiances, were united in their defence on Irish governmental policy and their desire to stay out of the war in the face of mounting political and public pressure, particularly from Britain, but also from the United States.

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57 'As Churchill pointed out on Tuesday (the fifth), the fact that we are denied the use of these seriously hampers our campaign against the U-boats. Parliamentary opinion holds strongly that Britain cannot be expected to be placed at such a disadvantage indefinitely and hopes were expressed yesterday that the government would re-open the question with de Valera. One suggestion is that we should seek temporarily to lease the principal bases...' The Irish Press, 7/11/1940, p.1. From The Daily Telegraph, 6/11/1940.

58 The Irish Press, 8/11/1940, p.6.

On the debate of November 1940, we have, as yet, only seen the Irish newspaper perceptions of the issue. To get a fuller picture we must now turn towards The Times and the New York Times to see if Irish media perceptions of the political and press campaigns of Britain and, to a lesser extent, the U.S.A. were, indeed, correct, and not just an exercise in galvanising the public Irish attitude on defending neutrality.

The Times' representation of the issue took very much the form of a diplomatic treatise. It teased out the provisions of the 1921 Treaty and illustrated just where Britain stood as a result of those provisions ceasing to have effect from 25 April 1938 onwards. On 6 November, The Times published Churchill's war review speech with the part appertaining to Ireland headlined, 'The U-boat menace – 'Gigantic task' for the Navy'[59] The article quoted Churchill's speech in full. On the same day it analysed the situation. The article was headlined 'British ships and ports of Eire – surrender of 1938 – fuelling handicap.' The article opened with 'The Prime Minister's outspoken reference yesterday to the handicap imposed upon us in combating the U-boat campaign in the Atlantic by the denial to our ships and aircraft of the use of the ports of Eire which were at our disposal in the last war found strong support in all parts of the House of Commons...'[60] The Times printed the provisions of the 1921 treaty again, in full, here, to provide a background to the issue for their readers. The article continued 'Churchill, who was one of the signatories of the Treaty of 1921, strongly criticised the decision to surrender our rights in these ports without any guarantee.'[61]

This article was correct in its assessment that Churchill had shown great foresight in regarding the possible implications of another European war and Irish sovereignty in the twenty-six counties. However, it also represented a changing of the attitude of The Times from the article published 9 September 1939, which stated that 'From the British point of view it is more than probable that Eire's neutrality is the best possible policy that de Valera's government could possibly have adopted.'[62] The Times

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59 The Times, 6/11/1940, p.2.

60 'Our Rights to the use of the ports of Berehaven, Queenstown (Cobh) and Lough Swilly were surrendered under the agreements made with Eire in 1938 in an attempt to achieve a final settlement of the long standing differences between the two countries. Churchill opposed the arrangement at the time. The defence agreement then made cancelled articles 6 and 7 of the Treaty of 1921...' The Times, 6/11/1940, p.4.

61 'In the debate on the Act, Mr. Churchill described these ports as "the sentinel towers of the western approaches" to these islands, and he suggested that the danger to be considered was that Eire might adopt an attitude of neutrality when this country was engaged in a European war. He foresaw then the possibility that the ports might be denied to us in our need, and that we might be gravely hampered in protecting the British population from another attempt at sea blockade of its food supplies.' Ibid.

62 Op.Cit.

editorial of 6 November 1940[63] did not provide any particular opinion on Churchill's or Lees Smith's statements, merely reprinting the most important points and letting them speak for themselves.

On 8 November, The Times reported de Valera's reply. The headline was 'de Valera on Ports of Eire – no question of transfer.' It stated 'de Valera in the Dáil referring to Churchill's statement about the ports in Eire, said he did not know if every one of them was prepared to take that statement, as he was prepared to take it, as a symbol, perhaps a natural expression of regret, or whether it portended something more. He said that he wanted friendly relations with the people of Britain and other people, but naturally with Britain because she was nearest.'[64] The article went on to say that de Valera denied that German U-boats were being re-supplied in Irish ports and that the British government knew it was a falsehood. He said that 'all outstanding differences between Eire and Britain had been settled except partition' and that 'up to now it had not been suggested that they were not entitled to act as they acted in remaining out of the war. He was anxious that they should remain neutral.'[65] Surprisingly, considering the hostility that was so evident in Irish newspaper coverage of British statements and press opinions, this hostility was not evident here. The Times, in its reporting of Churchill's speech and the ensuing issue, was structured and diplomatic in its criticism, and did not display the open hostility evident in The News Chronicle and The Daily Telegraph. This, however, was probably more reflective of The Times' traditions and the editorial restraints which would have been placed on its reporters. This newspaper did not descend into open accusation and hostility.

In the ensuing weeks after Churchill's speech, many letters to the editor appeared in The Times which provide an insight into what certain sections of British society thought about the issue. It is clear from these letters to the editor of The Times that its readership was against Irish neutrality. There were, of course, some more fervently against it than others, with a notable response supporting the Irish position on 20 November from Thomas Bodkin, of the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham. Arguments about the ports issue, Irish neutrality and the best measures to take against these factors, were ongoing.[66] However, it is clear that this issue struck home with the people of Britain at this time, and for the next few years the Irish ports issue would recur periodically depending on the changing fortunes of the war.

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63 The Times, 6/11/1940, p.5.

64 The Times, 8/11/1940, p.4.

65 Ibid.

66 The Times, 11/11/1940, p.5. 14/11/1940, p.2. 20/11/1940, p.5. 22/11/1940, p.5.

As regards the New York Times and Churchill's speech, the editorial of 7 November stated, 'Great Britain's need of Irish naval bases is a grim and irrefutable fact... One can only hope that this latest of very many anxieties will not provoke Churchill into seizing the Irish bases by force. It would be a tragedy to revive old Anglo-Irish enmities when there is still room for friendly negotiations...'[67] As if to follow up this question of a British invasion of Ireland, as inspired by Churchill's speech, the New York Times of 9 November printed the headline 'warns Ireland of plot – Italian news agency says British secretly plan to seize country.' This article followed on a dispatch from 'Stefani,' the official Italian news agency which 'accused Great Britain of preparing to occupy Eire and claiming that parliament had discussed the project in secret sessions. The dispatch declared that Britain had armed the Northern Ireland army as part of the occupation plot, so as to make it appear like an internal question.'[68] This dispatch was, undoubtedly, an Italian attempt to use Churchill's speech to create rumours of invasion. However, as the New York Times editorial of 7 November said, this possibility was not lost on them. De Valera, too, was aware of this possibility, as shown in his speech reported by The Times editorial of 8 November. The Irish Press editorial of 8 November[69] also raised this possibility.

That Irish neutrality and the Irish ports as part of that neutrality were a source for major concern in late 1940, was not lost on anyone who was following the events of the war. The possibility of negotiations with the Irish government on the issue were raised, as was the possibility of Britain taking the Irish ports by force. It is clear that Britain, suddenly realising the situation, was desperate, and sought to attain use of the ports which she had given up in 1938. Her hostility as a result of that realisation was clear. While the American press refrained from any overtly aggressive comments, it did come down on the side of Britain. Irish newspaper reactions to these attacks were to amplify them and exaggerate the sense that Ireland's back was against the wall, hence galvanising that Irish determination to defend the policy of neutrality and securing unity amongst all the people of the twenty-six counties. On the question of a potential invasion, The Irish Times on 7 November published a Press Association telegram with Berlin's reaction to Churchill's statement, 'The Wilhelmstrasse today decided that the most interesting point in Churchill's speech yesterday was his reference to the absence of British naval and air bases in Eire. Informed sources here said: "it is significant that Churchill cast longing eyes in the direction of Eire at a moment when

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67 '...All who hope for the triumph of the British cause and for the peace and independence of Eire will hope also that the leaders of the two neighbouring island peoples can reach an agreement without delay.' The New York Times, 7/11/1940.

68 The New York Times, 9/11/1940, p.5.

69 Op.Cit.

the American election was practically over. Apparently, a reaction in America was feared if British covetousness became known to the American voter before he cast his ballot".[70] It is clear that a possible British invasion of Ireland was not lost on the Germans either who cited political timing in order to prevent a possible backlash among the American public from having an adverse effect on American assistance and support.

The nature of Irish censorship during this early period of the war is perhaps reflective of a recently independent country, aware of its geographical position in Europe and apprehensive over whether its borders would be respected. The policy of neutrality that Eamon de Valera elected to pursue meant that strict impartiality had to be maintained regarding all news items concerning the war. It is clear that in September 1939, Ireland's policy of neutrality, while its recognition represented certain constitutional problems for Britain, was generally accepted as the best policy for both countries. It was not until November 1940 when Churchill highlighted the effect that the 'grievous and heavy burden' policy was having on the British war effort and chances of survival, that British opinion realised the danger and attitudes changed into hostility towards Ireland. These attitudes were to continue for a long time, as we shall see in chapter 3, which duly meant that from the viewpoint of de Valera and his cabinet the threat of invasion could have become a reality at any time.

70 The Irish Times, 7/11/1940, p.6. From the Press Association, 6/11/1940.

CHAPTER 3

FROM CONFLICT TO ACCEPTANCE: DECEMBER 1941 TO JULY 1943

The impact of the United States of America's entry into the war

The period from the entry of the United States into the war on 9 December 1941 to mid 1943 was pivotal to the Battle of the Atlantic and, as a result, to the question of Irish neutrality and the Irish ports. The U-boats were, in early 1941, positively winning the Battle of the Atlantic, and the entry of the U.S.A. into the war saw the opening of the second U-boat 'Happy Time,' the decimation of the 'easy pickings' off the eastern American seaboard. In the long term, however, the joint co-operation of the British and American navies and air forces would win out.

