

The Emergency: Ireland in a world at war, 1939–45

DOCUMENTARY TEACHING RESOURCE
FOR JUNIOR CERT AND TRANSITION YEAR
Compiled and edited by John Gibney and Kate O'Malley



Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann
Royal Irish Academy



JOHN GIBNEY is Assistant Editor with the Royal Irish Academy's
Documents on Irish Foreign Policy series: **ria.ie**

KATE O'MALLEY is Managing Editor of the Royal Irish Academy's
Dictionary of Irish Biography: **ria.ie**



Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann
Royal Irish Academy

Contents

How to use this pack	4
Suggested links to Junior Cert History	5
Introduction: Ireland and the Emergency, 1939–45	7
Notable personalities from the <i>Dictionary of Irish Biography</i>	8
1: Neutrality, Ireland and international relations	21
2: Key personalities at home and abroad	39
3: Anglo-Irish relations	51
4: Trade and socio-economic conditions	63
5: The role of the military during the Emergency	73
6: War and Northern Ireland	93
7: Technology and communications	103
8: Espionage	113
Glossary	126
Further resources for Research Study Report (RSR), local studies, biographical studies and group projects	127

How to use this pack

This teaching resource is primarily based on volumes VI and VII of the Royal Irish Academy's *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy* (DIFP) series, which since 1998 has published documents held in the National Archives of Ireland (NAI) and elsewhere (such as UCD Archives, or UCDA) that relate to the history of Ireland's foreign relations since 1919. It is supplemented with material from the Royal Irish Academy's *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (DIB).

The pack is primarily intended for use as a stand-alone module for Transition Year, and can also be used to build on the Junior Certificate history course, with its emphasis on:

- (a) Recognising key change
- (b) Exploring people, culture and ideas
- (c) Applying historical thinking

The module is intended to allow students to expand upon the course material that they have previously covered and to investigate the work of the historian by working with 'primary' source material, in the form of original documents relating to Ireland during the 'Emergency'. The pack includes a short guide on how the module may be relevant to Junior Cycle, and possible means of assessment and examination that may also be useful for TY.

The module is divided into distinct sections. Together these form a sequence, but each section is self-contained and can be explored individually. Each contains a selection of original documents, some of which have been re-edited, and is geared towards discussion and debate in the classroom. There is also supporting material such as separate biographies, a glossary, and a list of additional resources, with details on how to use these for further projects and the Leaving Cert RSR. We hope that these will enable students and teachers to contextualise and discuss the documents in a way that allows them to explore the contemporary and historical issues raised by Irish neutrality and the Second World War, along with the experience of those who lived through the period. Teachers and students can choose which sections to focus on, in what order, and how best to use it in the classroom.

Junior Cert History links

by Fintan O'Mahony

The following is intended as a short guide on how the module might be used in relation to the Junior Cert history curriculum.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

(What will students do before they read the documents)

Students will have previously engaged with Strand One learning outcomes including developing the ability to debate the usefulness and limitations of different types of primary and secondary sources of historical evidence (1.6), and be able to demonstrate awareness of historical concepts, such as source and evidence; fact and opinion; viewpoint and objectivity; cause and consequence; change and continuity; time and space (1.4). Opportunities also arise for students to consider the Emergency as a contentious issue (1.2). Exploring these documents in themselves provides an opportunity to investigate a repository of historical evidence (1.8).

Students will also require an awareness of the key events both in Ireland and in the wider world to orientate them when reading through the documents.

LEARNING OUTCOMES IN FOCUS

Strand One: The Nature of History

1.2 consider contentious or controversial issues in history from more than one perspective and discuss the historical roots of a contentious or controversial issue or theme in the contemporary world

1.4 demonstrate awareness of historical concepts, such as source and evidence; fact and opinion; viewpoint and objectivity; cause and consequence; change and continuity; time and space

1.6 debate the usefulness and limitations of different types of primary and secondary sources of historical evidence, such as written, visual, aural, oral and tactile evidence; and appreciate the contribution of archaeology and new technology to historical enquiry

1.8 investigate a repository of historical evidence such as a museum, library, heritage centre, digital or other archive or exhibition

Strand Two: History of Ireland

2.8 describe the impact of war on the lives of Irish people, referring to either World War One or World War Two

Strand Three: History of Europe and the Wider World

3.4 discuss the general causes and course of World War One or World War Two and the immediate and long-term impact of the war on people and nations

KEY LEARNING

(Context & Key Learning-what we hope the students will learn)

How World War Two and the Emergency impacted on the lives of people at that time.

The period connects Irish and World History (2.13).

Links with Learning Outcome 2.2 and 2.5, through considering the role of de Valera and Anglo-Irish Relations.

Students will become aware of the value of official communications as evidence.

Through these documents, students should have a clear view of both the public and state response to war.

Learners should have opportunities to critically interrogate primary sources.

Historical knowledge and conceptual understanding should be combined to produce students work using a variety of formats.

ASSESSMENT

(How will teachers know the students have engaged with the documents and Learning Outcomes).

Display: maps, photos, models (**The role of the military during the Emergency, Espionage**).

An article: on the reasons for neutrality (**Neutrality, Ireland and International Relations**).

Essay: on the relationship between Ireland and Britain (**Anglo-Irish Relations, War in Ireland and Northern Ireland, Espionage, Trade and Socio-Economic conditions**).

Blog: from a diplomat in an Axis legation in Ireland (**Neutrality, Ireland and International Relations, Espionage**).

Script for a broadcast: the impact of war on Irish people on both sides of the border (**Neutrality, Ireland and International Relations, Anglo-Irish Relations, War in Ireland and Northern Ireland, Trade and Socio-Economic conditions**).

Address to an audience: on neutrality then and now (**Neutrality, Ireland and International Relations, Anglo-Irish Relations**).

Letter to a journal or newspaper: on the commemoration of World War Two.

Obituary: for Éamon de Valera.

Speech: recreate de Valera's or Churchill's post war speeches (**Neutrality, Ireland and International Relations, Anglo-Irish Relations**).

Introduction

Ireland and the Emergency, 1939-45

This module is about Ireland's experience of the Second World War, or as the period is usually referred to in Ireland, the 'Emergency'. The use of the term 'Emergency' for the period of the Second World War in Ireland arises from the declaration of a 'state of emergency' by the Fianna Fáil government of Éamon de Valera on 2 September 1939. Ireland remained neutral in the Second World War.

Ireland had adopted a policy of neutrality after independence in 1922. It had been a member of the League of Nations in the 1920s and 1930s but stayed out of military alliances. Following the outbreak of the Second World War Éamon de Valera's government did not want to become involved in what was bound to be a devastating and destructive conflict. They were concerned that one of the warring powers – Britain or Germany – might invade them, which would mean that Ireland would almost certainly be targeted by that country's enemy, who would attack or confront their opponent on Irish territory. The British expected that Ireland would support them in a conflict. The Irish government knew that following Britain into a European war would be deeply unpopular and would almost certainly increase support for the IRA, and even lead to renewed civil war.

Throughout the early years of the war British propaganda, supported by the United States, attacked Ireland for remaining neutral and called on Dublin to enter the war effort on the Allied side. The British were increasingly hostile to Irish neutrality as they sought to regain the use of the naval bases – the 'Treaty Ports' of Berehaven, Cobh and Lough Swilly – that they handed over to the Irish government in 1938. As US entry into the war became more likely, much Irish-American opinion also turned against Irish neutrality. The Irish position was also made difficult by the fact that Northern Ireland, as part of the UK, was officially at war; US troops were stationed there from 1942 onwards.

As a neutral state, Ireland also had to maintain relations with Germany, who made it very clear that they expected Ireland to remain strictly neutral, and not to offer any assistance or support to the Allies. However, the chances of a German invasion or attack (like the bombing of Dublin's North Strand in May 1941) faded in the months after the Battle of Britain and the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. The chance of a British invasion or attack also lessened as the war turned eastward and the Battle of the Atlantic moved away from Irish shores.

By early 1942 neutral Ireland retained little strategic value for the Allies. Demands for the use of Irish ports declined as modern naval facilities were built at Derry on the River Foyle in Northern Ireland, and new airbases in Northern Ireland allowed long-range aircraft to patrol far over the Atlantic to counter German U-boats. From January 1942 to February 1944 the Allies often simply ignored Ireland, though limited co-operation with the Allies continued and tensions re-emerged in the months before D-Day

The documents compiled here do not cover every aspect of Ireland's experience of the 'Emergency'. They focus mainly on diplomatic, political and military issues, rather than on social and cultural history. But this selection of primary source documents is intended to illustrate how Ireland managed to remain neutral in the Second World War, and the challenges Ireland faced while doing so.

Notable personalities from the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*

Below is a selection of biographies reproduced from the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (DIB) (<https://www.ria.ie/research-projects/dictionary-irish-biography>). The five entries here are of lesser known individuals who all feature in the module, or who are relevant to the subject that it touches upon. You can also look through the DIB (available in your school via Scoilnet) for more well-known Irish figures like Éamon de Valera and Frank Aiken, for example. There are many more biographies in the DIB that pertain to the documents in this module (some of the other important figures, such as Joseph Walshe, are listed in the introduction to Section 2). The abbreviation ‘qv’ in brackets is short for the Latin ‘quod vide’ meaning ‘on this (matter) go see’. This means that there is also an entry in the DIB for the individual concerned, and each entry will have lists of further sources at the end. These also contain full details for the in-text references. By reading some of these other entries that appear below you might find something of interest and worth pursuing for your RSR topic.

Daniel ('Dan') Bryan

by Pauric J. Dempsey and Eunan O'Halpin

Bryan, Daniel ('Dan') (1900–85), soldier and intelligence officer, was born at Dunbell, Co. Kilkenny, on 9 May 1900, the eldest of the twelve children of John Bryan, farmer, of Dunbell, and his wife, Margaret Mary (née Lanagan), of Maddoxstown, Co. Kilkenny. Educated at the CBS Kilkenny, he entered UCD in 1916 and spent two years studying medicine. In November 1917 he joined the Irish Volunteers and served in C and G companies, 4th battalion, Dublin brigade. He participated in raids, armed patrols, and observation work (he was a scout on Baggot Street Bridge during Bloody Sunday, 21 November 1920), and in January 1921 was appointed assistant battalion intelligence officer, working with Sean Dowling, Sean MacCurtain, and F. X. Coughlan. His duties included the correlation of intelligence derived from Tommy Daly (qv), an employee of the Kildare Street Club. He never fired a weapon in anger during his long revolutionary and military career, and never commanded a battalion, the usual route to senior rank in the army. Intelligence was his *métier*.

In June 1922 Bryan joined the national army as an officer on the general staff. He became heavily involved in intelligence work during the civil war, and his agents, who were widely feared, were instrumental in the wide-scale arrests of anti-treatyites in the Dublin area. Partly in order to facilitate clandestine meetings with agents, Bryan developed the habit of working on his own late at night. This, along with being teetotal and a non-smoker, probably contributed to his somewhat solitary persona in the army. On 4 September 1923 he was promoted to the rank of captain, and the following year officially moved to the intelligence branch, where he was to the fore in uncovering the army mutiny. To Bryan the mutiny was essentially about 'whiskey and jobs'.

In 1926 the army's role in the gathering of domestic intelligence was terminated and Bryan was transferred to the defence plans division (October 1927–November 1928). In 1927 he attended the five-year-review conference of the treaty defence arrangements in London, and in October 1930, while working in the assistant chief of staff's branch, he attended the imperial conference in London. He was acting director of the intelligence branch, designated G2, in 1931. Despite his loyalty to the Free State, he maintained informal contacts within the republican and labour movements and is credited with snuffing out the wild talk of discontented officers who boasted that they would refuse to take orders from a Fianna Fáil government should one be elected.

Bryan graduated in June 1933 from the infantry officer's course. While on the command and staff officer's course (September 1934–July 1935), he incurred the wrath of Major-General Hugo

McNeill (qv) by writing a thesis that contradicted the latter's military strategy. Bryan argued that the state did not have the means to resist an external attack, and pointed to the threat that a foreign power might use Ireland and encourage the republican movement for the purposes of gathering intelligence and causing trouble in Britain. This became the basis of 'Fundamental factors affecting Irish defence policy', circulated to ministers in May 1936, which was the first official document to shed light on the internal security implications of the Irish policy of neutrality. It assessed Ireland's security position in relation to Great Britain and rejected the thinking of a group of senior officers who envisaged successfully taking on the British military in time of war, and pointed out that Ireland was not virtually 'but absolutely disarmed'.

After returning to G2 in 1935 with the rank of major, Bryan was one of the team that briefed Éamon de Valera (qv) on the state's defences prior to the negotiations that led to the handing over by Britain of the treaty ports in 1938. In that same year primary responsibility for security intelligence was transferred to G2, where Bryan established a defence security section to address the problem of German use of Ireland for intelligence activities directed against Britain and France. He was appointed deputy director (1938–41) and promoted to colonel. From 1939 he established excellent working relations with the head of MI5's Irish desk, Cecil Liddell, and with Liddell's powerful brother Guy (who rose to be head of counter-espionage and deputy director of MI5 by 1945). When Bryan became director of G2 in July 1941 relations improved further. Liddell had found Bryan's predecessor frustrating to deal with on the sharing of information relating to the activities of German nationals and the German legation in Ireland. Bryan admired Lieutenant-General Dan McKenna (qv) (unexpectedly appointed chief of staff after the dismissal of Michael Brennan (qv)), not for his direct and sometimes brutal manner, but for the relentless drive and decisiveness which he exhibited in expanding and professionalising the defence forces. McKenna, in turn, left Bryan to his own devices, while providing support by meeting Cecil Liddell and other British officers.

Bryan enjoyed intelligence work for its own sake, and his enthusiasm and good relations with Liddell led to increased cooperation as the war progressed. He worked closely with the secretary of the Department of External Affairs, Joseph Walshe (qv), de Valera's key foreign policy adviser, and with the assistant secretary, F. H. Boland (qv). These links meant that Bryan's actions carried the taoiseach's imprimatur, and left him unusual leeway in the management of intelligence liaison. On 11 November 1941 Bryan visited London at the invitation of MI5 to discuss the activities of both the German legation and the agent Herman Goertz (qv). Despite Ireland's neutrality, he arranged for a British wireless expert to visit Dublin in an attempt to find the signal of the German legation. Bryan also agreed that the Irish army's signal corps would provide the British with reports of all transmissions intercepted from the German legation and arranged to keep a twenty-four-hour watch on the legation itself.

In collaboration with the Department of Posts and Telegraph's special investigation unit and the Garda aliens and security sections and special branch, G2 developed an impressive counter-intelligence network. In 1940 Bryan secured a key informant within a covert intelligence organisation established in Ireland by the British Secret Intelligence Service, and G2 were thus able to monitor its information-gathering activities until the end of the war. By the end of 1943 the Irish had netted all twelve Abwehr agents sent to Ireland, mostly within a few days of each one's arrival, including the elusive Herman Goertz. Bryan brought in Dr Richard Hayes (qv), director of the NLI and an amateur cryptographer, in an attempt to crack the cipher used by Goertz. Liddell later described Hayes's gift in this area as amounting 'almost to genius'. Bryan was not informed for some time that Hayes had cracked the Goertz code, as Colonel Eamon de Buitléar (1902–81), a linguist foisted upon Bryan as second in command who had little aptitude for intelligence work, unilaterally withheld this information because

he believed that Bryan would hand it immediately to the British authorities. This breakthrough caused considerable excitement in MI5 and the British code-breaking service. The cipher cracked by Hayes was used by the British to decode intercepted messages carried to the German legation in Lisbon by a man named Eastwood, a ship's cook who was working for a charlatan and would-be agent, Joseph Andrews. The messages ultimately indicated that the general officer commanding of the second division of the Irish army had been in contact with Goertz, but this was never disclosed. General Hugo McNeill, whom Bryan distrusted, often tried to bypass and belittle him, and to interfere in intelligence work.

In combination with other elements of the defence forces, G2 also developed effective air and coastal observation and wireless interception systems which were crucial to the maintenance of neutrality and the provision of information to the Allied powers (de Valera believed that the more such material Ireland provided, the less could the Allies claim to be seriously damaged by Irish neutrality). After the war Bryan unsuccessfully opposed the dismantling of the G2 security apparatus, but the Department of Justice, with which he had fraught relations during the Emergency, argued successfully that the Garda security section and special branch should be restored to primacy. Bryan then concentrated his energies on investigating communism in Ireland and its foreign links, partly on the basis that if the Irish did not do this, the British and American agencies would establish a covert presence in Ireland. Much to Bryan's annoyance, Seán MacBride (qv), minister for external affairs (1948–51), was obsessed by the notion of pervasive British espionage. Bryan was disappointed not to be appointed adjutant general of the army, feeling that he had been unfairly tainted in Fine Gael eyes by his wartime links to de Valera's closest advisers, but in truth his talents and experience lay mainly in intelligence, where he was peerless.

Bryan was a member of the Irish military delegation that visited the US army's European command in November 1951. He was moved from G2 and appointed commandant of the Military College in March 1952 (in later years, former cadets remembered him as an amiable but distant figure). In November 1955, seeing his promotion hopes again frustrated by the inter-party government, he took early retirement.

Bryan was a founder member of the Military History Society of Ireland (1949) and, with the support of Dr Michael Tierney (qv) and Professors G. A. Hayes-McCoy (qv) and R. W. Dudley Edwards (qv), unsuccessfully argued for a chair of military history at UCD. A deeply religious and rather conservative man, who retained a strong Kilkenny accent, he looked more like a professor than a spy master, and was modest, discreet, and humane about personal failings. Douglas Gageby (qv) (1918–2004), who served in G2 (1944–5), spoke of his formidable intellect, and of the steel which lay beneath his mild appearance and manner of constantly blinking while thinking. His absent-mindedness about inessentials was well known in the army and even in British and American intelligence agencies. In his last years he was inclined to be discursive in talking with researchers, but his prodigious memory and unerring ability to identify links between apparently unrelated episodes and individuals remained to the end.

In 1930 Bryan married Ellen Barton-Fraser, of Ballsbridge, Dublin, who predeceased him by some years. They had no children. He died 16 June 1985 in Dublin after briefly suffering from stomach cancer, and was buried in the local church near his family home at Dunbell, Co. Kilkenny. His unpublished memoirs (IE UCDA P109) as well as his papers (IE UCDA P71) are deposited in the UCD archives, while some of his correspondence with MI5 is in the NAI (A3, A8/1, and A60).

David Gray

by Bernadette Whelan

Gray, David (1870–1968), diplomat and playwright, was born 8 August 1870 in Buffalo, New York state, of Scottish parents; his father was editor of the *Buffalo Courier*. He graduated from Harvard University in 1892. Between 1893 and 1899 he worked as a reporter and leader writer for several Rochester and Buffalo newspapers. Admitted to practise at the bar in 1899, he nevertheless earned his living as a writer and was the author of several plays, articles, one novel, and an unpublished work, ‘Behind the green curtain’. In 1914 he married Mrs Maude Livingston Hall Waterbury (1877–1952), youngest sister of Eleanor Roosevelt’s mother. She had been married to Lawrence Waterbury for twelve years and had two children, Lawrence and Anne. The Grays went to live in Maine, but US participation in the first world war disrupted their life. He served as a captain with the American Expeditionary Forces in France and received the Croix de Guerre and Chevalier de la Légion d’honneur for his work as a liaison officer with the French army. Maude worked in one of the intelligence bureaux of the post office department in New York city. Towards the end of the war, Gray broke his leg in two places and was helped to return to the US through the good offices of Eleanor Roosevelt, who requested her husband, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, assistant secretary of the navy, to have Gray return stateside with them on board the *George Washington*. Both he and Maude remained close to the Roosevelts, with FDR describing David as his ‘cousin’. After the war, Gray returned to writing; he received a doctorate of letters from Bowdoin College in 1925.

President Roosevelt appointed the 69-year-old Gray as US minister in Dublin on 16 February 1940 to replace John Cuddahy. An amateur in the world of diplomacy, Gray faced a difficult situation in a neutral state, at a time when Northern Ireland, as part of the UK, participated fully in the war with its ports, airfields, and manufacturing industries playing vital roles in the war effort. Gray held definite views about Ireland: he resented the influence exercised by Irish nationalists with those in Irish-America who were critical of Roosevelt’s pro-British policy, and he opposed Irish neutrality. His views mirrored those of Roosevelt. Neither of them, nor indeed the US public in general, fully understood the rationale behind neutrality, despite the efforts of Robert Brennan (qv), the Irish minister in Washington. From the time he arrived in Dublin, and particularly from June 1940 to July 1941, when a German invasion of Britain was a real possibility, Gray worked in cooperation with British officials and ministers to persuade and intimidate the de Valera government into entering the war or, to use Roosevelt’s words, ‘to fish or cut bait’ (Coogan, 543). But his effectiveness was lessened because Éamon de Valera (qv) came to detest him and Joseph Walshe (qv), secretary of the Department of External Affairs, believed he ‘brandished the big stick too much’ (Fisk, 305). Gray was actively involved in summer 1940 in moves to offer Irish unity in return for Irish entry into the war. Unusually for a diplomat accredited to Dublin, he tried (unsuccessfully) to persuade Northern Ireland government ministers to accept such a deal.

His relationship with de Valera was further damaged when the taoiseach blamed Gray for the negative reaction that Frank Aiken (qv) encountered from Roosevelt, from Dean Acheson, assistant secretary of state, and from officials during his arms- and equipment-buying trip to the US in April 1941. Although Roosevelt relented and agreed to sell two ships and wheat through the American Red Cross, it was clear the US government was unwilling to support Éire so long as it denied the military use of its ports to Britain and appeared to be tolerating Axis espionage activity (in fact, all German agents landed in Ireland were captured). Following the near-failure of the Aiken visit, Gray learned that de Valera was furious, blaming him for misrepresenting Ireland to Washington, and that he would ask for Gray's recall were it not for his connection to Roosevelt.

Once the US entered the war in December 1941 and the German threat of invasion to Britain and Ireland began to recede, the 'testy old gentleman' (as Ervin Marlin of the US Office of Strategic Services described Gray; Fisk, 531) refused to acknowledge the Irish policy of benevolent neutrality towards the Allied side. Gray contributed to Roosevelt's 'absent treatment policy' of Éire and the 'American note' affair that represented the crisis point in US–Éire relations during the war. On 21 February 1944 Gray delivered a note to de Valera requesting the recall of German and Japanese representatives in Dublin. De Valera regarded the request as an ultimatum and rejected it. Irish neutrality remained intact, but there was to be one last round to the de Valera–Gray match on 30 April 1945, when the US minister requested the keys to the German legation in Dublin before the German minister, Eduard Hempel (qv), could destroy its archives. When de Valera declined, it provided Gray with further evidence of Irish refusal to cooperate with the Allies. But the extent of de Valera's personal and political dislike of the US minister emerged two days later, when the taoiseach visited Hempel to express his condolences on the death of Adolf Hitler. This provoked Allied outrage but de Valera explained his action as part of the courtesies of neutrality, remarking that Hempel 'was always friendly and inevitably correct – in marked contrast to Gray' (Coogan, 610).

Roosevelt had believed that Gray was doing 'exceedingly well' in Dublin. He accorded him a go-between role between the White House and Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. Despite Roosevelt's death in April 1945 and lobbying by Irish-American Democrats for his removal, Gray's personal connection with the Roosevelts allowed him to remain in office until June 1947. In his last two years in Ireland he supported the negotiation of the bilateral air agreement (for the sake of US security) and Irish requests to the Truman administration for food supplies, but he was furious at de Valera's efforts to 'pressure-group our government' (Gray memo, June 1947; Gray papers, box 9, file 'Ireland') on the anti-partition issue. After his return to the US he retired to Siesta Key, Sarasota, Florida, remaining interested in Irish politics. He died 12 April 1968.

Eduard Hempel

by John P. Duggan

Hempel, Eduard (1887–1972), German diplomat, was born 6 June 1887 in Pirna, Saxony, and baptised into the Zwinglian church, eldest among two sons and one daughter of Carl Constantin Hempel, district administrator, and Russian-born Olga Elvine Hempel (née Ponfick). In 1898 his father retired as district president with lung trouble to Davos, Switzerland. Eduard went to school in Bautzen and in Davos (Gymnasium Fridericianum). In 1906 he passed his *Abitur* in Wertheim/Baden. From 1906 to 1910 he studied law in Munich, Heidelberg, Berlin, and Leipzig. On 15 June 1910 he passed his first state examination. On 28 June 1910 he was awarded his doctorate in jurisprudence, and from 1 October 1910 to 30 September 1911 he did voluntary military service with the Saxon Mounted Guard Regiment. On 1 February 1912 he began work in the district president's office in Saxony.

His father died in 1911, and in 1913 his mother took him with his brother and sister for an extended tour of India, China, and Japan. When war broke out (August 1914) Eduard rejoined his regiment as a reserve lieutenant. He was wounded in Poland. In 1915 he was posted to military headquarters at Charleville in the French Ardennes, and in 1917 transferred to Rumania. After the war he passed his second state examination and for two years worked again in Saxony. In 1921 he was transferred to the Saxon legation in Berlin (such a legation existed there until 1933), where he served as legation secretary and counsellor. In July 1926 he completed his diplomatic consular examination and was incorporated into the foreign ministry.

On 24 May 1928 he married Eva, youngest of three children of Georg Ahlemann, a Prussian officer. A week later he was sent to Oslo as first secretary for four years. On 23 December 1929 he was promoted to counsellor of the legation, first class. In the early 1930s he was a western observer at the great show trials in Russia. From November 1932 to November 1937 he administered Foreign Office properties. In 1933 he was appointed privy legation councillor, a position he held until July 1937, when he was sent to Dublin on the advice of Foreign Minister von Neurath. Hitler saw him privately before he left and impressed him with his grasp of Anglo–Irish relations and his insight that the religious factor presented a difficulty in Irish–German relations, although he gave him no special instructions that we know of. No photographs of the meeting were allowed.

His rank for the new appointment was minister class I. He did not have ambassador status: he was an ‘envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary’. He was accompanied by his wife, Eva, and three children: Andreas (eldest child, born in Oslo), Constantin, and Liv (both born in Berlin). The other two children, Berthold (d. 1948) and Agnes, were born in Dublin. The Irish government preferred a non-National Socialist as minister. Hitler initially did not interfere with the foreign service; he later gave diplomats living abroad the option of either joining the Nazi party or leaving the service and ‘reeducation’. Hempel joined on 1

July 1938. He gave the Nazi salute at the Royal Dublin Horse Show in the presence of the president, Douglas Hyde (qv), the taoiseach, Éamon de Valera (qv), and the tánaiste, Seán T. O'Kelly (qv). The *Auslandsorganisation* kept an eye on German nationals abroad. Hempel's predecessor in Dublin, von Dehn Schmidt, was disgraced for kissing the papal nuncio's ring.

Hempel represented a government whose militant *Lebensraum* policy eventually involved war with Britain – Ireland's 'ancient enemy', but one with which it had close economic and blood ties. Irish neutrality came under constant diplomatic and other pressure from Britain, and later the USA. The inherent difficulties of this situation for Hempel, as official communicator between governments, were aggravated by German efforts to use Ireland against Britain through contacts with the IRA and the insertion of agents such as Herman Goertz (qv). In general Hempel's handling of the situation satisfied the British government, with the exception of his radio link with Berlin, which was used to send military information; the transmitter was impounded by the Irish authorities (21 December 1943) before it could jeopardise the allied invasion of Europe. De Valera, too, found him to be 'invariably correct', which may have influenced his decision to offer his condolences to Hempel after Hitler's death.

After the war, he claimed that his efforts to set up in business were frustrated by the British government. More realistically, his capabilities in that direction were limited. He fitted more into Gordon Craig's categories of 'the fixed person for the fixed job', one of 'the technicians of diplomacy' (Paul Seabury, *Wilhelmstrasse: a study of German diplomats under the Nazi regime* (1954), pp vii, ix). It was left to his wife to become the breadwinner. She set up a cake/confectionery business in Dún Laoghaire. De Valera, with Britain's Sir John Maffey (qv), facilitated Hempel's return to Germany in 1949. On 31 January 1950 he was reappointed to the foreign office, and on 15 March 1951 he took over responsibilities for its real estate and buildings at home and abroad. He was too old for representative status. He retired on 18 December 1951, and died of natural causes at the age of 85 on 12 November 1972 in Wildtal, Freiburg-im-Breisgau. He was survived by his wife and all their children except Berthold.

John Loader Maffey

by Niall Keogh and Bridget Hourican

Maffey, John Loader (1877–1969), 1st Baron Rugby, ‘UK representative to Éire’, was born 1 July 1877 in Rugby, Warwickshire, England, younger son of Thomas Maffey, commercial traveller, and Mary Penelope Maffey (née Loader). He was educated at Rugby School and was a scholar of Christ Church, Oxford, of which he was later an honorary Student. He entered the Indian civil service (1899), and transferred to the political department (1905). After serving with the Mohmand field force (1908), he was political agent, Khyber (1909–12); deputy commissioner, Peshawar (1914–15); deputy secretary in the foreign and political department of the government of India (1915–16); and private secretary to the viceroy, Lord Chelmsford (1916–20). He held these offices during the difficult war years and amid growing pressure for constitutional reform, and was judged tactful and knowledgeable, being particularly useful in smoothing relations between the viceroy and the visiting secretary of state for India, E. S. Montagu.

As chief commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province (1921–4), he was praised for his handling of the kidnapping of the 17-year-old Mollie Ellis by tribesmen. He secured her release without sending in troops or paying the high ransom. However, he resigned from this post in 1924 when his advice against military occupation was ignored. Two years later he was made governor-general of Sudan (1926–33), where he initiated a policy of devolution to the local assemblies, the Gezira. This was intended to offset the influence of the educated Sudanese, of whom he was wary since observing the rise of nationalism among the elite in India. However, his policy of shoring up the power of local sheikhs created problems for his successors. After leaving Sudan he was appointed permanent under-secretary of state for the colonies (1933–7). He retired at the age of 60 and became a director of Rio Tinto Co. and Imperial Airways. His awards included CIE (1916), CSI (1920), KCVO (1921), KCB (1934), and CGMG (1935).

After the outbreak of war in September 1939, Maffey was sent to Dublin to discuss the implications of neutrality and new arrangements for diplomatic relations between the two countries. De Valera (qv) insisted the visit be kept secret, so Maffey arrived incognito (using the name ‘Smith’) and the meeting took place in the Department of Agriculture. A week later (22 September) Maffey was officially appointed to Dublin. His title presented difficulties. They compromised on ‘United Kingdom representative to Éire’ (de Valera having replaced ‘in’ with ‘to’ at the last moment). Maffey occupied this role until 1949.

His position required all the adroitness, tact, and experience he had acquired in India and Sudan; he had to establish diplomatic relations with a country in an anomalous position, remaining sensitive to the Irish government’s wish to be treated as fully independent and the British government’s insistence that Ireland was the concern of the Dominions Office, not the Foreign Office. To this was added the stress of war, the question of neutrality, and

Maffey's unenviable position as conduit between two exceptionally difficult and stubborn premiers: de Valera and Churchill. Maffey's view was that 'this temperamental country needs quiet treatment and a patient, consistent policy' (quoted in Duggan, 227–8), but since 'temperamental' applied equally to Churchill, quiet treatment was not always possible: after the attack on Pearl Harbour Maffey had to wake de Valera at 1.30 a.m. to deliver Churchill's celebrated 'Now or never. A nation once again' cable.

Maffey shared Churchill's frustration over the treaty ports, but blamed the situation on the British negotiators in 1938 whom 'de Valera had bluffed. . . his success has been a tragedy for both countries' (quoted in Duggan, 168), and thought it unlikely the agreement could be reversed during war. This view was informed by his understanding of de Valera's character, which he judged narrow, intransigent, and potentially troublesome if pushed too far. (His explanation for the much debated condolence call to the German minister, Eduard Hempel (qv), after Hitler's death was that de Valera was reacting to recent American pressure to seize German legation files.) However, Maffey was also genuinely convinced by de Valera's argument that he could not give up the ports, even if he wanted to, because of the mood in the country; and also that Irish neutrality was friendly towards Britain, and that the government was in fact quietly helping the allied war effort. Concerned to mitigate London's resentment towards Ireland, Maffey repeatedly stressed these points in despatches, noting in 1939 that 'any tampering with the ports would raise a storm here' (quoted in Dwyer, *De Valera*, 231), and in 1940 commending Éire's cooperation 'in the way of intelligence reports, coded weather reports, prompt reports of submarine movements, free use of Lough Foyle and the air over Donegal shore and territorial waters' (Duggan, 135). He also noted that neutrality allowed de Valera a free hand to deal harshly with the IRA.