The press of the time, however, did not have the benefit of hindsight. The period of late 1941 and early 1942 witnessed much intensive discussion about the ports issue in the British and American press. Unfortunately, as cited in chapter 2, the Irish press was handicapped by strict censorship, which intensified after the first few months of 1942. As a result, the addressing of the Irish ports issue and the defence of the Irish position from allied press attacks was limited.

The Times, predictably enough, was the most prolific in its coverage of this issue, and followed Irish political life closely. On 6 October 1941, The Times published a tribute by de Valera to Britain made at a Local Security Force rally at Mullingar the previous day. De Valera said, 'small nations in the path of great powers are generally treated with scant consideration. So far our rights have been in the main respected, and I think it is only fair in this connection (sic) to acknowledge that the belligerent nearest us, Great Britain, in spite of the temptation and the urgency of certain propagandists, has not succumbed to them and has not behaved unworthily.'[1] In the context of the hostility shown by British opinion towards the Irish position in chapter 2, this statement can be seen as a relieved 'thank you' from de Valera to Britain for respecting Irish neutrality despite obvious temptations. At this point there was no hint that the U.S.A. would be pulled into the war by Japan and it must have appeared to de Valera and the Irish government that the immediate threat of invasion was, at that point, past.

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[1] The Times. 6/10/41.

However, this tribute did not, by any means, make the point that Ireland was out of danger, a point of which The Times, as well as de Valera, were very well aware. On 20 October, The Times published an article in which it stated that, 'de Valera's warning to Eire – involvement in war "a high probability".' Warning against complacency at a defence forces parade in Wexford, de Valera had said, 'In speaking of the likelihood of our involvement in war, we are not dealing with some distant vague possibility. We are dealing with what must by all reasonable people be classed as a high probability.'[2] The Times would, of course, have been extremely interested in a statement like this. The possibility, or probability, of Ireland entering the war, would have caused much relief, and one suspects, excitement, among the British political leaders, the Admiralty and the public in general.

These relatively calm speeches were, however, about to be consigned to irrelevance. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941 and the German declaration of war on the U.S.A. on 9 December, de Valera was forced to revert to the old style of speech, conveying the urgency of the Irish situation. The Times, of course, reporting on the Irish position in the aftermath of the U.S.A.'s entry highlighted, through their Dublin correspondent on 15 December, headlined 'de Valera's policy – effect on Eire of U.S.A. at war.' De Valera was here reported as saying in Cork the day before, that the Irish position had not changed.[3] This would have dismayed many readers in Britain. Ireland's 'friendly neutrality' had so far not yielded any assistance to Britain, and had provided much anxiety about the protection of her flank. A return to the old questions and pressures of November 1940 was to be expected. The Times, somewhat sceptically, published de Valera's Christmas broadcast to the United States on 27 December with the headline, 'Eire's policy – "Duty to try to keep out of the war".'[4] Needless to say, The Times thought Ireland's 'Duties' lay elsewhere.

An insightful presentation of the ports issue, in its altered wartime context, was set out by The Times parliamentary correspondent on 13 January 1942. This article was reflective of The Times' drawing attention to the facts of the situation as it viewed them, but without an overtly hostile tone:

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2 The Times, 20/10/1941, p.4.

3 De Valera said '...that with the entry of the U.S.A. into the war, strangers who did not understand conditions in Eire had begun to ask how America's entry into the war would affect Irish policy. We answer that question in advance. The policy of the state remains unchanged. We can only be a friendly neutral... Our circumstances, our history, the incompleteness of our national freedom through the partition of our country made any other policy impracticable...' The Times, 15/12/1941, p.2.

4 The Times, 27/12/1941, p.2.

The denial to our warships of the ports on the south and west coasts of Eire which were available to us in the last war has added to our difficulties and dangers in fighting the Battle of the Atlantic. Now that the United States is our ally, that country, too, is directly concerned in the consequences of Eire's neutrality. America's entry into the war raised hopes that de Valera and his government might be inclined to change their attitude because of Eire's traditional associations with America and her sensitiveness (sic) to the opinion of the great body of Irish-Americans.[5]

This article was reflective, both of The Times' general refraining from hostile comments, but also, of making the point in a diplomatic mode of delivery. This newspaper did not wish to rock the boat in any way, in case behind-the-scenes negotiations might provide results. Underneath this article, another set out de Valera's intention to stay out of the war. In Navan, on 12 January, he was reported as reiterating that 'we will defend ourselves from attack from any quarter...,'[6] underlining to The Times' readership that there was no change in Irish policy.

The New York Times of 13 January 1942, also drew attention to the Irish situation. The article had the headline 'de Valera denies a deal – declares Eire has had no secret negotiations with any power.' As with The Times, the New York Times printed de Valera's statement that Eire would defend herself '...from attacks from any quarter' and that he declared that 'when the war started not one inch of Eire territory was "for sale," and denied that there had been any secret bargaining with any other country.'[7] Just below that article was another saying that the U.S. Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, declined to comment on dispatches from Britain that the United States was making renewed approaches to Ireland in relation to the placing of Irish bases at the disposal of the U.S. He said that he had heard of the reports, but that he could offer no information on the subject.[8] Clearly, the issue of the ports was a live one. However, its sensitivity, as experienced in the aftermath of Churchill's 'grievous and heavy burden' speech of November 1940, meant that a delicate touch was needed to be taken in any possible approaches to the Irish government. Hence, the press was not going to be allowed to publicly analyse it.

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5 Irish-American, and American opinion in general, is being forcibly expressed in favour of collaboration by Eire which would take the form of making her ports and suitable air bases available to Anglo-American warships and aircraft. Since America's entry into the war, it may well be that both the American and British governments have taken steps to ascertain whether any change of policy might be expected on the part of Mr. de Valera and his government. Judging from Mr. de Valera's most recent speeches the response can only have been negative... The friendliness of Eire's neutrality is acknowledged, but this does not compensate for the loss of the use of the ports – handed over to Eire without reservation under the agreement of 1938 – Mr. Churchill described at the time as 'the sentinel towers of the western approaches' to these islands.' The Times. 13/1/1942, p.2.

6 The Times. 13/1/1942, p.2.

7 The New York Times. 13/1/1942, p.2.

8 Ibid.

An interesting article, by Craig Thompson, the paper's Dublin correspondent, appeared in the New York Times on 24 January. It had a headline 'Belief that Eire nears war gains – U.S. entry and issue of sea bases found renewing views of involvement – demands are vindicated – solution of partition problem, provision of air defence and raw materials listed.'[9] The article opened saying that despite belief that Ireland was nearing war, de Valera was still adamantly asserting neutrality even if it meant 'slow but virtually complete economic strangulation.' He stressed that 'The U.S. entry into the war, American activity and the possibility of a request for sea bases in the west of Eire, as well as for airfields at strategic points, has caused renewal of belief that Eire may not be able to remain aloof of the world struggle, part of which is being fought out in surrounding waters and air. But Eire holds that the grant of bases is equivalent to a declaration of war, and is determined to get concessions of great value,'[10] such as the ending of partition as set out in the headline. A very important point Craig Thompson made, and one that is pivotal to the analysis, or lack of it, in the Irish newspapers was, 'Through rigid censorship the de Valera government keeps tight control on views that are presented to the Irish people...'[11]

Through this article, the situation regarding the Irish question was made clear. While the New York Times, through Craig Thompson, came down against Irish neutrality this was to be expected considering the United States was now at war.

The first mention of the new global role of the U.S.A. appeared in The Irish Times of 7 January. The headline 'Stations in the British Isles' said, 'American armed forces will, on all oceans, be helping to guard essential communications which are vital to the United Nations. American land, air and sea forces will take stations in the British Isles, which constitute an essential fortress in the world struggle.'[12] This was the extent to which The Irish Times discussed the American entry into the war and the strategic importance of the isles and Ireland's position within them. On 12 January, in the bottom right-hand corner, a small article was published 'No talks with Eire - Northern Premier's statement,' which quoted J.M. Andrews, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, as saying 'They are not connected with Eire in any way'[13] when asked if the discussions being held in London had any reference to ports or bases in Eire.

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9 'Belief that Eire nears war gains – U.S. entry and issue of sea bases found renewing views of involvement – demands are vindicated – solution of partition problem, provision of air defence and raw materials listed.' The New York Times, 24/1/1942, p.7.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 The Irish Times, 7/1/1942, p.1.

13 The Irish Times, 12/1/1942, p.1.

The first real addressing of the issue in The Irish Times appeared on 13 January. It was under the headline, '"Eire not for sale" – Taoiseach – denial of secret bargains.' This article, published de Valera's speech in Navan, the day before, where he said that, 'there is no bargain. When the war started there was not an inch of national territory for sale... We will defend ourselves from any quarter."[14] His full speech cannot be taken as anything but the strongest possible response to British and U.S. press suggestions and diplomatic pressures of a deal on our ports. That a response so unequivocal was passed by the censor was clearly the result of a political decision. Normally, nothing vaguely approaching this kind of statement would have appeared in an Irish newspaper of the time.

The first intimation that there may have been pressure mounting on the Irish position appeared in the Irish Independent on 13 January, as with the other newspapers, with a headline, 'de Valera on hostile articles."[15] However, it had no comment on his statement. The Irish Press reported it too, with the headline, 'Taoiseach calls for bigger defence aim – reference to 'violent articles' in foreign newspapers"[16] but again, due to censorship, the paper had nothing to say on the matter. The next major point, relating indirectly to the Irish position in the war, came on 27 January, when all of the three principal Irish newspapers published articles on the arrival of U.S. troops in Northern Ireland. Under the headline, 'U.S. troops in Northern Ireland,' The Irish Times reported 'Several thousand men of an American infantry division landed at a Northern Ireland port yesterday. They are combat troops with the usual components of field artillery,"[17] but it had nothing of political or military importance to say on the matter. The Irish Independent had the headline 'U.S. troops land in North,"[18] and published a U.S. War Department communiqué to that effect. The Irish Press said 'U.S. troops in six counties,"[19] with no significant comment.