In the tense summer of 1940, when German attack through Ireland seemed a possibility, Maffey departed from his usual line of defending neutrality and suggested playing the Northern Ireland card. He was influenced by de Valera's probably disingenuous hints that if action were taken on partition, Ireland might change its policy. Maffey advised (3 June) a forceful, interventionist approach, promoting Irish unity, and giving an ultimatum to the Northern Ireland premier, Lord Craigavon (qv). This led to a qualified British government offer of unity three weeks later, which outraged Craigavon, and which de Valera rejected.

Maffey's eventual view of neutrality – that it was non-negotiable because of the will of the Irish people, and that it did not adversely affect the British war effort – was actually closer to de Valera's than to Churchill's, and he was concerned to contain the prime minister's more incendiary moves. When Churchill threatened in March 1944 to isolate Ireland through a travel ban, and perhaps economic sanctions, Maffey reassured de Valera that the 'twist' in Churchill's speech did not represent official British government policy. After Churchill's victory broadcast in which he took a swipe at de Valera, Maffey complained to the Dominions Office that the prime minister had lost Britain the moral high ground and given undue prominence to de Valera.

Maffey's attitude was in marked contrast to that of the American representative, David Gray (qv) who constantly harangued and threatened de Valera in trying to induce him to enter the war. As a result Maffey was well liked in Dublin (while unsuccessful efforts were made to remove Gray) and throughout the war he managed to arrange the release of allied air and naval personnel who landed in Ireland. In October 1943, after he had secured the release of eighteen airmen on non-operational flights and two on a combat mission, he wrote with quiet satisfaction to the Dominions Office 'that as a matter of interest to our high command, it might be pointed out to them that operations may now be conducted on the assumption that no risk of internment exists' (PRO, DO 130/32).

However, Maffey's conciliatory attitude could grate on Churchill. In 1940 Maffey asked for weapons to be supplied to the Irish to demonstrate that Britain respected Irish neutrality, and to prevent de Valera making political capital from British intransigence. A few were sent but when he asked for more, Churchill refused outright (though the dominions office had agreed), and noted that 'Maffey should not be encouraged to think his only task is to mollify de Valera and make everything, including our ruin, pass off pleasantly' (quoted in Dwyer, *De Valera*, 249).

Perhaps to mollify Churchill, Maffey included in his eloquent reports numerous harsh assessments of the taoiseach's character: 'a petty leader raking over old muck heaps . . . vain and ambitious' (ibid., 253), 'the physical and mental expression of the most narrow-minded and bigoted section of the country' (quoted in Dwyer, *Irish neutrality*, 69). Maffey certainly thought de Valera very narrow and 'firmly set in his tramlines' but, as far as can be judged, he came to respect him and found it 'difficult to think of this country carrying on at all if the reins fell from [his] hands' (Fisk, 303).

After the war, Maffey continued as UK representative and advised that 'things were not and could not be the same as before the war . . . neutrality has had a permanent effect on the relationship of Eire with the United Kingdom and the commonwealth' (quoted in Mansergh, 316). He felt that the advantage in the change of attitude was that instead of 'England's difficulty being Ireland's opportunity', England's difficulty was now none of Ireland's business. Regarding partition as an insoluble problem about which nothing could be done, he felt little should be said about it. He forecast a 1916-style coup in the north, led by hotheads loyal to the blood sacrifice tradition.

Maffey came to consider the 1936 external relations act as the best arrangement for ordering Anglo-Irish relations, but he was aware that repeal was likely – at de Valera's behest, he had looked into the possibility of the British government reviving the concept of the council of Ireland as part of the repeal process. However, he was, like most people, taken by surprise by the announcement by the new taoiseach, John A. Costello (qv), in September 1948. The following year Maffey retired, aged 71, and was replaced in March 1949 by Gilbert Laithwaite, who in 1950 became the first British ambassador to Ireland.

Raised to the peerage as Baron Rugby in 1947, Maffey died 20 April 1969 at his home, Chevington Lodge, 8 Flixton Road, Bungay, Suffolk. He was survived by his wife (m. 28 August 1907), Dorothy Gladys Huggins (1883/4–1973), and by two sons and a daughter. His elder son, Alan Loader Maffey, succeeded to the peerage.

Sheila Geraldine Mary Murphy

by Michael Kennedy

Murphy, Sheila Geraldine Mary (1898–1983), diplomat, was born 28 December 1898 at 18 Harcourt St., Dublin, elder daughter and fourth among five children of Dr. John Joseph Murphy, physician and surgeon (b. Carlow c.1841), and Louisa Murphy (née Dickson; b. Tyrone c.1863). She joined the Dáil Éireann civil service in 1921 as a compiler of statistics; she then joined the dáil publicity department, in which she served from February 1921 to January 1922, when she joined the secretariat of the provisional government. In February 1923 Murphy became private secretary to James McNeill (qv), Irish high commissioner in London (1922–8), a post she held until 1926, when she returned to Dublin as private secretary to the secretary of the Department of External Affairs, Joseph Walshe (qv). She held this post, in conjunction with that of archivist from 1936, for the next twenty years until 1946, when Walshe left his post as secretary to the department to become Ireland's first ambassador to the Holy See.

Some historians of Irish foreign policy have overlooked Sheila Murphy's importance in the development of Irish foreign policy. As private secretary to the secretary and as archivist, Murphy dealt with highly confidential documents and correspondence and worked closely with Joseph Walshe. Walshe only divulged information to his staff on a need-to-know basis; this even applied to his second-in-command, Seán Murphy (qv), so, as his private secretary and in charge of all secret archives and correspondence, Sheila Murphy had a comprehensive knowledge of, and the most open access to, the highest level of policymaking in the department. The 'Secretaries files' in the External Affairs collection at the National Archives in Dublin show that Sheila Murphy initialled and minuted with her characteristic 'SGM' the most sensitive material in the Department of External Affairs. Murphy was one of 'a very small, tightly knit, confidential group of officials' who advised Éamon de Valera (qv) on political matters (Cruise O'Brien, *Memoir*, 133).

It was not until after Walshe was appointed ambassador to the Vatican in 1946 that Sheila Murphy was given a 'diplomatic post'. With her twenty-four years' service she was one of the longest serving members of the department, along with Walshe, Frank Cremins (qv), and Seán Murphy. Sheila Murphy and Rosita Austin, the department's librarian and translator, were the only women in relatively senior ranks in External Affairs from 1922 to 1946, and Murphy the only woman 'career diplomat'. Three other women (Mary Tinney, Máire MacEntee, and Roisin O'Doherty) joined External Affairs as third secretaries in 1947.

Murphy was made a second secretary in the political and treaty relations section in 1946, being promoted to first secretary in 1948. This promotion was due to her length of service and her links with the pre-1922 administration. In an era of staff shortages in the department, Murphy's skills and institutional memory were valuable assets. She also served as first secretary

in Paris (1956–61) and on the first Irish delegation to a UN general assembly (1956). By 1961 she was in charge of the international organisations section of the department, which had responsibility for all international organisations except the UN. She was promoted to assistant secretary in 1962 and on her retirement (19 February 1964) was Ireland's highest ranking female diplomat.

Sheila Murphy died 15 January 1983, aged 84, at Oak House nursing home, Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin. Her funeral took place at the Church of the Sacred Heart, Donnybrook, Dublin, and she was buried in Deansgrange cemetery.

SECTION I:
Neutrality, Ireland
and International Relations

Introduction

Ireland, like many other European countries, declared itself neutral on the outbreak of the Second World War. This was strongly influenced by Éamon de Valera's belief that a small and weak state such as Ireland should avoid any involvement in wars between the major powers. It was also feared that if Ireland followed Britain's lead in a war with Germany, it would strengthen support for the IRA and even lead to a new civil war in Ireland. It might also make Ireland a target for the Axis and Allied powers. Irish neutrality was flexible; there was some limited co-operation with the British, though it was also feared that Britain might invade in response to any German landings.

The chances of either a British or German invasion of Ireland declined from mid-1941. From January 1942 to February 1944 the Allies often ignored Ireland, though US and British forces were based in Northern Ireland and limited co-operation with the Allies continued. The Irish policy of neutrality during the 'Emergency' had support at home but was deeply unpopular with both the British and Americans and remains controversial to this day.

The following documents show the thinking behind Irish neutrality, and also illustrates some of the practical challenges faced by the Irish government as it tried to avoid the devastating consequences of being dragged into the war.

DOCUMENT 1: NAI DT S 114455 A1 (following 2 pages)

- Memorandum to members of the government
- Dublin, September 1939

ROINN AN TAOISIGH
(Department of the Taoiseach)

Sladh Meán Thomhair, 1939.

To..... Rúnai,
Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha. ✓
" Cosanta.
Rúnai Príobháideach,
Aire Cóimhriartha Cosantais. ✓

I am directed by the Taoiseach to inform you that he proposes when the Dail meets on Wednesday to deal in a comprehensive survey with the special problems of this country arising out of the present situation with special reference to such matters as neutrality, finance, essential commodities, &c., military preparedness, unemployment, &c., and to indicate the steps which have been taken or which are contemplated by the Government to deal with the problems which have arisen.

For this purpose he wishes to be supplied at a very early date with a statement from your Department covering the various matters with which it is or will be dealing and in particular the following -

1. Problems that arise in preserving our neutrality as a relatively small country while powerful neighbouring States are at war.
2. The necessity for being prepared to deal with any demands from belligerents on any side, the acceptance of which would involve infringement of our neutrality.
3. Illustrations by reference to problems presented to neutral countries (a) in the war 1914-1918 and (b) in the present war.
4. The necessity for avoiding any action which by giving assistance to belligerents on either side in their war-like operations could reasonably be interpreted as a

breach/

To each member of the Government.

ROINN AN TAOISIGH
(Department of the Taoiseach)

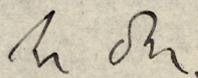
To.....

2.

breach of neutrality.

5. The necessity for being prepared as far as practicable against the danger, however remote, of attack from any quarter.
6. The censorship of communications and Press censorship with reference to 4 above.
7. Light restrictions with reference to 4 and 5 above.
8. The necessity for certain minimum military preparations within our resources.

I am also to request that you will be good enough to enumerate in detail the special emergency measures which it has been found necessary to take in your Department by way of (a) Government orders and (b) ministerial and subsidiary orders, and to indicate in each case the reasons which have rendered such measures necessary.



Rúnaí.

ECH

DOCUMENT 2: NAI DFA LEGAL ADVISER'S PAPERS

- Memorandum from Michael Rynne to Joseph P. Walshe (Dublin)
- (Copy) (Most Secret)
- Dublin, 16 September 1939

The maintenance of Neutrality

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the maintenance of our neutrality is going to involve us, practically every day, in difficult decisions of policy... But, if we want to stay out of war, we must not tie ourselves to the strict law, and yet we cannot embark with safety on a policy of applying the law to one belligerent and waiving it in favour of another.

2. What are the essential facts of our position?

Although the question-mark is only too evident, one may hazard the following reply:-

i) The Germans want us neutral. They know that, if we were not so, we would be on England's side at this early stage of the war. Towards the end of the war, after a German victory was practically certain, Germany might prefer to have us on her side. The essential is that, at present, Germany prefers us neutral, because

a) we represent at least one State of the Commonwealth which does not believe in the righteousness of Britain, of which British propaganda is trying to convince the world;

b) our neutrality may inconvenience Britain's blockade policy;

c) our neutrality, preventing the stampeding of the population into the British block, may be hoped to serve as a slight distraction to a belligerent Britain.

Of these three reasons, I think that 'reason a)' is self-sufficient. The moral effect of our declared neutrality is worth so much to Germany that she will not want to disturb our status quo.

ii) The British are resigned to our neutrality on certain terms. They know that, if we were not neutral to a fairly considerable extent,

a) encouragement would be given to the pro-German element here which might eventually carry the day. To prevent such a possibility, Britain would have to 'lend' us troops that she could ill afford. How much better to let the country be held 'benevolently neutral' by an Irish Government plus a small Irish Army and Police. Should those means fail, the matter can always be reconsidered;

b) a neutral island (whose neutrality has been promised respect by Germany) just next door has its advantages for Britain as an evacuation area, base hospital and centre of espionage, or, perhaps, counter-espionage;

c) if we went 'loyal' to all appearances, we might be expected to insist on our pound of flesh in Ulster at a very awkward time. That might mean 1914 and 1916 all over again. 'The Irish cannot be trusted' - 'The Irish will always have a grievance'.

3. To conclude, given that the above premises are all fairly well-founded, we may take the view that our neutrality suits both belligerents at the moment. The Germans are so pleased that they have promised to recognise the status we have assumed, but the British are holding back for terms. In parenthesis, it may be remarked that neither belligerent is in the least likely to respect our 'neutral rights' in practice - but there we will be no worse off than any other small neutral country...

DOCUMENT 3: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES P3

- Memorandum from Joseph P. Walshe to Éamon de Valera (Dublin)
- (Copy)
- Dublin, 17 June 1940

The German Minister [Hempel] called to see me today at 11 o'clock by appointment to make the following verbal communication.

1. The exclusive object of Germany's fight is Great Britain.
2. In pursuing this object there may be a possibility of her touching Irish interests.
3. Germany expects a real understanding of that position on the part of Ireland but without expecting Ireland to injure her neutrality.
4. The outcome of the struggle will be of definite importance for the definite fulfilment of Irish national aims.

In communicating the foregoing the German Minister said that he had of course kept his Government informed of the developments of events in Ireland, particularly since the Held* affair. He could not help noticing a certain deterioration in our neutrality attitude. The speeches made by Messrs. Dillon,** Mulcahy*** and O'Higgins*** pointed especially to Germany as the probable invader. He had noted Mr. Dillon's remark about some special knowledge which he said he possessed to the effect that Germany was to be the invader. The Minister said he distinguished between the Taoiseach's remarks about Holland and Belgium which were based on the general principle that the territory of small nations must not be violated, and the definitely anti-German statements of the deputies mentioned.

The German Minister was very friendly. He said he understood perfectly the difficulties of our position. I explained to him that the measures taken by you were

essential for establishment of the unity of the nation. You were desirous above all things to protect our people from the disastrous effects of the war being fought out in Ireland. You earnestly hoped that neither belligerent would violate our territory. Dr. Hempel said he felt sure such was not Germany's intention, but he could not ask his Government - as I had suggested - to make a statement saying they would not make use of Irish territory in their attack on England. That would be tantamount to a partial revealing of their plans to the enemy.

*Held' affair or case: This was a raid on the house of Stephen Carroll Held in Dublin on 23 May 1940, in which Gardaí found evidence of IRA links with Germany.

**James Dillon (1902-86), TD and deputy leader of Fine Gael until 1942, when he left the party over his calls for Ireland to support the allies. He rejoined and later became leader of Fine Gael from 1959 to 1965.

***Richard Mulcahy (1886-1971), Fine Gael TD. He had been chief of staff of the IRA during the War of Independence and commander in chief of the National Army during the Civil War, and became Fine Gael leader in 1944

****Thomas F. O'Higgins (1890-1953), Fine Gael TD.

DOCUMENT 4: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A2

- Memorandum by Joseph P. Walshe to Éamon de Valera (Dublin)
- (Copy)
- Dublin, 11 July 1940

1. Neutrality was not entered upon for the purpose of being used as a bargaining factor. It represented, and does represent, the fundamental attitude of the entire people. It is just as much a part of the national position as the desire to remain Irish, and we can no more abandon it than we can renounce everything that constitutes our national distinctiveness. If either party invades us, we are then going to fight to defend our integral national life against an enemy who wishes to destroy its essential character in time of war. In defending our neutrality against an invader by force of arms, we are not giving it up quite the contrary.

Clearly, Belgium, Holland, Norway and Denmark had the same conception of neutrality. They had to run the risk of avoiding military alliances with neighbouring Great Powers as an attempt to safeguard their ultimate national existence. An alliance with either Great Power, in their view, would only have brought earlier disaster upon them. Neutrality kept three of the small States concerned out of the last war. The fact that Germany regarded their territories as essential to her for waging the war against England and France does not necessarily mean that they are to be incorporated ultimately into the German State. Their neutrality at least has given them a right to the sympathy and good will of all other peoples in their eventual effort to regain their independence. A military alliance would not only have lost them that sympathy, but would have caused the world to say that they deserved the fate of the Power with which they had cast their lot.

2. Notwithstanding the hostile attitude of a section of the American Press which supports England so long, and just so long, as they think her financial power has a chance of continuing, the vast body of the American people whose good will we retain while we remain neutral can be a powerful—even a determining—factor in the restoration of our independence should we lose it during the war as a result of defending our neutrality.

If, on the other hand, we ally ourselves with England, that good will will disappear and we shall be classed once more as part of England deserving whatever fate may befall her in defeat. Whatever the ups and downs of world fortunes may be, the eventual good will of America is essential to Germany if her European order is to be a success. Our sheet anchor is in the common people of the United States. The hopes and fears of Germany's future are linked up with her future relations with America, and that is our hope, whether of avoiding a German invasion altogether or of eventually getting back our independence if invaded by Germany during the war.

3. The detailed practical reasons for not abandoning our neutrality are related to the foregoing general considerations. If England is victorious, our relations with her must return to normal. Even States at war with each other resume normal relations in due course. Our attitude towards England is more than benevolent. A few years of unjustifiable resentment might follow her victory but what is that to the deservedly complete loss of our independence which would follow a German victory if we make ourselves one with England now. It might even suit Germany to be able to treat Ireland as part of England and to subject us to perpetual occupation and absorption. We can at least do what we can to save our people from that fate, and what we can do is to refuse to give Germany the right of conquest by accepting our reabsorption in the United Kingdom, for that is the meaning of establishing a military unit between ourselves and Great Britain.

4. Let us beware also of a very vital factor in the British agitation for a military alliance. It is beyond belief that a great many of Britain's public men do not recognise the grave danger of defeat in which she now stands. Many of them must be thinking of possible peace terms. If Ireland becomes a unit with Great Britain, it is entirely probable that the two countries would be treated as such by Germany, and the losses, financial, economic, etc., would be spread over both territories. Ireland would not be given separate privileges. Instead of playing our natural role as a separate State with an important position as the outpost of Europe towards America, and being treated with favour by the dominant State of Europe naturally desirous of keeping us strong in population and prosperity vis-à-vis England, we should be turned into a barren German fortress. It is natural that England should not cease—even in her present desperate straits to adhere to the policy of having a weak country on her western

flank. Some day she might hope to take back the fortress, but she could never again defeat an Ireland with a strong and prosperous population. A strong Ireland would be a gain to the European continent. To all true Britishers it would constitute a weakening of Britain. That has been an elementary fact of British policy for centuries, and it was last formulated in Churchill's book on the Great War.*

5. To abandon our neutrality is therefore to accept Britain's conception of our place in the world. It would be a clear indication that, at the very crisis of our national life, we had not yet grasped the elementary truths of world politics, and we should deserve the consequences of our fatal ignorance.

6. England is already conquered. That is also an elementary fact for everyone who has not allowed himself to be overcome by Britain's belief in her permanent invincibility. The moment Germany and Russia (even without Italy and Japan) proposed to act together against England, her fate was sealed. To the sane looker-on, Chamberlain's announcement of England's declaration of war on Germany in his radio talk on 3rd September, 1939, sounded the death knell of the British Empire. She went into the war on a broken diplomatic front and no fleet, no financial power, could save her from a combination stretching from France to the Pacific. Now, she has suffered the greatest defeat in her military history in the Battle of Flanders. Driven out of Norway, Belgium, Holland and France, she is a relatively small, densely populated, industrial island beleaguered by an air force which is at least five times as strong in numbers as hers. America's delivery of planes does not exceed 500 a month, and, with increasing tension in the Far East and America's ingrained fear of Japan, this number is likely to decrease. The argument that American aid to England is the best way to beat Germany who is only a potential enemy will have little or no force with the American people when Japan begins to take over the white man's possessions in East Asia—an event that will in all probability coincide with the later phases of Germany's attack on Britain...

7. To conclude, the possibility of a German invasion which does exist gives no excuse for abandoning our neutrality. As I have suggested, it makes the maintenance of that policy all the more essential. A neutral State has a better chance of resurrection in the final settlement, and, in our particular position, departure from neutrality would be attended by many other evils, as already

explained. But we should not take a German invasion as a certainty. Militarily, it is a hazardous venture. It would mean establishing relatively small forces isolated from their base by a distance of 300 miles. It would mean incurring the risk of a major defeat and the loss of transports at sea. Germany's lightning progress is being helped by the prestige already won, and she cannot want to run the risk of a severe blow to it in the course of what could only be a subsidiary operation. The mere landing of troops from planes could not be expected to effect a permanent hold without advancing troops in the rear (which happened in all the attacks on the small Continental Powers). Our Army, at least with the help of the British Army, could quickly bring such attempts to nought. Moreover, Germany does not want to alienate the entire public opinion of America. She knows that the Irish, Germans and Italians form a very powerful group there, with Irish influence paramount. She knows how grievous a moral loss she would suffer if she attacked Ireland, which is not—as were the other States attacked—in the way of her advance to England. It would be an enormous underestimate of Hitler's ambitions to believe that he is not determined to win the good opinion of America for his real aim in the building of a new Europe under German leadership.

8. The arguments relating to our internal situation are too obvious to need formulation. Dissension, demoralisation, and the final moral and material defeat of the nation, is a brief summary of the consequences. Some priests who have no world Church outlook and overcome by hatred for the passing phenomenon of Nazism, say we are bound to join the fight against Germany. The Pope does not seem to share that view.

*Winston Churchill, *The World Crisis, 1911-1918* (London, 1923).

DOCUMENT 5: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES P3

- Memorandum by Joseph P. Walshe (Dublin)
- (Most Secret)
- Dublin, 18 July 1940

Dr. Hempel called to see me today, and remained for over two and a half hours. The main object of his visit was to emphasise Germany's intention not to violate our neutrality, and, above all, not to invade Ireland. He said that, at the time he last saw the Taoiseach, he had not been free to speak as clearly as he was now. He could now speak quite definitely and reaffirm in the strongest way the attitude just described. He felt, during his talk with the Taoiseach, that there was still in the Taoiseach's mind an element of suspicion with regard to Germany's intentions. He was most anxious at the time of the conversation to dissipate these suspicions.

I suggested to Dr. Hempel that it was natural that the Taoiseach should still be suspicious at the time of the conversation to which he referred, as he (Dr. Hempel) had said that, notwithstanding his conviction that there would be no attack on our neutrality, he could not say so openly and explicitly for strategic reasons. I was very glad that he had given us the new assurances on 6th July, and again today, which contained no reservations whatever. He must always remember that the Held case gave the very gravest occasion for suspecting Germany's intentions about this country.

Dr. Hempel's reaction to my mention of the Held case was what it always has been—that, whatever the truth may have been, it was an extremely unfortunate incident for the relations between the two countries. But, whatever about the past and whatever suspicions had been created, he was now able to affirm without reservations (on account of the definiteness of his last instructions) that our neutrality would continue to be respected by Germany so long as we did not tolerate any violation of it by the other belligerent. Incidentally, he would like to remind me that there was a great deal of anti-Irish propaganda in the British Press, and in that section of the Press in America which was controlled by Britain; whilst in Germany, neither on the radio nor in the Press, was there anything but a friendly attitude towards this country. It was unfortunate that a certain number of people who were

known to be friendly to Germany had been imprisoned in this country.

I replied to this last remark that the people he referred to were not in prison because they were friends of Germany, but because—even before the war began—they had been plotting to overthrow the existing State set up by the majority of the Irish people. It was, of course, natural that any group plotting to overthrow the State would be ready to seek the help of an external Power, and, in putting these men in prison, the Government was only carrying out its primary duty of defending the State which was the only bulwark between the people and chaos. Dr. Hempel would realise that there was no country in which the defence of the fabric of the State against internal enemies was so well understood as in Germany.

Dr. Hempel left expressing the hope that nothing would occur on the German or the Irish side in future which would interfere with our good relations, and he urged me to keep our Chargé d’Affaires* in Berlin as fully informed as possible of the Government’s firmness in the matter of neutrality.

*William Warnock. ‘Chargé d’Affaires’ is the official term for a diplomat left in charge of a diplomatic mission overseas in the absence of an ambassador, which is a more senior rank.

DOCUMENT 6: NAI DFA PARIS EMBASSY P48/2

- Memorandum from Joseph P. Walshe to Seán Murphy (Vichy)
- Dublin, 24 April 1944

MISREPRESENTATIONS

1. (a) That the German Legation in Dublin has a very large staff, variously estimated at 60, 80, 100 or even higher;
(b) that there are thousands of German (and Japanese) nationals in Ireland.

ACTUAL POSITION

The entire staff of the German Legation consists of five officials and three typists. There is no German military, naval or air attaché in Dublin.

The total number of Germans in the country, apart from Jewish refugees, is 165. Of these 25 are priests and five are nuns. The remaining 135 consist of 74 males and 61 females.

There are only 3 Japanese in Ireland, viz., the Consul, the Vice-Consul and the former's wife.

2. That the Axis Representatives in Ireland are able to send information to their Governments (about Allied military movements, etc.) through their official bags or couriers under diplomatic privilege.

ACTUAL POSITION

Neither the German nor the Japanese Representative has sent or received any diplomatic bags since the beginning of the war nor has any German or Japanese courier left or arrived in Ireland.

The Axis Representatives communicate with their Governments by telegram. All telegraph cables from Ireland pass direct to British territory.

3. That German submarines are refuelled on the Irish coast.

ACTUAL POSITION

No suggestion to this effect has ever been made to us by the British (or American) Authorities.

Speaking in the Dáil on the 7th November 1940, the Taoiseach said (Col. 388): 'It is a lie to say that German submarines or any other submarines are being supplied with fuel or provisions on our coasts. A most extensive system of coast observation has been established here since the war. I say it is a lie and I say further that it is known to be a falsehood by the British Government itself.'

In the British House of Lords on the 22nd October 1940, Lord Strabolgi referred to a statement made by Dr. James Little, M.P.,* that 'the Éire Government are winking at or permitting supplies of petrol to German submarines from Irish territory.' Lord Strabolgi said that this statement had received publicity in the English papers but he had seen no mention of the Irish Government's denials of the allegation. He said submarines do not use petrol, but heavy oil fuel, and that the idea that the quantities of heavy oil fuel that would be required could be conveyed to German submarines without attracting attention was grotesque.

Replying for the Government, Lord Snell said that he had no information as to 'why the Ministry of Information allowed the statements to be put into the Press', but that he was 'able to say, bearing in mind all that is involved, that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have no evidence to the effect that enemy submarines are being supplied from Éire territory.' When Lord Newton complained that this statement was not 'absolutely conclusive', Lord Snell said: 'I should say that His Majesty's Government are not in the habit of making general statements without having made some enquiry as to the facts.'

Despite these denials, the allegation has frequently been repeated. A statement on the 15th April 1944 by Sir Hugh O'Neill, a Six Counties M.P., that German submarines in recent weeks have sent boats ashore on the west coast of Ireland to meet German agents received prominent publicity in the British and American press.

4. (a) That Ireland is wholly dependent on British and Allied shipping and (b) that the lives of British and Allied seamen are endangered bringing supplies to Ireland.

ACTUAL POSITION

Apart from petroleum products, all our imports from overseas are carried on Irish ships. Irish ships do not sail in British or any other convoys. In reply to a Parliamentary Question in the British House of Commons on the 23rd June, 1943, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of War Transport (Mr. Noel Baker) said: 'So far as I am aware, no United Kingdom or Allied ship has been lost carrying a full cargo of goods either to or from Éire on an ocean voyage.'

The trade between Britain and Ireland is carried partly on Irish and partly on British vessels.

As regards petroleum products, see attached copy of Mr. Noel Baker 's reply to a question in the British House of Commons on the 4th August, 1943. We have no tanker in which to fetch our supply. One tanker would be sufficient to carry the very small quantity now available to us.

*Ulster Unionist Westminster MP for Down (1939-46).

Possible questions

1. What did Hempel say about the Irish attitude to neutrality? (doc 3)
2. Compare and contrast what Hempel said in the two documents in which he appears (doc 3, 5)
3. What can you tell about the thinking behind the policy of neutrality? (doc 2)
4. Why did Joseph Walshe write that neutrality was necessary? Choose any one of his arguments (doc 4)
5. What do the documents reveal about the practical challenges of keeping Ireland neutral? (doc 1, 6)
6. Why was neutrality important in terms of Ireland's relations with Britain, Germany, and the US? (doc 2, 4)
7. Explore the context of any one of the documents: why were the issues explored in them so important at the time in question?
8. Should Ireland have remained neutral? Discuss with reference to any of the documents.

SECTION 2:
Key personalities
at home and abroad

Introduction

Ireland was neutral during the war, and as such, international diplomacy was very important to wartime government policy. Preventing invasion (by either belligerent) and preserving Ireland's independence and neutrality were the main priorities. Crucial to Ireland's foreign policy at this time was the close working relationship between a small group of senior officials in the Department of External Affairs: Secretary of the Department, Joseph Walshe; Assistant Secretary, Frederick H. Boland; Legal Advisor, Michael Rynne and private secretary to Walshe and custodian of the Department's secret archives, Sheila Murphy. All worked under the direction of the Taoiseach and Minister for External Affairs, Éamon de Valera.

Irish diplomats abroad were required to report on events happening around them, but their primary duty was to Ireland's national interests and its wartime neutrality. The three most important capitals and diplomats in this regard were: London, John W. Dulanty; Washington, Robert Brennan and, Berlin, William Warnock. At times they were in direct contact with figures such as US President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

Diplomatic pressure would come from both the Allied and Axis sides of the conflict, and as a neutral state, Ireland did not expel any diplomat resident in Ireland at the time. At various times in the course of the war relations with these diplomats were challenging. The three most significant foreign diplomats in Dublin at the time were: John Maffey, British Representative to Éire, David Gray, United States Minister to Ireland and Eduard Hempel, German Minister to Ireland. Biographies of these, and of all the Irish figures mentioned above, can be found in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*.

DOCUMENT 1: UCDA P150/2548

- Letter from Éamon de Valera to Neville Chamberlain (London)
- (Copy)
- Dublin, 22 September 1939

My dear Prime Minister,

I received your letter of September 19th, and have had another talk with Sir John Maffey.

My colleagues and I, in the circumstances, are prepared to accept the 'Representative' you propose. For a long time we have felt that it would greatly make for speed and efficiency if we had here an Ambassador or Minister from Britain to be a counterpart of our High Commissioner in London. We were aware that there would be certain difficulties on your side in the making of such an appointment, and did not consequently press the matter, although we were convinced that that was the wise policy to follow.

I have explained to Sir John Maffey the difficulties which the acceptance of your proposal will involve for us. He will I am sure make clear to you how much, in my opinion, will depend on the character of the person chosen to inaugurate the service. I have already informed my colleagues that I believed that Sir John Maffey has the experience and understanding necessary to make it a success.

I remain,
my dear Prime Minister,
Yours sincerely,
[signed] Eamon de Valera

*I would like you to know how much I sympathise with you in your present anxieties.
E. de V.

*Postscript by de Valera.

DOCUMENT 2: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES P35

- Letter from Robert Brennan to Joseph P. Walshe (Dublin)
- (Confidential) (108/18/41)
- Washington, 10 April 1941

When Mr. Aiken and I called on President Roosevelt on the 7th April, Mr. Roosevelt opened by inquiring cordially about Mr. de Valera's health...Mr. Aiken proceeded to give an idea as to how matters stood in Ireland. He said that 99% of the people were in favour of neutrality, but that, if Ireland was attacked, she intended to defend herself, and for that reason he wanted to get certain equipment, a list of which he had handed into the State Department, and also a supply of wheat and other commodities. The President interrupted to say that he believed in being perfectly frank. He said 'you are reported as having said that the Irish had nothing to fear from a German victory'. Mr. Aiken said he had said nothing of the kind, and I backed him up in this, and further said that we had seen no report alleging any such statement.