The next day, all of these three Irish newspapers reported de Valera's protest that Ireland had not been consulted over the landing of U.S. troops, who were

14 De Valera continued, 'This country at different times since the war began has been the subject of violent articles in different newspapers in different countries. All sorts of suggestions are being made... You do not see these things, because we have adopted a policy not to let into the newspapers anything that would go to stir up bitterness and ill-feeling...but the time is coming when we may have to change our policy in that respect. If these newspaper attacks are a prelude to hostile action against us, then we would not be fair to our own people if we did not let them see and give them warning that these statements are there... What we are doing is our God-given right to do... If we are attacked, we will have to take it as God's will and sell our lives, if we have to sell them, as dearly as we can.' The Irish Times, 13/1/1942, p.1.

15 The Irish Independent, 13/1/1942, p.3.

16 The Irish Press, 13/1/1942, p.1.

17 The Irish Times, 27/1/1942, p.1.

18 The Irish Independent, 27/1/1942, p.3

19 The Irish Press, 27/1/1942, p.1.

foreigners, on Northern Irish soil. The essence of de Valera's protest was a restatement of the context of Irish independence and dissatisfaction with partition involving President Woodrow Wilson's declaration on the rights of small nations to national self-determination. He reiterated Ireland's right to take an independent stance without implying hostility to the United States.[20]

The Irish Independent also published de Valera's protest with President Roosevelt's comment when informed of it, as being 'Really'?[21] The Irish Press, too published the protest but went on to highlight the words of Sean Lemass, Minister for Supplies: 'the dangers to our neutrality and our independence have in no way diminished; on the contrary there are many indications to suggest that they have increased. It may be that in the coming year the supreme test will come.'[22] From this it is clear that fears of an invasion were, once again, very real and the need to ensure the unity of the people was paramount.

In The Times of 28 January, de Valera's speech was quoted, but no comments of any kind were included with the report. Even the headline, 'De Valera and U.S. troops – never consulted'[23] was presented without any comment. The New York Times published the protest. The headline was 'Dublin protests at arrival of American Expeditionary Force' and commented that 'all Eire morning newspapers carried stories today of the arrival of U.S. troops in Northern Ireland while Dublin's three dailys (sic) made the story the subject of posters. The stories printed, however, did not go beyond a brief official account issued at Belfast and they were printed without any editorial comment.'[24] It then printed de Valera's speech in full. While the Irish papers were hindered by censorship, The Times and the New York Times had very little to say on the issue at that time. It was not until a strong reply was made by J.M. Andrews that a confrontation on the issue drew editorial comments.

The New York Times of 29 January published an article, again, written by Craig Thompson[25] in which he opened his analysis with the statement that the use of the ports had become a major issue of concern and that de Valera had protested at the

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20 The Irish Times, 28/1/1942, p.1.

21 The Irish Independent, 28/1/1942, p.3.

22 The Irish Press, 28/1/1942, p.1.

23 The Times, 28/1/1942, p.9.

24 The New York Times, 28/1/1942, p.4.

25 'Mr. de Valera scored by Ulster Premier – Andrews calls denial of bases 'folly resulting in the sacrifice of thousands of lives' – issue raised in Commons – Eire government defends use of Emergency powers as vital for Neutrality.' The New York Times, 28/1/1942, p.5.

arrival of the U.S. troops in Northern Ireland. However, he went on to indicate an understanding of de Valera's strategic concern in the context of his neutrality policy.[26] His analysis of the situation in Ireland in the aftermath of the U.S. arrival, and the reason why de Valera issued his protest, was well informed. In order to protect neutrality and the attitude of impartiality that went with it, de Valera had to protest against the landing of foreign troops on Irish soil. That this soil was under British jurisdiction did not diminish Ireland's constitutional claim over it.[27] Hence, the use of Irish soil by a foreign army could have legally constituted a breaking of neutrality. De Valera had to be seen to defend his neutrality stance, and from territorial claims made in the constitution of 1937, it was a substantive issue.

In The Times' coverage of this question J.M. Andrews' full statement was published. He denied the right of de Valera to interfere in Northern Ireland's affairs, and went on to highlight the difficulties raised by the Irish Free State on the treaty ports issue:

...The presence of American forces in Northern Ireland, to which de Valera objects, is part of a vast strategic plan for the defeat of the Axis powers... de Valera, as head of a neighbouring state, evidently resents their arrival. No doubt he would have prevented it if he could, just as he has denied to Britain and the United States the use of naval bases in Eire. This folly has seriously hampered the British navy in the Battle of the Atlantic and has meant the sacrifice of thousands of gallant lives.[28]

In publishing this statement in full, The Times managed to report, impartially, what was said and, perhaps, imply its concurrence with it. It must also be said that, in no other political issue would such a heated exchange of views have ensued. The issue of Irish neutrality and the ports had been re-opened, in part by U.S. entry into the war and also by de Valera's necessary protest in order to defend Irish neutrality. While the New York Times, through Craig Thompson, displayed an understanding of the reasons behind de Valera's protest, the Unionist response was forceful and unequivocal.

Probably due to censorship, The Irish Press refrained from either reporting or rebutting the northern premier's speech.[29] While the Irish Independent of the same

26 'In both London and Belfast today the question of bases in Eire came to the forefront... It is the undeviating position of the Eire government that to grant the United Nations (sic) the use of harbours or airfields means immediate war... The arrival of American troops in Northern Ireland caused Mr. de Valera to make a statement that was widely reported as meaning that he did not approve of this incursion on Irish soil... Mr. de Valera...wanted his people and the German government to know that the landing of the Americans was outside his control and done without his aid. This was the way of taking a position that might be reassurance to Germany that the American landing was not preceded by any agreement between Eire and the United States with regard to bases. But Mr. de Valera also wanted to remind President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill that he wanted large concessions for Eire bases – and abolition of the border that separates Eire from Ulster is one of them.' The New York Times, 29/1/1942, p.5.

27 Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution, 1937.

28 The Times, 29/1/1942, p.2.

29 The Irish Times, 29/1/1942, p.1.

day also refrained from comment on the speech, it did report P. Maxwell, Nationalist M.P., Foyle Division, Derry, as saying, 'we consider the landing of American troops is an act of aggression against the Irish nation.'[30] The exchanges of 28 and 29 January 1942 respectively were not the end but rather the beginning of quite an intense debate over the following month.

The Times of 30 January published an insightful view of the situation, which reminded its readership of the full facts behind the issue, under the headline, 'U.S. and Eire – background of protest by de Valera.' It said:

> De Valera's protest against the appearance of the American troops – which the American government find 'surprising' – has a background which has not yet been made known. Soon after the entry of the United States into the war much more than a hint was conveyed to Washington that if the United States would press Great Britain to press the government of Northern Ireland to come to terms with the union of Eire, the problem of naval bases in southern Eire could be solved. There are just as obvious reasons why the hint was not taken as there are to assume that, if Eire were attacked, American troops would take a share in her defence[31]

It is possible that The Times was here hinting at moves afoot to review aspects of the partition settlement in return for access to, and use of the ports. It could be seen that the United States was taking the initiative in this regard. However, while there is no doubt that such political considerations were in the air at the time, it was not at all clear that such a deal could be done.

The significance of the arrival of the U.S. troops, as perceived by Churchill, was published in the Irish Independent of 30 January. He was quoted as saying that

> It certainly offers a measure of protection to southern Ireland, and to Ireland as a whole, which she would otherwise not enjoy. This whole business cannot do Mr. de Valera any harm. It might even do him some good... At a time when the successful invasion of these islands is Hitler's last remaining hope of total victory.[32]

Churchill was, of course, correct. If there were any German plans to invade the United States' presence would have provided a strong deterrent. Churchill's statement did not appear in The Irish Times while The Irish Press did publish it but, like the Irish Independent, declined to comment.

The New York Times continued on the American Expeditionary Force (A.E.F.) controversy on 31 January with the headline, 'Dublin likens A.E.F. advent to a quisling recognition,' saying that the Dublin government charged that the landing of

30 The Irish Independent, 29.1/1942, p.3

31 The Times, 30/1/1942, p.4.

32 The Irish Independent, 30/1/1942, p.3

U.S. troops violated Eire's neutrality and that it was 'determined to raise an army as quickly as possible to resist invasion from any direction.'[33] It reported the Irish government as saying that this was blatant support of Britain's desire to keep the northern counties separate from the south, and that the arrival was an attempt to force Eire into the war on the allied side.[34] In reporting this, the New York Times, was reporting what it believed to be, and what was, political posturing. The statement was an empty protest in order to emphasise, as Craig Thompson believed, that the Dublin government had nothing to do with the landings but was, in effect, restating its continued neutrality stance.

There was, however, some fear in Ireland about the American troops as an article in the same issue of the New York Times testified. A headline 'Seizure of bases anticipated,' an article written by their Dublin correspondent, stated that 'official concern was felt here today that the arrival of U.S. troops in neighbouring Ulster might be preliminary to seizure of Eire's naval bases that the allies need badly for the Battle of the Atlantic...'[35] The article highlighted the opinion that the average Irishman was unaware of the dangerous situation Ireland was in due to her geography. It can also be assumed that the average Irishman did not realise the danger that Ireland was in, at that moment, due to press censorship. The New York Times, on the other hand, was not handicapped by such restrictions, and their Dublin correspondent was well aware of the potential danger to Ireland's sovereignty. The article continued, 'The newspapers made only scant mention of the U.S. troops arriving and consistent press demands that Eire turn over bases to the allies have seen little light in the censored press'[36] The full text of de Valera's protest was printed here as well,[37] a clear indication of the attention that the New York Times was giving to the Irish ports and neutrality problem at this time. Another indication of the information blackout in Ireland appeared in The Irish Times of 2 February in the headline, 'Silence is Golden says Mr. Cosgrave.'[38]

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33 The New York Times, 3/1/1942, p.1.

34 'The U.S. has recognised a "Quisling government" in Northern Ireland by sending troops there, and the landing forces have taken a "lease" on Irish soil which seriously threatened the neutrality of Eire.' The New York Times. 31/1/1942, p.1.

35 '"We are so keen on peace" said one Irishman 'that we will fight like hell for it. Although I don't think it will come to that, any attack by Germany would not necessarily mean that we would call for help from anyone. Foreign troops would automatically walk in to fight beside Eire's army.' The neutrality of Eire was strongly expressed both by officials and by the man on Dublin's streets – but of course, it was also apparent that the average Irishman did not realise the critical situation he had been placed in by Ireland's geography.' The New York Times. 31/1/1942, p.1.

36 Ibid.

37 The New York Times. 31/1/1942. p.1.

38 William Cosgrave had stated in an interview with United States press representatives the previous Saturday that 'He was of the opinion at the moment, and, as matters stand, that the best interests of this country and of everybody else can best be served by public men in this country preserving, as far as humanly possible, a sensible and discreet silence on our external relations generally.'

The 'Dangers of attack on Eire – de Valera's call for more soldiers' was the headline to an article that appeared in The Times of 4 February. In this, a speech by de Valera at Naas the day before was quoted in which he said 'war was becoming more fierce and the difficulties which confronted Eire were becoming more acute. The dangers of an actual attack might become greater... If their country were attacked... The country would become a cockpit. If one belligerent attacked it would almost be a certainty that the other would take a hand,' and, added de Valera, 'we ourselves would take a hand in it too.'[39] As might be expected in relation to a speech which so strongly emphasised the momentum of the conflict, a report of this speech also appeared in The Irish Times, the Irish Independent and The Irish Press. In the Irish newspapers, however, all the headlines appertained to the farmers having to be ready in case of attack, adequate food supplies being of paramount importance. Seemingly, whereas The Times, a foreign paper, was concerned with the defence issue, the Irish papers targeted the more internal, self-sufficiency issues for the Irish public.

The continued addressing of the neutrality issue in the New York Times focussed on 'Eire getting arms from the British – heartened by development in relations with London – sticks to neutrality – will defend home soil.'[40] This was the headline over an article written by Hugh Smith on 3 February highlighting the hope in Ireland that Britain had finally accepted Ireland's position.[41] Whether or not a thaw of sorts in the current debate over the treaty ports can be seen through a series of letters from 4 until 14 February that were published in The Times' letters to the Editor columns, these letters illustrated clearly just how heated and intense the treaty ports issue was at that time. They also illustrate the division amongst the readership of The Times regarding the ports question and Ireland's right to maintain her position.

The first letter on the subject at this time was from Lord Chatfield, First Sea Lord of the Admiralty at the time of the ports hand-over in 1938. His letter of 4 February made the point that 'the hostility of Eire to the occupation of these ports by the United Kingdom was increasing and it was obvious that unless we were willing

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39 The Times, 4/2/1942, p.2.

40 The New York Times, 3/2/1942, p.11.

41 Smith said that 'It is common knowledge that Eire has been getting arms from the British via the border since December... So far as Eire is concerned, this correspondent can say that the news of these arms deliveries was heard by the people with unfeigned gladness, coupled with the hope that the neutrality position here has been understood, in England. Observers here have been asking whether this very significant development in Anglo-Irish relations indicates first, that Britain has conclusively accepted Eire's right and determination to maintain her neutrality, and, secondly that Britain has taken cognisance of Premier de Valera's repeated guarantee that his government would not permit Eireann (sic) territory to be used as a base for a hostile attack against her and that Britain was placing Eire in the best possible position to fulfil that guarantee.' The New York Times, 3/2/1942, p.11.

and able to hold them by military force they would be useless for naval purposes.[42] Political opinion of the time, he wrote, had been to aim for an improved atmosphere between Britain and Ireland and hope that they would be allowed to use them in time of war. In either situation, the ports they envisaged would have been denied to the enemy. They had not envisaged that France would collapse and that the French ports would fall into German hands.[43]

A reply to Lord Chatfield came from Professor D.L. Savory, published on 5 February. Savory reminded Lord Chatfield of Article 7, Clause B of the treaty of 1921, that had provided for harbour and other facilities as required by Britain in time of war or strained relations. Hence, Britain could have acquired control of a large hinterland around the ports if needed. He also quoted Churchill in the House of Commons, 5 May 1935, as cited in chapter one, as saying, 'The Admiralty of those days (1921) assured me that without the use of these ports it would be very difficult, perhaps almost impossible, to feed this island in time of war.'[44]

The letters from high-placed elements in English society revisited many of the key strategic issues involved in the return of the treaty ports. They highlight the level of interest in the issue at this time of great peril for Britain. Others entered the correspondence in subsequent days, such as a Gerard Ryan of New College, Oxford, in support of Lord Chatfield's and the British government's reasons for returning the ports to Ireland.[45] Lord Stanhope was another voice that came down on the side of Lord Chatfield.[46] And on 14 February a Hubert Gough reminded Professor Savory that the treaty ports were only supposed to be held until Ireland undertook her own coastal defence. This is what had happened in 1938.[47]

Throughout this exchange, Professor Savory, unlike Lords Chatfield and Stanhope, Hubert Gough and Gerard Ryan, did not take into consideration the military, strategic and political factors that had been evaluated by the British Admiralty and Government in April 1938. It was clear that he was looking back with blind regret. As such, he was ineffective in his arguments of 9, 12 and 14 February.

The Times, in publishing Professor Savory's letters allowed him to make his point of view known, not only out of courtesy to him but also to make known that

42 The Times, Letters to the Editor, 4/2/1942, p.5.

43 Ibid.

44 The Times, Letters to the Editor, 5/2/1942, p.5.

45 The Times, Letters to the Editor, 7/2/1942, p.5.

46 The Times, Letters to the Editor, 11/2/1942, p.5.

47 The Times, Letters to the Editor, 14/2/1942, p.2.

there were, undoubtedly, others who were of the same opinion regarding the reasons for the return of the ports. However, in publishing the letters of four persons with viewpoints counter to those of Professor Savory, The Times was acknowledging that the majority of people 'in the know' were of the same opinion as Lord Chatfield. The paper was acknowledging, as Lord Stanhope had said, that no one had liked giving the ports back to Ireland and that it was a source for regret, but that Britain would not have been able to hold them against a hostile Ireland in time of war and that the Chamberlain government could not be blamed for what they had done. While neutral Ireland was putting Britain in a very dangerous position at that time, a friendly Ireland was seen, by The Times and the majority of educated thinkers as far better than an Ireland in open conflict with Britain.

It is important to note that the Irish newspapers reported Lord Chatfield's disclosures of 4 February, but due to censorship influences, refrained from comment.[48] That they all published Lord Chatfield's letter was a clear indication of how important the issue was to all concerned at that time and that all saw the letter as it was, a vindication of Ireland's control of the ports, or rather Britain's lack of control over them.

The underlying tension in the Irish newspapers regarding the landing of U.S. troops was dissipated on 7 February when all three papers published an article on, 'U.S. troops no threat to Eire – Welles.'[49] The text in all three papers followed the same line:

> Brennan, Irish minister to the United States, has delivered to Sumner Welles, an official at the State Department, a copy of what is believed to be a summary of the protest made by de Valera in Dublin, against the landing of the American Expeditionary Force in Northern Ireland, without consulting or notifying him. Brennan, who remained with Welles for twenty minutes, afterwards told reporters that the conversation was 'cordial and helpful,' and indicated that Welles had given him assurances that the presence of U.S. troops in Northern Ireland was in no way a threat to Eire.[50]

At this, and with relative absence of the ports issue in the Irish newspapers subsequent to it, one can almost hear the sigh of relief amongst the Irish media as they ran the statement off the printing presses. From now, for a long time, the ports issue virtually disappeared from the Irish newspapers, with one exception in The Irish Times.

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48 The Irish Independent, 5/2/1942, p.3, The Irish Press, 5/2/1942, p.1, The Irish Times, 5/2/1942, p.1.

49 The Irish Independent, 7/2/1942, p.2.

50 Ibid.

14 February also saw the last treatment of the issue in The Times until late April. It was under the headline, 'Bases in southern Ireland – rumour of U.S. mission to Eire,' that its Washington correspondent wrote an article pertaining to a possible mission to Ireland to discuss the situation, but that this was just 'official' rumour.[51] That said, The Times now effectively closed down reportage of the 'delicate question of the use of bases in southern Ireland,' leaving any ironing out of the issues involved to the politicians and those charged with the defence of the two islands. The 'complexity of the factors involved' saw rumour and speculation, as reported by the press, end for the time being.

The issue of the treaty ports, from this point onwards, became somewhat fragmented in coverage by the English-medium press. There were no further particular points of crisis and each newspaper carried various articles and reports at different times, although, there was some correlation between the Irish newspapers.