The President went on to talk of the dire consequences that would come to Ireland in the event of a German victory. On the question of supplies the difficulty was in not knowing how they would be used. The Rumanians, for instance, had asked for military equipment, and, when asked who they would use the equipment against, they had no reply. In our case there was no definite and explicit statement that they would be used against Germany in case of attack. Mr. Aiken pointed out that Mr. de Valera had stated again and again, as far back as 1935 and since, that we would defend our territory against any belligerent who attacked us, and, furthermore, that he had given an explicit undertaking in public that he would not allow Ireland to be used as a base to attack England.* The President said that a great many people in America did not realise this. He said that, if we could convince the British that such were the case, and if then the British came to him and said they were satisfied on the point, the supplies would be forthcoming. Mr. Aiken pointed out that the British policy in regard to Ireland had been very stupid and that the President should try and save them from their own folly. He should use his own judgment and initiative in approaching this subject. Mr. Aiken pointed out that the Germans might think it unwise to attack

England directly, and in that event they might occupy Ireland so as to straddle the communications between Britain and America and cut off the last remaining route. The President at this stage asked how we would get the stuff over and Mr. Aiken replied that we were prepared to purchase ships if we were satisfied that the flag would be transferred. He said that the State Department would not give a decision on the flag question, and that this had been held up indefinitely. The President said 'that means you have not convinced the State Department that this material would not be used to attack England'. Mr. Aiken said that they had no intention of doing anything of the kind, and recalled again Mr. de Valera's explicit undertaking that Ireland will not be used as a base to attack England *and that we had announced it was no part of our policy to settle partition by force...* During the interview, General Watson had come in a couple of times to signify that the interview was at an end, but, as Mr. Aiken had not said all he wanted to say, he kept on. At this stage, however, the President showed that the interview was at an end, and a couple of other Secretaries had come in as well as a half a dozen negro waiters who prepared to serve the President's lunch.

Mr. Aiken, standing, asked the President whether we could say that he (the President) sympathised with Ireland's stand against aggression. The President replied 'against German aggression'. Mr. Aiken said 'or British aggression'. The President said 'Nonsense, you don't fear an attack from England. England is not going to attack you. It's a preposterous suggestion.' Mr. Aiken said why did the British refuse to give us a specific undertaking on this point when they were asked to. The President said 'It is absurd nonsense, ridiculous nonsense. Why, Churchill would never do anything of that kind. I wouldn't mind saying it to him myself.' Mr. Aiken said 'Will you do this, Mr. President'. He said 'I certainly will. I'll ask Churchill myself.' Mr. Aiken then said 'Would you give an instruction, Mr. President, that we get a definite yes or no on the matter of supplies within a few days'. He said 'I will do that.' We then withdrew, the interview having lasted from 12.30 to 1.45.

*See Dáil Debates, vol. 56, col. 2116, 29 May 1935.

**Major-General Edwin Watson (1883-1945), Aide-de-Camp to President Roosevelt.

DOCUMENT 3: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES P12/14/1

- Confidential report from John W. Dulanty to Joseph P. Walshe (Dublin)
- (No. 14) (Secret)
- London, 22 May 1941

When I asked this morning for an interview with Mr. Churchill he saw me straight away in the Cabinet Room of the House of Commons (temporary building). I told him that I came on the instructions of Mr. de Valera for the express purpose of acquainting him with the grave concern which the Irish Government felt at the revival of the idea of applying military conscription to Northern Ireland. I reminded him of the consideration which the British Government had given to this question in May 1939 and how they had decided to drop the clause in their Military Service Bill which extended conscription to Northern Ireland.

The Irish Government had no wish to impede the British. On the contrary their action had shewn consistently a full and generous measure of helpfulness. I detailed the various ways in which we had assisted them—noting in passing that their response to our efforts to meet them on food questions had not been encouraging. Nevertheless in other matters we had promptly given information for which they had asked, and, speaking for myself, I thought we had not only gone to the extreme limit of benevolent neutrality but had sometimes passed it.

In return for this we were presented with a problem of the gravest character because if they decided to impose conscription on Northern Ireland it would bring about a situation the end of which no one could foresee. It would surely be an outrage to seek to force the nationalists of the Six Counties to fight for a freedom they had never known. Impartial English investigators had stated in unequivocal terms their conclusion that the nationalist minority were denied the fundamental rights of citizenship. Owing to the highly partisan selectivity of supporters of the Six County Government to fill the ranks of the Home Guard, the B. Specials, and the A.R.P. organisation, the comparatively small number available as conscripts would be men of the nationalist minority and Mr. Churchill could be assured that most of these would go to prison rather than obey the order of a Parliament which in their view has no right over them.

Evidence of the feeling in Ireland could be seen in the statement issued by Cardinal MacRory* together with the Northern Bishops and also the statement of the Northern Labour party.

Speaking for myself only, I inquired whether if the recruitment of the Six Counties were being impeded by fear on the part of men of unemployment after the war that difficulty could not be met by giving them, as volunteers, the guarantee of reinstatement after the war which the British Government were giving to the conscript.

Mr. Churchill said that he would of course bear in mind the Irish Government's view of this question which was still under consideration.

We could not expect him to be impressed by the likelihood of a disturbance in the North of Ireland. There were disturbances of a graver character all over Europe. We must remember that Éire was not the only place where self-government obtained and its leaders were not the only men of strong will and purpose. If the democratic Government of Northern Ireland asked the British Government to impose conscription he did not see how they could refuse. Membership of the Home Guard and the other organisations would afford no ground for exemption. Further, nothing would be placed in the way of the members of the minority of the Six Counties wishing to cross the Border into Éire. 'If' he said, 'they want to run away we will put no obstacle in their path'. I retorted with some heat that we had not anywhere shewn a disposition to run away, least of all when in his own day our small forces had fought the might of the British.

Mr. Churchill instantly agreed that in the past we had never run away. He spoke vehemently about our fame all over the world for valour—we were 'one of the world's finest fighting races'—and how lamentable it was that we had put ourselves out of the world fight for freedom through the ignoble fear of being bombed. He had always shewn a warm friendship for Ireland. He was conscious of what Ireland had suffered in the past but it was heartbreaking to him to see us with our glorious record standing aside from this life and death fight for freedom. He had always been in favour of a united Ireland. He was still in favour of it. What chance was there now when their friends in the North of Ireland were fighting with them and we were standing aside? He was afraid we were perpetuating Partition.

It must be remembered that feeling in Britain was strongly against us and that particularly on the part of those English people who in the past had fought for Ireland. He had been restrained about our attitude. But he had only to broadcast for ten minutes and we would see the reaction in Britain.

'You should tell your Government that we are fighting for our lives, and owing to the imprudence of Mr. Chamberlain we are denied the use of the ports which were given to you'. I enquired whether 'given' was the correct expression, when in fact they were merely restoring to us what was our own. To this he made no answer but referred again to his support of our cause in the British Parliament, how he and others had taken a great risk in securing the passage of a Treaty only to find it later so unjustifiably repudiated.

In my conversation with Lord Cranborne I had referred to the effect of American opinion on so catastrophic a proposal as we were now discussing. Mr. Churchill referred to this and said they were fully informed about America. They knew the great American public were behind the American Government in supporting this fight the British were making against aggression. As his tone rather implied that we did not know America I remarked that Mr. de Valera knew and was well known in America and that we had of course our own sources of intelligence. 'I daresay Mr. de Valera has' Mr. Churchill answered 'and I have no doubt that he will do us as much harm as he can'. I pointed again to the help we had been giving, to Mr. de Valera's statement long before the war that we would never allow our territory to be used as a base of attack on Britain and to the increasing feeling of sympathy for the British in their difficulties which was growing amongst our people for the first time certainly in my own recollection of the last thirty years.

Mr. Churchill said that we were keeping out of the war because we thought the British would lose. They would not lose. It would be a long fight but they would win. 'You talk of your Government's wish that our relations should be those of good neighbours. How does that fit with the present position?' I reminded him how we had tried time and time again to buy munitions, particularly for air defence but the British had given us scant help. The war had shewn the tragedy of their own lack of arms he said but added 'If you came in we would share and share alike'.

'Do I understand you to say that if we proceed with conscription in Northern Ireland such assistance as you have been giving us will stop?' I said I was not authorised to say that and if Lord Cranborne had so reported it was due to a misunderstanding on his part. Mr. Churchill said 'Although I cannot give you arms when we and our allies are still desperately short of them I have decided to agree to your having certain aeroplanes, but that would need to be reconsidered if you should stop any help you are giving us'. I said that there was no change in our attitude. (Lord Cranborne told me later that in his note to Mr. Churchill setting out our representations he had said that he thought I gave 'a gentle hint'. He had since told Mr. Churchill that this was incorrect).

The members of the Cabinet were kept waiting over twenty minutes for their daily meeting until the finish of this interview which ended on the British Prime Minister 's saying he would inform his colleagues of the view of the Irish Government.

*Joseph MacRory (1861-1945), Catholic cardinal and archbishop of Armagh.

DOCUMENT 4: UCDA P150/2676

- Letter from Éamon de Valera to Robert Brennan (Washington)
- (Confidential) (Copy)
- Dublin, 21 May 1945

Dear Bob,

I am anticipating that your difficulties over there with the press, etc. will begin to lighten from now on. I am sure you are keeping in the closest touch with our friends and keeping them as fully informed as possible.

I have noted that my call on the German Minister on the announcement of Hitler's death was played up to the utmost. I expected this. Gray could not fail to try his usual upon it. I could have had a diplomatic illness but as you know I would scorn that sort of thing. I acted very deliberately in this matter. So long as we retained our diplomatic relations with Germany to have failed to call upon the German representative would have been an act of unpardonable discourtesy to the German nation and to Dr. Hempel himself. During the whole of the war Dr. Hempel's conduct was irreproachable. He was always friendly and invariably correct - in marked contrast with Gray. I certainly was not going to add to his humiliation in the hour of defeat. I had another reason. It would establish a bad precedent. It is of considerable importance that the formal acts of courtesy paid on such occasions as the death of the head of a State should not have attached to them any further special significance, such as connoting approval or disapproval of the policies of the State in question or of its head. It is important that it should never be inferred that these formal acts imply the passing of any judgment good or bad. I am anxious that you should know my mind on all this. I have carefully refrained from attempting to give any explanation in public. An explanation would have been interpreted as an excuse, and an excuse as a consciousness of having acted wrongly. I acted correctly and I feel certain wisely.

I would like to write to you on two or three other matters, e.g. Broadcasting and Partition. I have not the time however and I shall ask Mr. Leydon to convey my views orally instead.

Regards to Mrs. Brennan and the children. I hope you are all very well.

Possible questions

1. Why was the Irish government happy about the appointment of Sir John Maffey as British 'Representative' to Ireland? (doc 1)
2. What do you think de Valera's postscript refers to? (doc 1)
3. What did Roosevelt report de Valera as saying? (doc 2)
4. What type of arguments for and against neutrality did Aiken and Roosevelt put forward in their conversation? (doc 2)
5. What were the Irish government worried about in document three?
6. Why was Winston Churchill opposed to Irish neutrality? (doc 3)
7. What according to document four was 'played up to the utmost'?
8. What is de Valera's opinion of Dr Hempel? (doc 4)
9. Why according to document four did de Valera visit the German Embassy on the death of Hitler? (doc 4)



Éamon de Valera arriving at Spike Island, Cork, 11 July 1938, for the handover of one of the three 'Treaty Ports' retained by Britain as naval bases in Ireland after 1922. To his right can be seen Minister for Defence Frank Aiken. The return of the ports enabled Ireland's successful neutrality in the Second World War (UCD-OFM Partnership).

SECTION 3:
Anglo-Irish Relations

Introduction

Establishing a good working relationship with belligerent Britain, her closest neighbour, was a crucial objective for Ireland during the war. Until the appointment of Sir John Maffey as British ‘Representative’ in Dublin there had been no British diplomatic presence in Dublin. De Valera told the British soon after the outbreak of the war that he wished to be as friendly as he could ‘while maintaining the essentials of neutrality’. This idea is often referred to in history books as ‘benevolent neutrality’. At the time de Valera would express this in diplomatic language as always maintaining a ‘certain consideration’ for Britain, and stated that he would not let Ireland be used as a base from which to attack Britain.

Britain’s situation worsened in June 1940 after the evacuation of Dunkirk and the fall of France. It now looked to defend its western flank, and former Dominions Secretary Malcolm MacDonald arrived in Dublin in mid-June to try to convince de Valera that the Germans would invade Ireland next. He offered Irish unity in return for immediate Irish entry into the war. However, de Valera thought that Ireland would only suffer by entering the war and would have no influence after the war, especially if the Germans won. The offer was rejected.

Winston Churchill, who succeeded Neville Chamberlain as prime minister, never understood or accepted Ireland’s decision to remain neutral and questioned the very nature of Irish independence. After the US entered the war Churchill felt, incorrectly, that Ireland might now reconsider abandoning neutrality. This was the last time pressure was put on Ireland by Britain to join the war, but de Valera did not consider the offer seriously. In his VE Day speech Churchill publicly criticised Ireland’s neutrality from London. Shortly afterwards de Valera responded in a radio broadcast in which he justified Ireland’s neutral stance in the war.

Note: It is not clear if de Valera dictated documents Nos 2 and 3 below in 1941, or if they were dictated in the 1960s in connection with research for The Earl of Longford and Thomas P. O’Neill’s biography of de Valera which was published in 1970.

DOCUMENT 1: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES P13

- Memorandum from Joseph P. Walshe to Éamon de Valera (Dublin)
- (Copy No. 1)
- Dublin, 1 July 1940

Irish replies to a British proposal [offered on X June] on a United Ireland

The British proposals for a united Ireland can be summarised as follows:-

1) The British Government would give a solemn undertaking that the Union of Ireland would become an accomplished fact at an early date. There would be no turning back from that declaration.

2) A joint body of the Belfast and Dublin Governments would meet at once to work out the constitution and practical details of the Union of Ireland. The United Kingdom Government would give whatever assistance might be desired towards the work of this body. The purpose of the work would be to establish at as early a date as possible the whole machinery of government of the Union.

3) The two Parliaments might even get together at once for the purpose of legislating for the whole of Ireland in regard to matters of common concern. This combined legislation would not prejudice the form of the constitution of the Union.

4) The condition that Ireland should forthwith enter into the war on the side of the United Kingdom and her Allies is the sole hypothesis on which the foregoing proposals are made. The fact that our entry into the war, instead of taking place through a formal declaration of war (the only way which would be appropriate to our independent status), would be realised by our allowing British forces into our territory, does not affect the issue.

5) The Joint Council of Defence appears to be part of the hypothesis of our entry into the war.

Comments on the Foregoing...

There is not any guarantee that, having accepted the very vague and half-boiled proposal for a Union of Ireland, the Northern Government would be under any obligation to accept our view as to what that Union should be. The Northern Government would, of course, desire the assistance of the British Government on the Joint Committee, and we might take it for granted that the complete absence of any previous guarantee of the status of the Union as a whole would lead to the establishment of a new State which would be far less independent than Éire. In any case, if the British succeeded in getting us to join the war as mercenaries, whether at a joint meeting of the two Parliaments or prior to it, they would naturally postpone any further developments concerning the Union until the war was over. The truly appalling situation in which they now find themselves, fighting alone against the might of Germany, would be quite a sufficient excuse before the world for concentrating exclusively on the defence of these islands against Germany.

Mr. Chamberlain's penultimate paragraph makes it clear beyond doubt that the British would not proceed with the suggestion for the establishment of the Union of Ireland if there were any possibility of the Six County area being withdrawn from its present state of belligerency. There is a clear warning in Mr. Chamberlain's last paragraph not to play with the idea that we can have any kind of constitutional unity without having beforehand committed ourselves to entry into the war.

The German Minister's statement to you on Saturday morning that Germany had a specific interest in the disposal of the Six Counties as being part of the State with which she was at war is true in international law, and the Germans have a certain basis for holding the view that we cannot now withdraw the territory of the Six Counties from the belligerent area without consultation with the German Government. Furthermore, it is a tenable proposition that negotiations undertaken with the British for the absorption of the Six Counties into a united Ireland with the intention, on either the British or the Irish side, of bringing a united Ireland into the war, constitutes a breach of neutrality.

Unless we make the clearest possible statement declaring that the policy of the Irish Government is and will

remain that of strict neutrality, whether for the 26 Counties or for the whole of Ireland (should there be a united Ireland), until invaded by one or the other of the belligerents, the danger of an invasion by Germany will continue to exist. It is not sufficient to say that we want a Parliament for the whole of Ireland which will include amongst its rights that of going into the war. Such a statement only sows suspicion in the minds of the Germans and of our own people, and makes the latter believe that we might possibly accept entry into a war, which, so far, is none of our concern, as the price of our neutrality. Neutrality has given the people more faith in what the Government has achieved for the independence of this country than any other act of theirs. They regard it as a sign and symbol of our independence, and, if it goes, they will believe - and rightly - that our independence has gone with it.