The rules of censorship allowed newspapers to report statements by political leaders and officials. The Irish Times editorial of 25 February, in commenting on Churchill's war review of the previous day, headlined 'The dark hour' commented: 'this is, indeed, one of Britain's darkest hours... The U-boat campaign in the Atlantic has grown in intensity, and during the past two months there has been a most serious increase in shipping losses, together with an extreme strain upon the energies of the British – and presumably, American – warcraft that exist for the protection of merchant shipping. These are what Churchill calls the "blunt, brutal facts" of the present situation...'[52] Here the concern of The Irish Times for Britain was obvious, yet it was obliged to maintain unity with the Irish governments policy, thus no attacks against neutrality were forthcoming..

While the debate over the issue of the Irish ports had died down from its crisis point in January and early February 1942, it was still a bone of contention in the U.S. the New York Times, on 22 February, published an important article which reported on an opinion poll among Irish-Americans on their attitudes to Ireland's stance at that

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51 'There are suggestions in Washington that associate justice Frank Murphy, of the Supreme Court, an Irish-American and a devout Catholic, may visit Eire with a small mission to discuss with Mr. de Valera the delicate question of the use of bases in Southern Ireland by the allied powers. There is no official warrant for the story, which is printed here with the hint that President Roosevelt would not necessarily disapprove of its publication, but the complexity of the factors involved and the certainty that no such de Marche (sic) would be made unless there were a reasonable certainty that it would meet with success, leave it for the time being in the realm of rumour.' The Times, 14/2/1942, p.4.

52 The Irish Times, 25/2/1942, p.2.

time. This article was written by George Gallup, Director of the American Institute of Public Opinion, and stated that these surveys were made by a system of highly selective sampling in each of the forty-eight states. The conclusion the pole came to was in the headline. It was '72% of Irish in U.S. want bases in Eire; 56% in Gallup Poll favour joining in war.'[53]

As the poll pointed out, there was indeed, a significant change in Irish-American attitudes from early 1941 to early 1942. This, predictably enough, would have been due to the circumstances engendered by the U.S.A's entry into the war. However, the poll is of immense importance to the issue of the treaty ports as represented by the English-medium press, because it showed the mood of American and Irish-American public opinion on the issue. It can also be seen as vindicating the pro-British and pro-Allied use of the Irish ports stance taken by the New York Times throughout the war, but especially after the U.S.A's entry into the war.

To illustrate that the ports issue had not faded from the minds of politicians, strategists or, even, the press, all three principal Irish newspapers on 2 March published a statement by Major Randolf Churchill, the son of Winston, against Lord

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53 The article opened,' A substantial majority of Irish-Americans polled throughout the country by the American Institute of Public Opinion believe that the Irish Free State government of Eamon de Valera should abandon its policy of neutrality and not only give the allies the right to use naval bases along the Irish coast but openly join the allied side by declaring war on Germany. Now that the German fleet has broken loose from Brest, and may join the Nazi submarines and raiders in roving the North Sea and the Atlantic, the question of allied naval bases along the Irish coast – and the position of Ireland generally – takes on new significance. It is, of course, a question which only the Irish people and their government can finally decide.'

The Survey had asked two questions. the first: 'would you like to see the Irish Free State let the allies use war bases along the Irish coast?.' The results were:

	Yes	No	Undecided
All voters	90%	5%	5%
Irish-Americans	72%	21%	7%

On the second question: 'should the Irish state join the allies in declaring war against Germany?.' The results were:

All voters	71%	16%	13%
Irish-Americans	56%	32%	12%

From these results the article concluded that "the Irish-American vote in favour of ending Irish neutrality is especially significant in view of the sentiment which existed among the group a year ago. An institute survey in January 1941, found that Irish-Americans were at that time opposed to granting Irish bases to the British, whereas the general public was even then in favour of such a move.'

On the question posed a year earlier: 'would you like to see the Irish give up their neutrality and let the English use war bases along the Irish coast?' The results had been:

All voters	63%	16%	21%
Irish-Americans	40%	52%	8%

Chatfield's letter of 4 February. The Irish Press entitled the article, 'Major Churchill on Irish Ports.' Here Randolf had called Lord Chatfield 'a man of Munich.' He said that 'it was Lord Chatfield who gave to Chamberlain's government the technical advice on which they handed over to de Valera the vital strategic treaty ports whose loss we are feeling so acutely today. In the same year – 1938 – Chatfield was content to be the First Sea Lord under whose administration not one destroyer was built.'[54] While all three principal Irish newspapers, in publishing the statement, recognised its importance to the ongoing debate, they were all hamstrung by censorship which had recently been tightened even further. A search of the Irish newspapers has indicated that the issue fell out of coverage from that point until the winning of the Battle of the Atlantic in mid 1943, almost completely. The position and the attitude of the Irish newspapers at that point in the war was, perhaps, best illustrated by the Irish Independent editorial of 23 March which said 'Eire's neutrality':

> The time is not yet ripe to discuss freely the origin and source of Eire's powers to remain neutral in the present war... Suffice it to say that the policy of neutrality commands the support of the people of all parties with an approach to unanimity such as no other line of national policy has ever attained.[55]

Towards a general acceptance of the Irish position

The Times and the New York Times, while still seeing the ports issue as important, also reduced their coverage of it. April and May 1942 saw The Times publish some articles relating to it, and, again, August, November, December and early 1943 some more articles were published. The New York Times of 24 March 1942 carried an article by Robert P. Post, its London correspondent, entitled, 'Eire finds peace an uneasy state – but she is clinging to unhappy situation because of fear of something worse.' Already, in his headline, Robert Post attempted to belittle the Irish people and their policy of neutrality.[56] Overall, his article can be seen as nothing other than a blatant attempt to influence American public opinion against Ireland. However, following on his opening volley, Post was not yet finished. He continued to say, 'if

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54 The Irish Press. 2/3/1942, p.1.

55 The Irish Independent. 23/3/1942, p.2.

56 'The arrival of U.S. troops in Northern Ireland inevitably brought home to Eire, as it had never been brought home before, the possibility that Eire might become involved in the war. Eire... has lights and meat, sugar and cream... What she has in the way of anything that is imported from abroad comes by courtesy of the British and U.S. navies... After a survey of the political Eire, it appears that Eire is a sick country, unhappy at heart and clinging to her unhappiness lest worse befall her... The truth is that the average Irishman is swayed by three factors. The first is that he happens to be at peace and wishes to remain that way. The second is the still bitter hate of anything that is British which is bound to tinge on all thoughts of going to war. The third factor is that the people of Eire, which is undefended or virtually so, are in great fear of German raiders.' The New York Times. 24/3/1942, p.7.

these factors are considered, the government's policy seems clear. That policy can be summed up as follows:'

We are neutral. We owe nothing, and are owed a good deal by the British Empire. It is true we live by its sufferance. But if we tried to take the country into war now we would be repudiated almost at once by the people of Eire, who do not want war. If we tried to do anything that would favour Britain we would simply give encouragement to our anti-British extremists and split the country wide open. Therefore, our best hope and our most useful service to the United Nations is to remain neutral until a time when we may have to fight. Any move to assist them will do more harm than good because it will inevitably tend to disunite Eire and a disunited Eire is not going to be effective as a member of the United Nations.[57]

That the New York Times would publish such an article written by a rumour-stirring, partisan, such as Robert P. Post, was a new departure and can be said to have been quite foreign to the paper's traditional approach. However, when one thinks of the previous style of reporting and lines of opinion evident in the New York Times, the publication of Post's article remains an anomaly that may have to be put down to a once-off expression of hostility from the New York Times towards Ireland. Nothing more on the Irish position was to appear in the New York Times until August 1942.

The Times of 28 April published an article entitled, 'Neutrality in Eire – official policies and popular sympathies – 'The indomitable Irishry' – from a correspondent lately in Eire' which asked the question, 'has the popular attitude towards neutrality been affected by these hardships (food shortages and lack of heavy industrial equipment), actual or threatened?' It answered its question saying that, despite over stringent censorship, the policy of neutrality was, in fact, gaining in strength.[58] The frustration of the writer of this article at Ireland's policy of neutrality was clearly evident. However, he did point out that the Irish people were behind the allies, and he did give an underlying reason for Irish neutrality. In this article there was none of the hostility seen in Robert Post's article in the New York Times. This was a moderately worded article, betraying frustration but not open hostility towards Ireland.

In articles such as this, one can detect a more 'relaxed' view of British opinion towards the Irish problem. Gone was the urgency of September 1939, November 1940 or January/February 1942. It seems very much as if the British public, as

57 The New York Times. 24/3/1942. p.7.

58 'Though one of the strictest censorships in the world prevents all public discussion on the subject, an impartial observer is bound to note that support for neutrality, far from being weakened, has received fresh accessions of strength from unlikely quarters. At the beginning of the war only a small handful believed that Eire could keep out of it, and Mr. de Valera's declaration of neutrality was generally interpreted as a refusal to fall into line with the Empire until circumstances should force him in...' However, 'even some members of the old 'ascendancy' class seem to have rallied to this singular belief; at all events they accept the situation with a complacency which rather grates on the visitor from Britain... There is no doubt that most of the people are anti-German and long for an allied victory... It is rather the fear of German brutality that lies beneath the policy of neutrality at all costs.' The Times. 28/4/1942, p.5.

represented by The Times, had accepted the Irish situation and were prepared to try to get on with the war.

17 August saw a headline in the New York Times of 'de Valera urges preparedness.' The article reported him speaking at Ennis the day before where he 'warned the people of Eire that they would be foolish to slacken their preparations for war. If war came, he said, he had no doubt they would stand the test, provided they did not waste the time given them to prepare.'[59] This article can be seen as just a report of a politician's statement. There was no real urgency behind the wording of the statement; it was just a reminder to the people of Ireland against complacency. The absence of editorial comment from the New York Times is evidence that the paper interpreted it as such.

Another article on 11 January 1943 entitled, 'The Empire and the world – future of the colonies – H. Morrison on Britain's task – full freedom' was perfect illustration of allied confidence and of how Ireland was no longer a problem.[60] As far as Morrison was concerned, the allies would win the war and Ireland's position was no longer cause for concern. That this opinion was published as an article with Morrison's name in the headline, is clear indication that The Times was of that opinion too.

That Irish neutrality was rapidly decreasing in importance as an issue is still further held out by a letter to the editor of the New York Times of 14 March 1943. Under the title, 'Ireland's neutrality – opposing opinions expressed concerning the matter,' Francis McCullagh of New York, responded to a letter from Henry Steele Commager, of Columbia University. He stated:

I find that writer (Dr. Commager) ill-informed, lugurious (sic) and pessimistic. He flogs the dead horse of neutrality, says nothing of the welcome change that has taken place in Anglo-Irish relations (clearly evident from The Times), and is contradicted by all my own correspondents in Ireland and by everybody here who is paying attention to the Irish question. Here is an extract from a letter on that question which I received only last week. The writer is also a Professor of History, but though he works in England he takes a keen interest in Ireland, where he was born, and paid a long visit to Ireland a few months ago; 'Ireland is very much out of the news you may have noticed. I have it on good authority that there is now complete understanding between Whitehall and Dublin on the question of neutrality. The British are now convinced that Ireland neutral is a far greater asset than Ireland at war.[61]

59 The New York Times, 17/8/1942, p.4.

60 'I am told that it is not everywhere understood that the self-governing dominions are in fact, as well as in form, absolute masters of their own political destinies. The fact remains that each is perfectly free without limit or reservation. The freedom and independence is real. And the proof is in Eire, which decided to stay out of the war and was left free to do so, to the great hurt of the Empire's cause and with little advantage to her reputation... When they do genuinely comprehend the moral and political achievement which it represents they will be in a better position to pronounce on the qualities and the value of that part of the Empire which is still dependent in status.' The Times, 11/1/1943, p.2.

61 The New York Times, 14/3/1943, Section IV, p.11.

This letter pointed out that Ireland's creameries were working hard to export butter, meat and eggs to Britain and he cited the c200,000 men serving in the British forces. He concluded, 'the newspapers, I presume, are a good indication of the government's desires, and the newspapers have been completely friendly to Eire for the past six months at least.'[62]

However, an article published by the New York Times on 15 July reported, 'Eire bases irk Ulster premier.' Here, the newspaper's London correspondent reported Sir Basil Brooke, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, as saying, '...that the Chamberlain government's handing back ports to Eire in 1938 was a gesture based on that government's belief in the good faith and friendship of the government of Eire. 'But the gesture, as we now see, was a mistaken one' he added.'[63] This can definitely be seen as the Battle of the Atlantic being over. Spoken in hindsight, it illustrated his belief that the Chamberlain government had made a mistake. However, he did not carry the point any further, it not being important anymore.

The final article on the treaty ports issue to appear in the New York Times was on 23 July. Its headline was, 'Morrison rebukes Eire on neutrality – warns Britons will not forget "indifference" of Ireland.' The London correspondent of The Manchester Guardian described the speech as throwing a 'political bomb' into the peaceful luncheon setting. Eire's role 'does not stand up too well in the history of nations,' Morrison said:

> We shall not forget, we cannot forget, that Eire, a country which has fought many a battle for what it conceived to be the cause of liberty, should have stood aside neutral, indifferent to this, one of the most dramatic and fateful struggles in the history of mankind. Eire's action is bound to have a modifying affect on many Britons' opinion about partition.[64]

This speech clearly signified that the Battle of the Atlantic had been won by the allies. Speaking in hindsight about Irish neutrality and the danger it had put Britain and the allies in during the world struggle, Morrison betrayed his conservative political inclination. Certainly, he was of the political persuasion of Winston Churchill regarding Ireland and its neutrality stance.

In conclusion, while the treaty ports issue had passed out of importance and out of the headlines, the New York Times found it hard to forget the Irish stance and remained stubbornly, pro-British and anti-Irish neutrality in its opinion. It must be

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62 Ibid.

63 The New York Times. 15/7/1943, p.4.

64 The New York Times, 23/7/1943, p.5.

said that there had been immense hostility towards Ireland shown in the British and American press at crisis stages of the war, though, it must also be said that The Times was, for the most part, quite even-handed. However, as the immediate emergencies affecting the allies were overcome and it became clear that the allies would, eventually, win the war the press desisted from their hostile coverage. What is particularly important to an analysis of the English-medium press coverage of the treaty ports issue during World War II is that reflections of particular sections of public opinion at that time can be discerned. In this, the English-medium press can be seen as providing a window to contemporary opinion regarding Ireland and her role in World War II. It is fascinating to trace the changing perspectives from April 1938, to the outbreak of war, through the crises of the war years up to July 1943 when the war in the west was moving in favour of the allies and the ports issue and neutrality became less strategically important to them.

CONCLUSION

In contemporary society the extensive media which now exist — television, radio and newspapers — play a very inter-penetrative and intensive role in political debate and in the shaping of public opinion. Leading politicians are very conscious of their public image and employ consultants to advise them on how best to use the media. On the other hand, the media engage in a good deal of investigative journalism and often employ aggressive interviewing techniques to elicit information or statements of position from politicians. Analysis of contemporary political developments needs to be alert to media coverage of events. While the style of media coverage of events in the late 30s and early 40s was very different from that of today, nevertheless, it was significant to the unfolding of issues at that time.

To my knowledge this thesis is the first detailed analysis of the newspaper coverage, by major representative newspapers, of the important issue of the hand-over of the treaty ports to the Irish Free State and the consequences of this decision for the conduct of the war and for inter-state relations during the crucial period, 1938-1943.

This study illustrates the mode in which the newspapers under review dealt with the evolving situation and both reflected and helped shape public opinion. The style of reportage was much less investigative than at present and it tended to report the statements of politicians in a more accepting way. Yet, the reportage is very revelatory of contemporary perspectives both in the context of triumph and of tension. The war context and the operation of censorship adds a sharper interest to such an analysis in an endeavour to examine how the media were 'used' to maintain the interests of government establishments.

The hand-over of the treaty ports to Ireland as part of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1938 was to prove to be a significant issue for international relations in the immediately subsequent years. It was to affect Britain's war effort in a pivotal way, which tempted her to consider invading Ireland. Anglo-Irish relations were tense in the early years of the war on this matter. The ports issue, as part of Irish neutrality, was to be a matter of the greatest importance to Ireland's stance as a newly independent country seeking to establish itself in the world's eyes and claiming to have its neutrality respected.

The ports issue was also to be of importance regarding relations between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland raising the partition issue in the context of the defence of the island. When the United States entered the war the ports issue was, again, an important one, as American opinion became impatient with the Irish stance and considered it not to be in keeping with the traditional close Irish-American relationship. Thus, during the period 1938 to 1943, the treaty ports were a pivotal issue in strategic, political and diplomatic concerns of these states. How the newspapers responded to the issues, interpreted developments and reflected opinion provides valuable insights into this period and enriches our understanding of the evolving situation.

The importance of the Irish ports was recognised at the opening session of the Anglo-Irish Treaty negotiations of 1921. On that day, 11 October, Arthur Griffith had raised the question of Irish neutrality, saying, that Ireland would 'want to be free to be neutral' in the event of a war declared by Britain.[1] To this issue Churchill had responded on 13 October that 'we must have free use of the Irish coasts in peace or war for imperial defence'[2] and added on 21 October during the sixth session of the conference that 'we cannot be sure that the Irish would have power to keep an effective neutrality. We could not guarantee the confluence of trade in an area where submarines were lurking unless we had Queenstown and other ports...'[3] From Churchill's perspective an independent, neutral Ireland could only have been regarded as a liability, and an independent Ireland without a British naval presence of any kind, would have represented a fatally weak point in the defence of the two islands.

While the development of air power in the 1930s had decreased the importance of the treaty ports by the time the Anglo-Irish Agreement negotiations had begun in January 1938, they were still of significant importance to both the island of Ireland and to the defence of Britain's North Atlantic trade routes. This was noted in Neville Chamberlain's statement in the House of Commons debate regarding the Agreement's provisions on 5 May that year. He stated that, 'no part in our discussions with the ministers from Eire gave us occasion for more prolonged and more anxious thought than this subject of defence...'[4] Clearly the treaty ports were still, seventeen years after the treaty of 1921, of particular importance to the defence of the isles.

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1 This was during a general discussion of foreign policy rather than of British defence requirements. Robert Fisk, In time of war. p.18.

2 Ibid, p.19

3 Ibid, p.19

4 The Times. 6/5/1938.

From this study one forms the view that de Valera was skilled and astute in his handling of the political and media aspects of his policy on the treaty ports. He always viewed the retention of the treaty ports by Britain under the treaty of 1921 as unfinished business. This control by Britain of these strategic ports was, in de Valera's view, a serious impediment to the full sovereignty of the Irish Free State. Through his involvement with the League of Nations and from other international linkages, de Valera was well aware of the impending war threat over Europe in the late thirties. The new Constitution of 1937, which he had piloted through, asserted a right over the whole territory of the island of Ireland and of the surrounding seas. In the negotiations on the Anglo-Irish Agreement in the spring of 1938, de Valera had his sights firmly fixed on regaining the treaty ports. He was as conscious as Churchill of their strategic importance in time of war. He was also aware that without the return of the ports, it would be impossible to maintain, successfully, a policy of neutrality in the event of Britain going to war. In such an eventuality Britain would use these ports and other belligerents would not be likely to respect a policy of neutrality declared by a country whose ports were being utilised by their enemy.