DOCUMENT 2: NAUK DO 130/17

- Telegram from Winston Churchill to Éamon de Valera (Dublin)
- (No. 120) (Most Immediate)
- Received, DUBLIN 00.30 8 December 1941

Following from Prime Minister for Mr. de Valera. Personal, private and secret. Begins.

Now is your chance. Now or never. 'A Nation once again'.
Am very ready to meet you at any time. Ends.*

*On 9 December 1941 Lord Cranborne explained to Maffey that Churchill's phrase 'a nation once again' 'certainly contemplated no deal over partition' and he meant 'by coming into the war Ireland would regain her soul' (TNA DO 130/17, Cranborne to Maffey, 9 Dec. 1941).

DOCUMENT 3: UCDA P150/2632

- Memorandum by Éamon de Valera of a meeting with Sir John Maffey
- (Most Secret)
- Dublin, undated

On Sunday night, at 1.30 a.m. Mr. Walshe rang me up to say that Sir John Maffey had a message from Mr. Churchill which he was instructed to deliver to me personally at once. I arranged to see him in half an hour, and saw him at 2.05 a.m. He said that he had got a message from Mr. Churchill which he was asked to deliver. I gathered from his introductory remarks before handing me the paper that he was rather surprised at the message; that he regarded it as Churchillian. I understood that it was an invitation to go over to see him. Before seeing the paper I pointed out to him that I thought it would be unwise; that it would probably be misunderstood by our people and regarded to have a significance beyond anything which it would in reality have; that after the visit, even [though] there would be no agreements of any kind arrived at, it would be thought that some secret bargain had been made and that anything the Government might do here, even though it was something that would have to be done had the visit never taken place, it would be regarded as a direct outcome of the visit, that it would increase the Government's difficulties in every way.

On being handed the written text I concluded that it was Mr. Churchill's way of intimating now is the chance for taking action which would ultimately lead to the unification of the country. I indicated to Sir John Maffey that I did not see the thing in that light, I saw no opportunity at the moment of securing unity, that our people were determined on their attitude of neutrality, etc. I pointed out that it was not because I did not wish to meet Mr. Churchill, that I was not in favour of going. I was not in favour of it because I considered it unwise; that I didn't see any basis of agreement and that disagreement might leave conditions worse than before and that my visit in any case would have the results that I had already indicated.

Sir John Maffey urged that whilst he understood my position, that I should not turn the suggestion flatly down. I said that I would naturally consult my colleagues on the matter and would let him know.

DOCUMENT 4: UCDA P150/2632

- Memorandum by Éamon de Valera of a meeting with Sir John Maffey
- (Most Secret)
- Dublin, undated

At 3.45 p.m. I saw Sir John Maffey, and after sympathising with him on the loss of the ships 'Prince of Wales' and 'Repulse'* and a short chat about the war, I told him that I had discussed Mr. Churchill's message with the members of the Government, that they had agreed with me that it would be wiser not to go over to London at the present time. I then handed him the following message which was amended by my adding the words 'or your representative here'.

'From Mr. de Valera to Mr. Churchill, Personal Private. Thanks for your message. Perhaps a visit from Lord Cranborne would be the best way towards a fuller understanding of our position here. Details of the visit could be arranged through our High Commissioner or your representative here'.

After some talk on the effect of America's entry into the war he asked whether I should consider it over on my mind what would be the effect of American representations with regard to the danger of the German and Japanese representatives as a danger centre for possible messages of information about British and American forces leaking out from here. I said that we would have to give the same answer to the U.S. that I had to the British, said I ought to let my mind work on the possibility of some half way house—make an inventory so to speak of the German methods of communication which he surmised.

* HMS *Prince of Wales*, a King George V class battleship, and HMS *Repulse*, a Renown-class battlecruiser, were sunk off Malaya by a Japanese air attack on 10 December 1941.

DOCUMENT 5: NAI DFA 305/392

- Letter from Joseph P. Walshe to Frederick H. Boland (Dublin)
- (Most Secret)
- Holy See, 4 May 1950

My dear Secretary,

I really can add very little to your letter to the Department of the Taoiseach (17 April 1950).

When Maffey rang me up I demurred at the idea of ringing up Mr. de Valera, at such an unseemly hour, unless the message was of the very first order of importance. M. replied that he had been instructed to deliver it immediately, so there was no way out of 'phoning' Mr. de V. immediately. The latter suspected, as I did, that it was an ultimatum of some kind, and on his instructions, I telephoned the Chief of Staff to take all necessary precautions against an advance across the border. It was a night of great alarms in the country, as you will remember, and the orders were not, I think, countermanded when the message was delivered. I think Mr. de V. phoned me the gist of the message after he had seen M. and I think I told the C. of Staff what it was, in order to reassure him.

Our opinion was that Churchill had been imbibing heavily that night, after the news of Pearl Harbour had come over on the American Radio between 7.0 and 8.0 o'clock, and that his effusion flowed into the message.

Cranborne, whom I accompanied to Airport, went away disheartened, and I am quite certain that the burden of Mr. de V.'s reply was that any participation in the war was a matter exclusively for a United Ireland Parliament. I am afraid no note exists of the conversation since Mr. de V. never seemed to dictate interviews of a secret character. At any rate I never saw any note of the conversation.

I regret that my memory of the occasion is not clearer.

DOCUMENT 6: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES P12/1

- Letter from Joseph P. Walshe to Seán Murphy (Paris)
- (Secret)
- Dublin, 7 June 1945

Thanks very much for your report on your conversation with the Turkish Minister, which the Taoiseach has found very interesting.

Further reports of this character on the general European situation will be much appreciated.

2. Thanks very much for your report on the internal situation in France and on the reception of the re-broadcast of the Taoiseach's speech.

We are doing everything possible to have the power of our station increased at an early date, and, furthermore, to establish a higher-powered short-wave station. The latter may take the best part of eighteen months to bring into operation.

3. The Taoiseach's speech has had a profound effect on our own people. It was a well-timed moral tonic after five years of bitter anti-Irish propaganda in the British Press and in the House of Commons (through pre-arranged questions). The speech has been universally praised here and has had very wide repercussions in Britain and America. The people were beginning to feel that the British especially were being let get away with too much, and a feeling of deep resentment was caused by the tone and matter of Churchill's speech. They saw in it a revival of the old Tory spirit of violent intolerance and contempt with regard to everything that concerns the rights and interests of this country. Coming so soon after the insult to the National Flag in Trinity College,* it re-aroused in the people the old deep sense of British injustice and hypocrisy. One of its incidental consequences, according to reports from all over the country, has been to increase enormously the numbers of people attending Gaelic League classes.

*A reference to an incident on VE (Victory in Europe) Day, 7 May 1945, when students of Trinity College Dublin flew a union flag, and placed a tricolour below it on the flagpole, which is regarded as a mark of disrespect.

Possible Questions

1. What did the British Government offer Ireland in June 1940?
2. What was the condition on which the British proposals were made? (doc 1)
3. What were some of the problems the Irish Government had with the British offer? (doc 1)
4. What, according to document one, did the Irish public think of neutrality? (doc 1)
5. What do **you** think Churchill meant by his telegram of 8 December 1941? (doc 2)
6. Why would de Valera not go over to see Churchill? (doc 3)
7. In document four what does de Valera tell Sir John Maffey he discussed with members of the Government? (doc 4)
8. Why were the German and Japanese Representatives in Ireland considered dangerous, according to Maffey? (doc 4)
9. In 1950 when reflecting on the night Churchill's telegram arrived, what does Walshe mean by 'precautions against an advance across the border'? (doc 5)
10. What according to de Valera, was a matter 'exclusively for a United Ireland Parliament'? (doc 5)
11. What impression did the Irish people have of de Valera's speech in response to Churchill's and why? (doc 6) Try to locate online both Churchill's victory speech and de Valera's famous reply.

FOOD RATION CARD COUNTERFOIL. DF N^o 99611

Name..... Garda Station.....
Address..... Date of Issue.....
Initials of Garda who issued Ration Card.....

FOOD RATION CARD DF N^o 99611

Name of Holder.....
Address.....

INSTRUCTIONS.

- (1) Each of the coupons below is valid for one week's ration only.
- (2) To obtain the rations you must hand up this Ration Card to the shopkeeper, who will remove the correct coupon. On no account remove coupons yourself, as this will render them invalid.

Department of Industry and Commerce, Dublin.

John Lydon

Secretary.

NOTE.—This Food Ration Card may be used only by, or on behalf of, the person named above.

Initials of Issuing Officer..... Date of Issue.....

DF	W							
N ^o	99611	SIÚCRE		IM		MARGAIRÍN		PLÚR NÓ ARÁN
DF		SUGAR		BUTTER		MARGARINE		FLOUR OR
N ^o		99611		99611		99611		BREAD
DF								99611
N ^o								

A ration card, issued for essential commodities that were in short supply during the 'Emergency' (National Archives of Ireland).

SECTION 4:
Trade and socio-economic
conditions

Introduction

Ireland's economic relationship with Britain had been a major issue in the 1930s, with the 'Economic War' between the two countries coming to an end in 1938. Britain, at this time, remained Ireland's largest trading partner, and was the largest market for the agricultural exports that made up the bulk of goods exported from Ireland. Britain, in turn, was a major supplier of essential material, such as fuel, to the Irish market.

The outbreak of the Second World War presented major challenges in this regard. It was unclear how the trading relationship between Britain and Ireland would be managed. Britain might need to hold onto goods for its own use that might otherwise have been exported to Ireland. There was also the possibility that if Ireland continued to trade with Britain as it had done before the war, then this could be interpreted by Germany as Ireland giving support to Britain. If Ireland was seen to favour Germany's enemy in this way, Ireland would no longer be regarded as neutral and could therefore be in danger of attack.

As the war progressed, the British demanded the use of the old 'Treaty Ports' to aid their campaign against the Germans in the Battle of the Atlantic and to protect supply convoys travelling from the United States. While it was unrealistic and impractical for the British to re-occupy the ports by force, they put pressure on the Irish government to let them use the ports by deliberately withholding supplies that would otherwise have been traded with Ireland.

The documents below give a sense of how economic and social conditions in Ireland were likely to have been affected by the war taking place beyond Ireland's borders.

DOCUMENT 1: NAI DT S11846A

- Memorandum by John Leydon (Dublin)
- (Most Secret)
- Dublin, 19 March 1940

Trade with Great Britain

In the course of conferences and discussions which the secretaries of the Department of Supplies and the Department of Agriculture had with officers of various Ministries in London on 12th, 13th and 14th instant, it was evident that in considering the facilities which might be afforded to us in the matter of supplies of feeding stuffs, fertilisers, raw materials for industries, etc., the question of the extent to which such commodities would be utilised in the production of an exportable surplus of produce, etc., required in the United Kingdom was influencing the general policy in that connection.

2. The shipping position had now become so critical that, with a view to conserving space, the matter of giving preference to the importation of finished produce, such as beef, rather than feeding stuffs had to be considered and there was also the question of utilising in the United Kingdom itself the bulk of such feeding stuffs as it might be possible to import.

3. Certainly it would be exceedingly difficult for the British Government to grant facilities either as regards purchase, provision of foreign exchange or shipping which would result in the farmers of Éire being in a better position in regard to their raw materials generally than farmers in the United Kingdom. It is true that the British Government strongly desire a maximum production in these islands of the various essential food stuffs which are normally imported in large quantities but in the present emergency it is imperative that such production should be achieved mainly, if not wholly, by the use of home-grown foods.

4. There is the further important question of whether the prices obtainable in the United Kingdom for the various classes of our exportable produce would be at a level adequate to compensate our farmers for the cost of imported raw materials. Moreover, the British authorities

are strongly opposed to agreeing to any facilities for the importation to Éire of raw materials for conversion into produce which may not in fact be urgently required by them.

5. The whole position in this connection is very obscure and it is most important that it should be examined immediately both in relation to price levels and to the quantities of our various agricultural products which the United Kingdom would be prepared to take from this country.

6. As a case in point, the present position in regard to bacon exports may be instanced. The price is satisfactory. Our quota was fixed at 40,000 cwts. per month but we now find we could export 55,000 cwts. per month after providing for our own needs. The Ministry of Food have, however, stated that they cannot possibly accept more than quota already fixed as they have very heavy stocks of bacon on hands which notwithstanding the increase in the ration is not moving into consumption rapidly enough to maintain stocks at the desired level having regard to storage space and the keeping quality of the commodity.

7. Butter might also be mentioned. The existing stocks in the United Kingdom amount to about 60,000 tons or, approximately, 2 months' supply at present rate of rationing. Having regard to the extent to which the use of margarine has been popularised and the rationing regulations, it is not at all clear to what extent the United Kingdom Authorities will arrange for the importation of butter in future. Whilst it is probable that they will raise no difficulty about taking our relatively small exportable surplus, there is every likelihood that the price which they will be prepared to pay will not be satisfactory.

8. The position appears to be that in order to decide what lines our agricultural production can most profitably follow, an understanding with the British Government is essential both as regards the quantities of our various products they are prepared to take and the prices they are prepared to pay. Such an understanding entails also an understanding about the quantities of various feeding stuffs, fertilisers, etc. we are to import, and the shipping facilities to carry them. This indicates the necessity for a comprehensive agreement which, as it will involve major issues of policy, seems to require the intervention of Ministers.

DOCUMENT 2: NAI DFA 2006/39

- Confidential report from John W. Dulanty to Joseph P. Walshe (Dublin)
- (No. 45) (Secret) (Copy)
- London, 25 July 1940

On the long outstanding question of the proposed comprehensive agreement to govern the trading relations between ourselves and the British, I have repeatedly pressed for a decision with the senior officials concerned, Mr. Lloyd, Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Food; Mr. Jenkins, Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Shipping, and Sir William Brown, Permanent Secretary of the Board of Trade; Sir Quintin Hill, Financial Secretary, Ministry of Food; Sir Henry French, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Food; and Viscount Caldecote. The latter told me that he had written to Lord Woolton who had replied with assurances that there was no delay.

Getting no satisfaction I saw Lord Woolton at his Office on Saturday afternoon last. I represented to him the great dissatisfaction of my Government at the unjustifiable delay on the part of the British. It seemed open to the interpretation that the British knew we had no other market and they were therefore adopting tactics of dilatoriness, not to say discourtesy. If our supplies were of any importance to them this unexplained delay was the right way to dry up the sources of that supply. The drop in price was already operating against us in lambs and live pigs.

Lord Woolton laughed at my remark about discourtesy.

I told him there was soreness throughout our agricultural community and there was also an increasing deterioration in the feelings of our people towards Britain. There had been a sustained campaign in the British press against our neutrality, coinciding with an unfriendly attitude in a section of the American press and, in various broadcasts from London by American commentators, implying that the British should invade our shores. It was not to be wondered at if the doubt existed in Ireland that these simultaneous activities were merely fortuitous and in no way inspired. It would be far better to give a decision,

even if it were a refusal to meet our difficulties, than for the British to pursue this policy of delay.

Lord Woolton said he was a businessman and not a politician. He was responsible to Parliament and the British people for buying food supplies on a business basis. He was not in favour of our Ministers crossing over to London at the end of April last because he felt that he was not in a position to assist them. If the market proved advantageous to us he was willing and ready to pay, but if in other commodities as for example butter the market was against us, he was sorry that he could not alter his position as a buyer. If he did he would have the High Commissioners of New Zealand and Australia pressing immediately for the same favourable consideration he had shown the Irish. If, for political considerations, the War Cabinet thought fit to arrange special terms for the Irish, he had no objection. He said that he had been impressed by what I had said and he would go to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and suggest that since he (Lord Woolton) could not depart from his 'market' attitude the Chancellor should consider making a grant to maintain supplies from Éire.

I said that it would be impossible at any time, but more particularly now for the Irish Government to accept what really amounted to a direct subsidy.

I had understood from discussions with other Departments that an arrangement with regard to cattle—which contained no competitive element—was a feasible plan. Lord Woolton did not agree but said he would look further into it.