As this thesis has demonstrated, it was significant that de Valera did not highlight the ports issue publicly in the lead up to and in the course of negotiations. The emphasis was placed on the land annuities and trade issues. It was noteworthy how both The Irish Times and the Irish Independent in their coverage of that period altogether ignored any treatment of the ports issue. Following the publication of the Agreement they were not as sharp as The Irish Press , the paper founded by de Valera, in emphasising the crucial importance of the return of the ports. It is also interesting to note that they did not initially see the return of the ports as 'the end of the story,' but considered that an understanding must have existed about a future defence pact in which a well disposed Ireland would allow Britain access to the ports if needed in the wartime crisis. At the time of the Anglo-Irish negotiations and Agreement there was a clear lack of investigative or analytical coverage of the significance of the treaty ports issue.

The Times, as well as other organs of the British press, and the New York Times, gave most coverage to the ports issue. It is quite clear from their coverage that they were aware of the significance of this negotiated arrangement. But it is also striking how they accepted, with little if any criticism, the Chamberlain Government's rationale for the hand-over. This indicated that the British government took the view that, had the ports been retained, it would not have been possible to hold them against the will of a local population who would be hostile to their occupation. On the other hand, the government felt it would have more to gain from the support of a friendly

Ireland whose sense of sovereignty had been confirmed by the return of the ports. The answers to questions raised at the outset of this thesis on page twelve, is that the press welcomed the arrangement and considered that it would lead to a new era of friendly relations between Britain and Ireland. The press did not pay attention to the gamble and risk involved for Britain in this 'act of faith.' While reporting the reservations of Winston Churchill, the British and American press were surprisingly in strong support of the settlement. Perhaps journalists and editorial writers were responding to political briefings, putting the British government position in the most favourable light. Certainly, Chamberlain's government had adopted an appeasement policy towards Germany in the hope of avoiding war. The resolution of outstanding difficulties with Britain's nearest neighbour, the Irish Free State, could be regarded as within this broad conciliatory approach.

Whatever about their initial responses to the return of the treaty ports, the Irish newspaper managements quickly noted the popularity of the achievement, as the government presented the issue to the public. Thus, the actual hand-over ceremony in Cobh in July 1938 was given significant coverage in all three principal Irish papers in a celebratory tone. The contribution of the ports to the full sovereignty of the Irish Free State and the historical dimension of the hand-over were emphasised. This coverage both reflected public opinion and contributed to it, giving a feeling of consolidation to the sense of independent statehood. The adoption of a neutrality policy was now more feasible.

By September the following year, 1939, the long threatening war was unleashed, a conflict that was to last for six years with devastating consequences. The Irish Free State, with its territory now intact under its own control, was in a position to take an independent stance. De Valera, who had earlier decided that a policy of neutrality was in Ireland's best interest in contemporary circumstances, now officially declared such a policy and got it accepted by the belligerents. As might be expected, the three principal Irish newspapers supported the government's decision. Interestingly, at that stage The Times also took a benign view of Ireland's declaration of neutrality. The New York Times covered the issue but refrained from either approving or disapproving. The declaration and acceptance of Irish neutrality was an important test of the acceptance of the sovereignty of the Irish Free State, which was not yet twenty years established. The press treatment helped in the dissemination of this policy and in creating a climate of respect for it. To sustain this policy, however, in the complex political environment which prevailed would pose major challenges.

One tool utilised by the government from an early stage was strict censorship of the press. Officialdom was ultra sensitive about articles or comment which might give offence to, or support for, any of the belligerents. Among the issues on which debate was suppressed within the Irish press was the utilisation of the treaty ports. In a sense, the silence on them was eloquent, particularly at times when the issue was given prominence in The Times and the New York Times, and when it was a cause of great concern to the allies. On the other hand, as the thesis demonstrates, the Irish government used the press at this period to bolster a sense of unity amongst the people and encourage a preparedness for defence if this were needed. The press faithfully reported de Valera's speeches which were aimed at cultivating morale, soldering a sense of unity and purpose, and keeping people alert about the dangers of the situation. In this regard, the press helped him to contribute to the feeling characterised by Joe Lee as follows:

> The feeling that neutrality was a significant achievement helped sustain national morale during the war. There is a good deal of validity in the official portrait of a country united behind a popular policy, and experiencing a sense of satisfaction at sustaining that policy in the face of pressure, real and imaginary, from the old enemy. [5]

There was another very important outcome of press censorship during the war and that was the lack of comment on the benign aspects of neutrality towards Britain operated by Ireland during the war years. Britain was denied the right to use the ports, but in terms of food supplies, manpower for her domestic needs and the provision of intelligence information, Ireland contributed significantly to Britain's needs during the war years.[6] In a sense, it could be argued that, while not including defence facilities, Chamberlain's idea of the value of a well disposed Ireland in time of war was borne out.

Nevertheless, as the thesis shows, there were times when Britain put pressure on Ireland regarding the ports issue. A notable instance of this followed the defeat of France in June 1940, when, it seemed that nothing could stop the German advance. While the Irish press was not free to cover the matter, the British and American press gave some coverage to the behind-the-scenes moves to come to a new deal with de Valera. This involved a British proposal that, in return for Ireland engaging in the war on Britain's side, efforts would be made to persuade James Craig (Lord Craigavon), Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, to accept a united Ireland. Craig rejected this and de Valera considered that it was not a realistic runner.

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5 Joe Lee, Ireland 1912-1985 – politics and society, (Cambridge, 1989) p.270.

6 Joe Lee, Ireland 1912-1985 – politics and society, (Cambridge, 1989) pp.244-245.

From time to time, press coverage indicated how Northern Ireland's leaders saw the Free State's policy of neutrality as hostile and, on the other hand, viewed their engagement in Britain's war effort as solidifying their place within the United Kingdom. The intensification of partition was an outcome of southern Ireland's neutrality stance, as new political and emotional ties were forged between Northern Ireland and Britain.

The coverage in The Times and the New York Times is particularly revealing about the climate of tension in 1942, following the United States entry into the war. The attitude of the New York Times had become strongly hostile to Ireland's continued neutrality and the unavailability of its ports and air bases, now that America was directly involved in the war. This thesis has also demonstrated how the press recorded shifts in Irish-American opinion on the matter. Indeed, in a wartime context the press often uses its influence to shape public opinion in line with what is viewed as the national interest. The New York Times, at that period was engaged in such opinion forming. The British press was generally very critical of Irish neutrality and the loss of the ports in the context of the stress of the 1940-42 war effort. While critical, The Times did not adopt a strongly hostile approach, as it was probably better informed of the value of Ireland's benign neutrality to Britain. At no stage did any self-questioning occur in the New York Times or The Times regarding their earlier welcome for the return of the treaty ports in 1938, which they now saw as injurious to the allied war effort. But such tends to be the nature of newspaper coverage of events on a day-to-day basis, realising that the public tends to have short memories regarding the coverage of events.

The press coverage of the landing of American troops in Northern Ireland is particularly interesting. In the context of the constitutional claim, and of the neutrality policy, de Valera judged it incumbent upon him to object formally to their being landed without any consultation with him. Northern Ireland rejected his right to interfere as an illegitimate intrusion in its affairs. There were niceties of protocol involved but it is interesting to note that in neither the United States, England nor Ireland, did press coverage get hysterical about the issue, and Irish-American relations were not seriously damaged. The New York Times, in particular, showed an understanding of why de Valera might regard it as politically necessary for him to object formally to the landing of United States troops.

Although the press was not privy to all the detail, there were undoubtedly intensive diplomatic pressures placed on de Valera at the time to re-think the neutrality policy in the interest of the allies. The fact that he resisted so firmly was at least partly due to his thorough conviction that Ireland's interests, from a variety of perspectives, were best served by the neutrality stance. The press coverage,

particularly in the British and American papers, is a form of barometer of the public mood at particular points in the war and conveys the difficulty of maintaining a principled stand in the context of a public mood shot through with fear, anxiety and concern about an intimidating future. There is no doubt that Churchill, as Prime Minister, was sorely tempted during the war crisis period to try to take back the ports by force. Wiser counsel, however, prevailed. The difficulties which would ensue, the replacement of a benign neutrality by a hostile Ireland which would have resulted, and the fact that Britain and the United States could use the Northern Ireland ports and air bases outweighed any value which might have emerged from such a takeover attempt.

Periodically, the issue of the treaty ports would emerge in the press depending on whether it was the Allies or the U-boats who had the upper hand in the Battle of the Atlantic at the time. However, it must be said that November 1940 and the early months of 1942 represented the most dangerous periods to the observance of Irish neutrality and it was then that the treaty ports were most in the public's consciousness. Analysis of the British and U.S. press coverage of the ports issue during those periods provides clear indication of the tension and bitterness held in both countries regarding Ireland during those times. Both John A. Murphy and Joe Lee draw attention to the intense secret diplomatic pressure being brought to bear on Ireland by both America and Britain at the time.[7]

In the context of the theme of this thesis, it is desirable to note the celebrated confrontation between the two old antagonists and statesmen, Churchill and de Valera, at the end of the war.