DOCUMENT 3: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES P20

- Telegram from the Department of External Affairs (in three parts via Geneva) to William Warnock (Berlin)
- (No. 71, No. 73, No. 74) (Personal) (Copy)
- Dublin, 30 August 1940

On 17th August German Minister presented a note regarding blockade. It suggested Government action to prevent Irish citizens and ships entering danger areas and said German Government was prepared to exempt from blockade ships flying Irish flag carrying essential supplies to us on condition of guarantee against transshipment. Hempel was authorised to negotiate special agreement on latter lines and strongly urged early reply.

As we have explained to Hempel, we appreciate regard for our interests implied in offer of special agreement, but even from the strictly practical point of view difficulties connected with insurance, the possibility of chartering neutral shipping prepared to fly Irish flag and other matters make immediate reply impossible. From the political point of view we must have regard to the conformity of any special agreement with our strict neutrality and to the possible use against us of German official statements about Holland and Belgium's attitude to British blockade such as those of 6th December, 29th February and 1st March. As regards transshipment, we do not allow it and there is no intention of changing this policy.

Government are much concerned at prospect of disturbance of Cross-Channel trade. In so far as legality of German measures is doubtful, we must reserve all our rights. Practically measures will hit us more than Britain because our exports to Britain are only 2 % of her imports but are 85% of our export trade and therefore of vital importance to us. Politically attacks on our trade will have bad repercussions internally and externally. These and other considerations make it likely that Germany would lose more than she would gain by attacks on Cross-Channel trade. We strongly urge therefore that our trade with Britain be exempt from blockade measures. The L.M.S. mail-boat is a case in point. It is of British registry but vast bulk of passengers are Irish. Use your knowledge of what

the effect would be on public opinion here to impress on German authorities that particularly as mail boat carries only passengers and mails, to attack it, even though it is a British ship, would be a major blunder. The Rosslare-Fishguard boat also British has already been machine gunned twice. Perhaps the most immediate question however is that of German attacks on Irish registered ships. We are anxious in interest of our neutrality and relations with Germany that German forces should be given orders not to make specific attacks on ships flying Irish flag, including those engaged in Cross-Channel trade. As we have explained to Hempel this course is strongly commended by following considerations.

One. Our exports are a small fraction of British imports and an even smaller fraction of British imports are carried in Irish ships. For the first seven months of this year the figures are 2 % and % respectively. We are giving details of these figures to Hempel. For Germany the material interest involved is infinitesimal.

Two. Political repercussions of frequent attacks on Irish ships would be deplorable. Though other losses would be suppressed attacks on Irish ships would be headlined in British and American newspapers as violations of our neutrality. Irish opinion in America and elsewhere abroad would be dismayed. Propaganda against our neutrality would be given a powerful weapon. The political and propagandist disadvantages from Germany's point of view would be out of proportion to any material result achieved.

Three. Bad prices and smaller purchases are likely to cause reduction of certain exports particularly store cattle in near future. Farmers will suffer. Absence of attacks on Irish ships would lessen risk of blockade being regarded by public opinion here as responsible for hardships due to other causes.

Four. We have striven to keep our export trade on normal peace-time lines. We do not allow transshipment or re-export or acceptance of abnormal war contracts. Irish ships are not armed and do not sail in convoy. This policy calls for some reciprocity on German side. It will be difficult to maintain if even Irish exports in Irish vessels are attacked.

We have only 10 vessels over 1,000 tons of which 8 are less than 1,500 tons and one of the remaining two is a passenger ship. Of the ten, four are mainly in Spanish

and other trade outside Irish Sea. We appreciate German Government cannot guarantee against mines and damage by raids on British ports. But we do expect that they will abstain from directly attacking Irish ships at sea by air or submarine. We would agree that there should be no disclosure of any kind about the exemption and that it should not be abused by increases in frequency of sailings, etc.

Please see Woermann at once and speak to him on lines of foregoing.

Possible questions

1. What type of goods were being traded between Britain and Ireland? (doc 1)
2. Why did Dulanty say there was 'soreness throughout our agricultural community'? (doc 2)
3. What kind of arguments did the British put forward for not giving Ireland a 'comprehensive agreement'? (doc 2)
4. How could trade between Britain and Ireland have affected Irish neutrality in the war? (doc 3)
5. How could the issues revealed in any of the documents have affected life in Ireland during the war?

Section 5:
The role of the military
during the Emergency

Introduction

As a neutral state, Ireland's Defence Forces were not involved in combat during the Second World War. The Irish military was relatively poorly equipped when compared to other armed forces, but Ireland faced no direct military threat for much of the conflict. It was made clear to the Irish government by both the British and the Germans that should one or the other violate Irish neutrality, then the other power would probably intervene as well. The Irish government felt that they would have to defend Irish territory in the event of an invasion by anyone. The Defence Forces were expanded, and throughout the war the government tried to obtain sufficient supplies of modern weapons to equip them with, though this often proved difficult.

In 1939-40 there were genuine fears that Ireland might be drawn into a potential German invasion of Britain. The Irish government feared the possibility of a German invasion as part of an attack on Britain, as well as the possibility of a British invasion to confront a German assault (though de Valera had publicly said that he would not permit Ireland to be used as a base from which to attack Britain). The Irish and British were willing to co-operate with one another to some degree on military matters, as the British knew that Ireland's security was important for its own defences.

The following documents reveal much about that co-operation, and about the Irish government's perspective on military matters in the early years of the war. By exploring the issues that the Irish and British militaries felt were important, they also give a sense of what an invasion of Ireland – by any other country – might have looked like in the 1940s.

DOCUMENT 1: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A3

- Minutes of meeting between representatives of the Government of Éire and representatives of the Dominions Office and Service Departments of the United Kingdom
- (Secret) (1st Meeting) (10/5/19) (Copy No. 2)
- London, 5.30 pm, 23 May 1940

THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT:-

United Kingdom

Sir Eric Machtig, Dominions Office
Mr. Stephenson, Dominions Office
Commander J. Creswell, Admiralty
Major G.D.G. Heyman, War Office
Squadron Leader R.E. de T. Vintras,
Air Ministry

Éire

Mr. Walshe
Colonel Archer

SECRETARIAT:-

Major A.T. Cornwall-Jones

MUTUAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN ÉIRE AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

SIR ERIC MACHTIG introduced MR. WALSHE and COLONEL ARCHER to the Service Representatives. He referred to the messages conveyed to the United Kingdom Government by Mr. de Valera. He understood the position to be as follows. Éire would fight if attacked by Germany and would call in the assistance of the United Kingdom the moment it became necessary. The political situation in Éire, however, was such that there could be no question of the Éire Government inviting in United Kingdom Troops before an actual German descent, and before fighting between the German and Éire forces had begun. If the United Kingdom forces arrived before such fighting had taken place, Mr. de Valera could not be responsible for the political consequences. If, on the other hand, fighting was in progress between Éire and German forces and the United Kingdom forces came in to help, Éire opinion would give whole-hearted support to British forces.

It was against this background that the meeting had to consider the problem of mutual co-operation.

MR. WALSHÉ agreed and said that as soon as it became apparent to the Irish people that an act of aggression had taken place against Ireland the whole attitude of the Irish people would change and they would gladly welcome support from British troops. Until the Irish people fully realised that the attack had come, however, the Irish Government could not call for British support.

The discussion first turned upon the question of the time at which the call for assistance should be given.

MAJOR HEYMAN pointed out that if assistance was to be effective it was essential that the request should be made at the moment the first German foot was placed upon Irish soil. If it was delayed and the Germans became established it would be all the more difficult to turn them out. He drew a parallel with the recent German invasion of Holland. The call for assistance in that case came too late. It was true that the Germans could not follow up a landing by seaborne troops in Éire with great mechanised columns. On the other hand, the landing might take the following form:-

- (i) A considerable number of parachute troops might be dropped to begin with. It was difficult to say how many might be expected at any particular point but the Germans were known to have some 4,000-5,000 trained parachutists and a great many more might have received training in the recent operations.
- (ii) These might be dropped in close proximity to the aerodrome or in suitable landing grounds for the purposes of capturing them.
- (iii) It must be assumed that if parachute troops were to be dropped they would be followed up by a large number of carrier-borne troops. The Germans had 30 4-engine aircraft (Ju. 90's and FW.200's) the carrying capacity of each of which was 40. They also had 500 Ju. 52's each capable of carrying 15. These aircraft would be capable of carrying out probably two return flights in three days although most of them would have to refuel on Irish soil.
- (iv) There might be a period of as much as a day or two between the landing of the parachute troops and the arrival of the troop carriers. Both would fly by night when interception by the fighter defence in the United Kingdom would be difficult.
- (v) Recent experience indicated that troop carriers were extremely vulnerable at moment of landing which would probably be at dawn. The ideal therefore was to attack

them as soon as they commenced to land. If there was any delay in calling for assistance a golden opportunity would be missed. Once established a force of this size would be extremely difficult to evict, and heavy bombing attacks which might cause civilian casualties would be necessary.

(vi) There was also a possibility that the enemy might land considerable numbers of men from submarines. It was possible that the Germans had as many as 100 submarines each capable of carrying 30 men.

COLONEL ARCHER appreciated that it was most desirable, if assistance was to be effective, that the call should be made at the earliest possible moment. He pointed out, however, that the political situation in Ireland was such that the Irish must take the first brunt of the attack. It would be quite impossible to call for assistance, even air assistance alone, until Irish public opinion had fully realised that the attack had taken place and that Irish troops were engaged. This realisation might be a matter only of hours, although it might, in the event, be a matter of a day or two. He asked whether it would be sufficient if the arrival of parachute troops were immediately made known and aircraft were detailed to stand by to await the call.

SQUADRON LEADER VINTRAS said that such warning would be better than nothing but it was most desirable that it should be accompanied with a definite request for assistance.

MR. WALSH asked whether, if a warning were received of the landing of parachute troops in Éire, fighter aircraft could not intercept the subsequent flights of troop carriers. As he understood it the doctrine of hot pursuit in Irish territorial waters was already established. It seemed unlikely that there would be any objection to fighters pursuing enemy aircraft and attacking them in Ireland.

SQUADRON LEADER VINTRAS pointed out that interception could not be guaranteed, particularly during the hours of darkness when the troop carriers would probably pass our fighter defences. German aircraft could however be attacked on arrival if their probable destinations, as revealed by preparatory parachute landings, were known. The opportunity would be lost if no call for assistance had been made.

There was general agreement that the establishment of efficient and rapid communication between the Service Staffs in Ireland and the Service Staffs in the United Kingdom was of vital importance. At present no such arrangements existed. The perfecting of a first-class system of communications was therefore one of the first requirements in mutual co-operation.

The meeting then turned to consider, seriatim, certain precautionary measures which Service Departments suggested should be taken by the Government of Éire.

(1) That all shipping in and approaching ports should be searched with a view particularly to locating troops, munitions, refugees and suspicious characters.

COMMANDER CRESWELL pointed out that a landing by air alone would probably not be a threat of a decisive nature. The Navy would take all possible steps to prevent any reinforcements by sea. In the light of recent experience of German methods in Norway, it was vital that the Government of Éire should take all possible steps to scrutinise shipping, both in and approaching Irish ports.

COLONEL ARCHER said that measures to this effect were receiving urgent consideration when he left Éire.

After a short discussion, MR. WALSHÉ agreed that measures would be taken to tighten up precautions in this respect immediately.

(2) That preparations should be made to prevent enemy landings at Aerodromes and Seaplane Bases, particularly Foynes, Baldonnell and Collinstown.

COLONEL ARCHER outlined the measures which were in the process of being taken by the Irish Government to achieve this object. At Rineanna, for instance, the whole aerodrome was to be put out of commission except for a few small runways required for coastal reconnaissance aircraft. The aerodrome was being divided into sectors and staked and wired. Obstacles were being placed on the open runways when they were not in use and could be quickly moved into position in an emergency. Sandbagged M.G. positions were being erected round the ground and two armoured cars would patrol.

Similar measures were being taken at Baldonnell except that half of this aerodrome would be left open. At Collinstown two-thirds of the aerodrome was being put out

of commission. In both cases piquets and machine gun posts were to be established and armoured cars would patrol. It was not proposed to erect obstacles in Phoenix Park which was used by the public. Similarly the Curragh was being left open. In this area, however, there was a considerable reserve and no difficulty was anticipated in dealing with any German attempt to land. Three other smaller aerodromes in the vicinity of Dublin were being put out of commission. In regard to the aerodrome at Oranmore (near Galway) it was proposed to render this unserviceable by cratering.

He asked whether, in the event of the Germans landing on Gormanston aerodrome [in Meath] the Navy would be able to render their position untenable by bombardment.

COMMANDER CRESWELL undertook to examine this question with the Naval Staff and provide Colonel Archer with a considered opinion. In discussion, there was general agreement that the above measures met the case. The following points, however, were made by the representatives of Service Departments:-

- (i) German landings might take place on any open space, e.g. roads, golf courses, racecourses, parks, etc.
- (ii) An immediate German object on landing would be to seize any stocks of oil in the vicinity. It was pointed out that arrangements might have been made with possible '5th Column' personnel in Éire, to have such stocks ready to hand on out of the way landing grounds. It was essential that arrangements should be made to destroy any stocks of oil in the vicinity of landing grounds, and that the closest investigation should be made with a view to detecting any concealed stocks.
- (iii) In view of the vast number of points at which German landings might take place, the only possible method of dealing with the problem seemed to be by holding mobile troops at suitable focal points, ready to move at very short notice. The experience gained in recent preparations was at Colonel Archer's disposal.

COLONEL ARCHER explained that Irish troops had been organised in mobile columns to this very end. The limited amount of artillery available had been allotted to these columns. He was prepared to explain the details of the plans if so desired. He also took note of the necessity for making preparations for destroying stocks of oil in the vicinity of landing grounds, and said he would be glad to have the results of the experience gained in recent preparations in the United Kingdom.

SQUADRON LEADER VINTRAS emphasized the necessity for dispersing aircraft on aerodromes. With regard to the question of placing landing grounds out of commission, he asked whether it might be possible to establish stocks of bombs and petrol at suitable landing grounds, for use by British Air Forces, if in the event, their assistance was required. Phoenix Park would probably not be suitable for this purpose.

COLONEL ARCHER asked Squadron Leader Vintras to let him know which particular aerodrome the Air Staff would like to use.

(3) That preparations should be made to prevent the enemy seizing ports, particularly Shannon, Cork, Galway, Swilly and Berehaven.

COLONEL ARCHER described the general plans for the defence of ports. In cases in which there was no Military forces at the port in question, defence was based upon mobile reserves.

COMMANDER CRESWELL asked whether there were any local anti-submarine defences at any of the ports. In particular if the British Navy were to be called in to assist the use of Berehaven and possibly Cork would be a necessity, and/or these local defences would be required.

COLONEL ARCHER said that the problem of the defence of ports was mainly a question of material and the availability of trained personnel.

COMMANDER CRESWELL undertook to examine the question of the provision of material in conjunction with the Naval Staff and inform Colonel Archer of the position.

(4) That all possible measures should be taken against '5th Column' activities including the supervision of the German Legation and German firms.

MAJOR HEYMAN stressed the vital importance of ensuring that the closest watch was kept upon all undesirable characters. While appreciating the impracticability of interning all such persons forthwith, he earnestly requested the Irish representatives to make all arrangements so that they could be interned at very short notice.

MR. WALSHE said that the Government of Éire were satisfied with the position as it now stood. If and when Éire were

to become belligerent, there would be no difficulty in taking all necessary measures.

(5) That a complete blackout should be organised forthwith throughout the whole of Éire.

MR. WALSHE undertook to give this matter immediate consideration.

MAJOR HEYMAN then asked whether the Government of Éire were prepared to discuss detailed plans. The point was that if we were to be really prepared to meet a German attack, it was essential that ways and means should be discussed. This could be done with the greatest of secrecy if so desired. If it was agreed that this should be done, the War Office would be ready to start discussion in about three days' time.

MR. WALSHE and COLONEL ARCHER agreed that this was the essence of the problem. There was no use in talking generalities, the object must be to obtain the closest possible mutual co-operation.

MAJOR HEYMAN asked whether the detailed planning should be carried out in London or in Dublin. There might be certain advantages in their taking place in Dublin.

MR. WALSHE undertook to consider this point.

IT WAS AGREED:-

a) That the representatives of the Government of Éire should give immediate consideration to the precautionary measures suggested by Service Departments, on the lines set out in the above record of discussion.

b) That the immediate and most urgent problem was the establishment when the threat arises, of efficient and rapid communications between the Service Staffs in Éire and the United Kingdom. To this end expert advisers should be invited to meet Mr. Walshe and Colonel Archer the next morning and advise on the necessary steps that should be taken.

c) That the representatives of the Government of Éire should be fully informed of the experience recently gained in respect of the following:-

(i) The preparation of plans for defence against airborne and seaborne invasion.