Churchill, in his victory speech of 13 May 1945, when looking back over the Allies' hard won victories did not hide his bitterness towards Ireland's lack of participation in the struggle. He stated:

> The sense of envelopment ...which might at any moment turn into strangulation, lay heavy upon us... Owing to the action of de Valera,... the approaches which the Southern Irish ports and airfields could so easily have guarded were closed by the hostile aircraft and U-boats. This was indeed a deadly moment in our life, and if it had not been for the loyalty and friendship of Northern Ireland we should have been forced to come to close quarters with de Valera or perish for ever from the earth. However, with a restraint and poise to which, I say, history will find few parallels, His Majesty's Government never laid a violent hand upon them, though at times it would have been quite easy and quite natural, and left the de Valera Government to frolic with the Germans and later with the Japanese representatives to their heart's content.[8]

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7 John A. Murphy, Op.cit., p.101. Joseph J. Lee, Op.cit., p.250.

8 Robert Fisk, In time of war, p.538.

In this speech, Churchill's view and stance regarding Ireland during the war was clear. It can be recognised that he saw the treaty ports as the major handicap to Britain during the war, a handicap that almost made imperial Britain violate Ireland's neutrality.

De Valera's awaited reply came on 16 May. His response held a poise and a sense of diplomacy reflective of the manner in which he led Ireland through the war. He did not wish to add 'fuel to the flames of hatred and passion.' He made allowances,

> ...for Mr. Churchill's statement, however unworthy, in the first flush of his victory. No such excuse could be found for me in this quieter atmosphere... Mr. Churchill ... is proud of Britain's stand alone, after France had fallen and before America entered the war.
>
> Could he not find in his heart the generosity to acknowledge that there is a small nation that stood alone not for one year or two, but for several hundred years against aggression; that endured spoliations (sic), famines, massacres in endless succession ... a small nation that could never be got to accept defeat and has never surrendered her soul?[9]

In his reply, de Valera showed to the world that he would not allow himself to be drawn into a public trading of insults regarding Ireland's wartime position. This was very much in keeping with the outward sense of calm and control which he had exhibited throughout the war years and which is observable in the newspaper coverage. His regaining of the ports in 1938 had been a major factor in allowing him to steer the policy of neutrality. The return of the Irish Treaty Ports has been termed by R.F. Foster as 'the brilliant success'[10] of the 1938 Agreement which, he states, de Valera, later in life, regarded as his greatest political achievement.

The value of analysing the press coverage of the treaty ports as an issue during these pivotal periods of the war has served to illustrate the pattern of opinion in the press and how these opinions changed over time. It has provided a barometer, as it were, of the evolution of such public opinion in response to the changing circumstances in the fortunes of the war. Overall, it can be argued that the newspapers served their readers well in disseminating information and informing them of developments on the treaty ports prior to the outbreak of war. They also inter-related well with public opinion, albeit with variations in line with traditional attitudes of their particular readerships. They provided an outlet for the opinions of their readerships on political events as they unfolded. Then, in a time of crisis, following the outbreak of war, they became aligned with government policy and

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9 Robert Fisk, In time of war. p.539.

10 Foster, R.F., Modern Ireland, 1600-1972, (London 1988) p.554.

important role in mediating it to the public. The quality of the investigative and analytic coverage of the ports issue, which would have been valuable for readers in the pre-war conditions, was less than impressive. The analysis has identified key features of the coverage and has contextualised it within the strategic and political framework of events.

Whereas previous academic studies of Irish neutrality have tended to concentrate more on the political issues involved and the diplomatic pressures therein, the study of press and public opinion has been largely neglected. It is the author's hope that this thesis has made a worthwhile contribution to our understanding of the significance of the treaty ports issue in the crucial five year period, 1938-43, and of how the issue was dealt with by the newspapers under review throughout that time.

APPENDIX A

Shipping and yearly U-boat losses in the Atlantic 1939-45, yearly and monthly

Month and year	Total (not including Pacific regions)		North Atlantic		
	Tons	Ships	Tons	Ships	U-boats
1939					
September	194,845	53	104,829	19	2
October	196,355	46	110,619	18	5
November	174,269	50	17,895	6	1
December	189,768	72	15,852	4	1
Total	**755,237**	**221**	**249,195**	**47**	**9**
1940					
January	214,506	73	35,970	9	2
February	226,920	63	74,759	17	4
March	107,009	45	11,215	2	3
April	158,218	58	24,570	4	5
May	288,461	101	49,087	9	1
June	585,496	140	269,529	53	0
July	386,913	105	141,474	28	2
August	397,229	92	190,048	39	3
September	448,621	100	254,553	52	0
October	442,985	103	286,644	56	1
November	385,715	97	201,341	38	2
December	349,568	82	293,304	42	0
Total	**3,991,641**	**1,059**	**1,805,494**	**349**	**23**
1941					
January	320,240	76	214,382	42	0
February	403,393	102	317,378	69	0
March	529,706	139	364,689	63	5
April	687,901	195	260,451	45	2
May	511,042	139	324,550	58	1
June	432,025	109	318,740	68	4
July	120,975	43	97,813	23	1
August	130,699	41	83,661	25	3
September	285,942	84	184,546	51	2
October	218,289	51	154,593	32	2
November	104,640	35	50,215	10	5
December	152,033	44	50,682	10	10
Total	**3,896,885**	**1,058**	**2,421,700**	**496**	**35**
1942					
January	419,907	106	276,795	48	3
February	679,632	154	429,891	73	2
March	834,164	273	534,064	95	6
April	674,457	132	391,044	66	3
May	705,050	151	576,350	120	4
June	834,196	173	623,545	124	3
July	618,113	128	486,965	98	11
August	661,133	123	508,426	96	10
September	567,327	114	473,585	95	10
October	637,833	101	399,715	62	16
November	807,754	134	508,707	83	13
December	348,902	73	262,135	46	5
Total	**7,790,697**	**1,662**	**5,471,222**	**1,006**	**86**

Month and year	Tons	Ships	Tons	Ships	U-boats
1943					
January	261,359	50	172,691	27	6
February	403,062	73	288,625	46	19
March	693,389	120	476,349	82	15
April	344,680	64	235,478	39	15
May	299,428	58	163,507	34	41
June	123,825	28	18,379	4	17
July	365,398	61	123,327	18	37
August	119,801	25	10,186	2	25
September	156,419	29	43,775	8	9
October	139,861	29	56,422	12	26
November	144,391	29	23,077	6	19
December	168,524	31	47,785	7	8
Total	**3,220,137**	**597**	**1,659,601**	**285**	**237**
1944					
January	130,635	26	36,065	5	15
February	116,855	23	12,577	2	20
March	157,960	25	36,867	7	25
April	82,372	13	34,224	5	21
May	27,297	5	0	0	22
June	104,084	26	4,294	2	25
July	78,756	17	15,480	2	23
August	118,304	23	5,685	1	36
September	44,805	8	16,535	3	21
October	11,668	4	0	0	13
November	37,980	9	7,828	3	7
December	134,913	26	5,458	1	14
Total	**1,045,629**	**205**	**175,013**	**31**	**242**
1945					
January	82,897	18	29,168	5	14
February	95,316	26	32,453	5	22
March	111,204	27	23,684	3	32
April	104,512	22	32,071	5	55
May	10,022	3	5,353	1	28
Total	**403,951**	**96**	**122,729**	**19**	**151**

Source: John Terraine, *Business in great waters* (London, 1989) pp.767-769.

APPENDIX B

Shipping losses in British home waters, 1939-45 (by all causes)

Month	Tons	Ships	% of total tonnage	Tons	Ships	% of total tonnage
		1939			**1940**	
January				178,536	64	83.2
February				152,161	46	67.0
March				95,794	43	89.5
April				133,638	54	85.5
May				230,607	90	79.3
June				208,924	77	35.7
July				192,331	67	49.7
August				162,956	45	41.0
September	84,965	33	43.6	131,150	39	29.2
October	63,368	24	32.3	131,620	43	29.7
November	155,668	43	89.3	92,713	48	24.0
December	152,952	65	80.6	83,308	34	23.8
Total	**455,953**	**165**	**60.4**	**1,794,538**	**650**	**44.9**
		1941			**1942**	
January	36,975	15	11.5	19,341	14	4.6
February	51,381	26	12.7	11,098	5	1.6
March	152,862	73	28.8	15,147	8	1.8
April	99,031	40	14.4	54,589	14	8.0
May		99	19.7	59,396	14	8.4
June	86,381	34	19.9	2,655	5	0.3
July	15,265	18	12.6	22,557	9	3.6
August	19,791	11	15.1			
September	54,779	13	19.1	1,892	1	0.3
October	35,996	12	16.5	12,733	6	1.9
November	30,332	20	28.9	6,363	5	0.8
December	56,845	19	9.7	9,114	10	2.6
Total	**740,293**	**350**	**17.1**	**214,885**	**91**	**2.7**
		1943			**1944**	
January	15,849	4	6.0	6,944	8	5.3
February	4,925	2	1.2	4,051	3	3.5
March	844	2	0.1			
April	9,926	5	2.9	468	1	0.6
May	1,568	1	0.5			
June	149	1	0.1	75,166*	19	72.2
July	72	1	0.0	19,038	8	24.1
August	19	1	0.0	54,834	12	46.3
September				21,163	3	47.2
October				1,722	2	14.7
November	13,036	7	9.0	8,880	3	23.3
December	6,086	1	3.6	85,639	18	63.4
Total	**52,484**	**25**	**1.6**	**277,905**	**77**	**26.6**
		1945				
January	46,553	12	56.1			
February	48,551	19	50.9			
March	83,864	23	75.4			
April	49,619	14	47.5			
May	4,669	2	27.1			
Total	**233,256**	**70**	**51.4**			

* = D-Day

Source: John Terraine, Business in great waters, p.771

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