(ii) The methods adopted by the Germans in the employment of the '5th Column'.

(iii) The methods employed by the Germans in carrying out parachute and troop-carrier attack.

Advice on these subjects would be communicated to Mr. Walshe and Colonel Archer by Officers especially detailed by Service Departments.

d) That detailed planning to ensure the closest of mutual co-operation should be considered as soon as possible in the greatest secrecy. In this connection, Mr. Walshe undertook to inform the Dominions Office whether it would be convenient that these conversations should take place in Dublin.

e) To meet at 11.30 a.m. the next morning to consider further the problems in (b) and (c) above.

DOCUMENT 2: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A3

- Memorandum by Joseph P. Walshe on the response of British troops in
- Northern Ireland to a German invasion of Ireland
- Dublin, 30 August 1940

If Germany invaded Ireland what steps would the British troops in the Six Counties be likely to take?

1) Their Air Force would attack the Germans. Consequently, they would take aerodromes in the neighbourhood of Dublin, establish depots there, as well as service units. It is very likely that the men and materials for this purpose are now in Newry ready for immediate transfer to the Dublin area.

2) No doubt the British are most afraid of a German invasion through Donegal, and they must have made preparations to advance immediately to Lough Swilly from Derry. Donegal would be overrun at once by the British troops now stationed in Derry. Our troops in Donegal would, in those circumstances, be faced with the immediate problem of the attitude to be taken towards the British troops.

3) If the Germans invaded us first, and we had to request the aid of the British, we should have to inform them before they actually crossed into our territory of our plans for the demolition of bridges, etc. This would be done through Liaison Officers who would also be responsible in such circumstances for the requisitioning of billets for the invited troops. The Liaison Officers would also inform the invited troops of the medical arrangements, hospitalisation of wounded men, etc.

4) Supplies for the invited troops would come to Dublin by rail, whereas the troops themselves would come by road. The Liaison Officers would have to know all about rolling-stock facilities. We should have to allow the invited troops to make a general base in or near Dublin for all kinds of supplies of clothing, munitions, etc. Dublin, being a port, provides the obvious site for such a supply base.

DOCUMENT 3: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A3

- Notes of a discussion concerning British-Irish defence co-operation between Joseph P. Walshe, General Harrison, Major General Daniel McKenna, Colonel Liam Archer and Major M. H. Pryce (Secret)
- Dublin, 17 February 1941

General Harrison referred to the existence of road barriers in the vicinity of the Border and asked would these exist when their forces were coming to our assistance and could they easily be removed. The Chief of Staff replied to him by saying that if any prominent member of the British Government was prepared to make a public statement to the effect that there was no intention on the part of England to invade this country he would remove the barriers immediately. He was, however, in the position that owing to the propaganda carried on in England against this country and for the possession of the Ports, he was compelled to look two ways when, in fact, he should only be looking in one direction. The barriers could be removed and without much difficulty unless they were covered by fire. General Harrison indicated that he appreciated the difficulty that we were in in this connection and he wished to assure the Chief of Staff that as far as he knew, and as far as the General Officer Commanding (GOC) Northern Ireland knew, there was absolutely no intention of invading this country. He personally was acquainted with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and he could not of course ask him what was in his mind but he felt satisfied that the intention to invade this country, if it existed amongst the Service Chiefs, could not but be known to the GOC Northern Ireland, and as he had said he was satisfied that there was nothing in the mind of the latter indicating any such intention or plan. Colonel Archer after this said that General Harrison could rest assured that if and when they were coming to our assistance no barriers would exist on the essential roads. The Chief of Staff stressed the effect that propaganda in England must necessarily have upon the minds not only of our people but of our soldiers, and when the latter had to be employed on creating such barriers, naturally their outlook must be affected by it....He asked would it be possible for their Supply &

Transport Officer from N. Ireland to come down and meet Major Lillis so that they could get to know one another and perhaps discuss points of detail arising from the questionnaire. The Chief of Staff said we would consider this.

General Harrison referred to the reception areas for evacuees and he had noticed that Co. Meath was one of these areas. He was concerned as to whether these evacuees would block the roads which would be essential for their forces coming South. The Chief of Staff assured him that such would not be the case as evacuees would be diverted on to other roads. He then referred to the question of the distribution and destruction of petrol supplies and the Chief of Staff told him that in fact we had now no petrol to destroy owing to the action of the British authorities in closing down so suddenly upon our supplies. He had expected that we would have had no difficulty in having a stock of two million gallons of petrol for purely military use but that was not now the position. The fact that we were cut so short meant that it affected the availability of transport for the forces when hostilities started in as much as a large quantity of the transport we had earmarked was now out of commission and batteries, etc. would deteriorate for lack of use. General Harrison said that if that was the situation he would have to tell the people in N. Ireland that they need not come here expecting to get supplies of petrol. He thought at the same time that we had been rather lavish in the use of petrol from the early stages, but Mr. Walshe pointed out to him that many tankers had come in here on the invasion of Belgium and Holland and we had very large supplies at that time, and there seemed little reason why we should retain very large supplies and be faced with the very serious problem of attempting its destruction in the event of invasion. One method of the destruction of it was to allow it to be used. We had handed over seven tankers to the British authorities on the understanding that our normal requirements would be met but this had not been done and we had received no warning that our supplies would be so drastically cut. General Harrison said that of course they had suffered very heavy losses in tankers. Though it was not his affair, he would, however, do all he could when he got to London to see if the situation could be improved for us.

He spoke in general of the destruction done by the German air raids and said that whilst some areas in London were very seriously affected, other large areas remained

completely untouched. The raids had, of course, hit some of their factories and to a certain extent hampered their output but not in the same degree as their raids had hampered Germany's production.

He then referred to the rumour which was in existence in N. Ireland that the I.R.A. had a plan to hold up on the line of the Boyne any assistance coming to us from N. Ireland and seemed to be deeply concerned with the security of the Boyne Viaduct. The Chief of Staff assured him that he would take steps to ensure that that crossing would be quite safe.

The Chief of Staff then referred to the questionnaire and indicated that he was rather confused by the layout of their advanced base area in North Co. Dublin and of the suggestion of an area around Naas. He did not exactly know what was the strength of the Force that was coming to our assistance. We had firstly been told that the force would be a Division, later that it would be almost double that size, and still later that we could only count on one Division.

General Harrison said that owing to his absence he was not very well in touch with this problem. The strength of the force earmarked to come to our assistance was approximately a Division and a half, but hoped it would be more. Reinforcements in England were earmarked but they in N. Ireland felt that these reinforcements were too far away. They could not, however, get them moved over as naturally there was opposition to the taking away from England of more troops.

Mr. Pryce said that the idea of the area in North Co. Dublin was to enable them to get enough supplies South of Drogheda to last for the first fortnight. Thereafter all supplies would come to whatever base area was agreed on in the light of the situation. The people in N. Ireland were worried over the fact that they had only one line of railway by means of which to transport their supplies initially and they felt they must get supplies quickly over the bottleneck of the Drogheda Viaduct.

General Harrison said that after that stage they expected to use Dublin as an advanced sea base and to send all their supplies and reinforcements through the Port of Dublin. At the beginning, however, the G.O.C. N. Ireland

must be able to move by good roads, must get his supplies South of the Boyne, and must move his force to the area where it could be made most use of whenever wanted and must also ensure the safety of the aerodromes.

The Chief of Staff handed to General Harrison the attached notes having reference to the question of the advanced base and other matters referred to in the questionnaire.

M O S T S E C R E T

Help Given by Irish Government to the British
in relation to the Actual Waging of the War

1. A large volume of detailed information about roads, railways and military facilities of every kind in the Twenty-Six County area.
2. Broadcasting of information relating to German planes and submarines in or near our area.
3. Permission to use the air for their planes over certain specified area.
4. Abstention from protest in regard to very frequent over-flying of other parts of our territory.
5. A constant stream of intelligence information in reply to an almost daily series of questions.
6. Placing at their disposal the information gathered by an elaborate coast-watching service.
7. Routing of German and Italian official communications through Britain.
8. Suppression of wireless transmitters and capture and internment of real or potential spies.
9. Use of Shannon airports for West African Service, and presumably trans-Atlantic services, though both these services cannot fail to be used for largely military purposes.

... ..

10. Allowing the British Legation to have two secret wireless sets and a private line to London and Belfast.

11. Complying with requests of the British Naval and Military Attachés for information and visits to special districts to satisfy themselves that British interests were being safeguarded.

12. Obscuring our lighting system at the request of the British military authorities.

13. Allowing the setting up of apparatus which has resulted in the destruction and decreased efficiency of our broadcasting system in order to prevent it being used by the Germans as a guide to British objectives.

24th May, 1941.

150,000 men to British forces
 about 60,000 workers (men)
 Have collaborated
 we have 250,000 men in all
 in military forces

(British Legation)
 Given to German
 Openly by British
 Ministry of Inf'n)

i.e. 400,000 men in military defence of Ireland
 we could not do more if we were in
 the war,
 all our surplus production going to them.

DOCUMENT 5: MILITARY ARCHIVES DIVISIONAL
MANOUVRES MAP B CORK & LISMORE

22

N^o 30

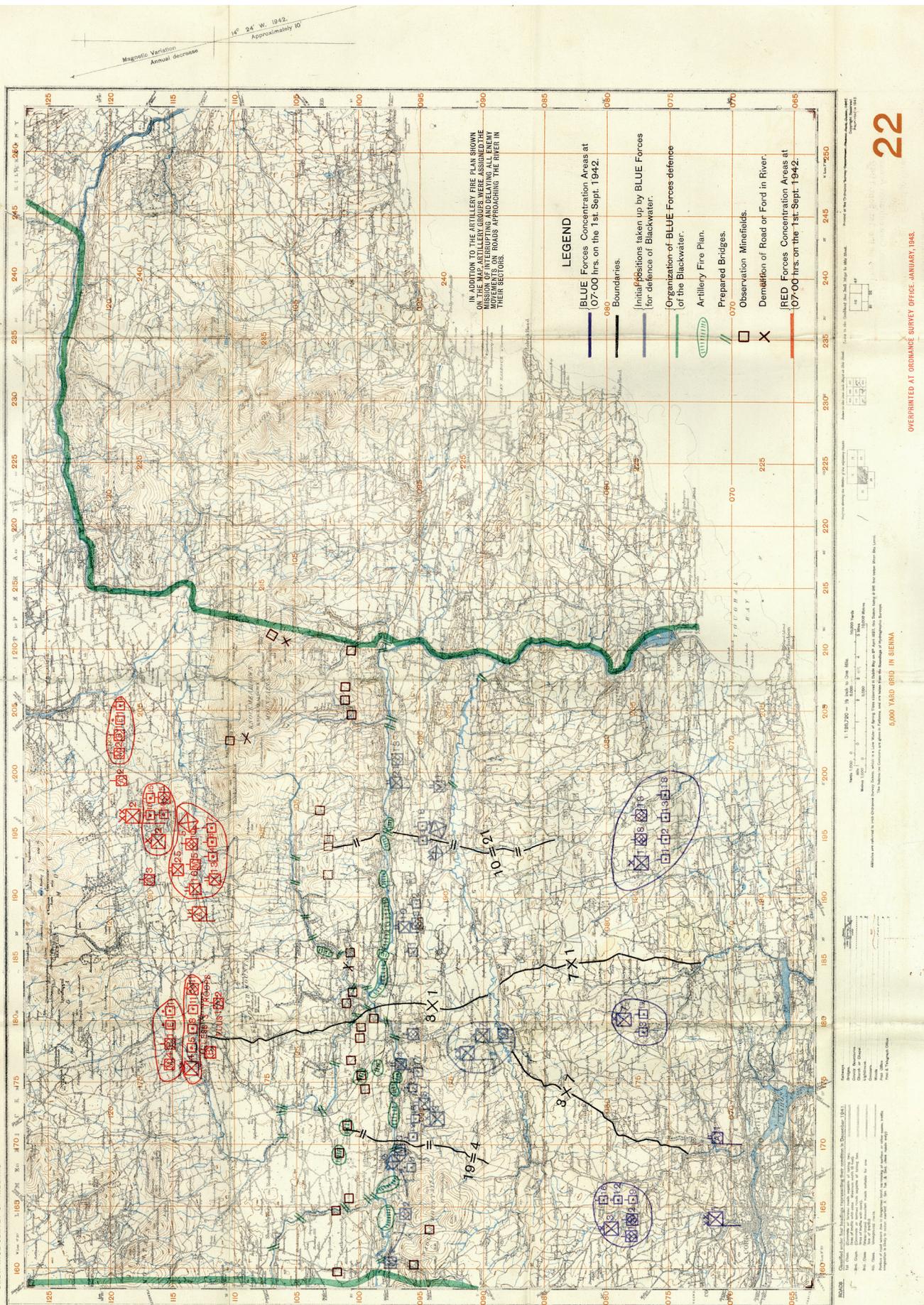
MODIFIED EDITION, 1942

CORK & LISMORE
MAP B.

FOR MILITARY USE ONLY
CONFIDENTIAL

1:126,720

ORDNANCE SURVEY OF IRELAND



22

* A map of military manoeuvres by the Defence Forces along the River Blackwater in Cork, 1942. The location was chosen because nearby Cork harbour was seen to be a likely location for a possible German invasion force to land.

Possible questions and group exercise

1. What do the documents reveal about the possible consequences of an invasion of Ireland? (doc 1, 4)
2. What kind of assistance was Ireland providing to the Allies? (doc 4)
3. What do the documents reveal about co-operation between Ireland and Britain during the war? Is this surprising?
4. What does the map tell you about what the Irish Defence Forces were preparing for, and how they would have resisted an invader?
5. As a group exercise, focus on the first document. Students should read through it from the perspective of any one of the individuals taking part, and should try and understand what they are saying, and what they are being told. Using maps, students should collectively attempt to piece together the various components of the plans to defend Ireland. What can this reveal about the challenges and opportunities that would present themselves to the Irish, the British and Germans in the event of an invasion of Ireland in 1940-41?



Members of the Defence Forces prepare to board the Dublin to Belfast train at Amiens Street (Connolly) station in Dublin, possibly to look for deserters or smugglers crossing the border (Military Archives).

SECTION 6:
War in Ireland
and Northern Ireland

Introduction

Northern Ireland was not neutral. As part of the UK, it took part in the war on the Allied side, and the war provided unionists with an opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty to the King and empire. Northern Ireland became increasingly important to the Allies after it became clear that the Irish 'Treaty ports' would not be made available for use by the British military. However, after the fall of France US ships began sailing past Northern Ireland via the western approaches to the UK as it was safer. Ports in Belfast, Larne and on the River Foyle became crucial in the Battle of the Atlantic.

There had been some bombings in Ireland during the war, most notably in the North Strand area of Dublin, though it was not clear if these actions were deliberate or accidental attacks by the Germans. Belfast, however, was deliberately attacked four times throughout April and May 1941 by the German Luftwaffe who targeted its military and manufacturing zones, which were producing shipping, aircraft and ammunition for the allied war effort. Outside London, more people were killed in the 'Belfast Blitz' (c.900) than in any other part of the UK at any one time. Northern Ireland's experience of war and war mobilisation impacted it in ways which wouldn't happen south of the border. In May 1941 Churchill floated the idea of extending conscription to Northern Ireland, only to quickly reverse his stance after protests from the Dublin government.

Wartime food production in Northern Ireland increased considerably, but a lot of this food (especially eggs and milk) was distributed throughout the rest of the UK. Despite this Northern Ireland suffered food shortages during the war and rationing was introduced.

From 1942 on, allied demands for use of southern ports ended as modern naval facilities were built on the Foyle, US forces were stationed there, and new airbases in Northern Ireland allowed long range aircraft to patrol far over the Atlantic. While the experience of the war differed on either side of the border, the impact of the war on Northern Ireland inevitably had repercussions in Ireland.

DOCUMENT 1: NAI DFA OTTAWA EMBASSY FILE 850

- Aide mémoire from John J. Hearne to Dr Oscar D. Skelton (Ottawa)
- (Copy)
- Ottawa, 22 December 1939

The Irish Government's neutrality policy has produced a feeling of contentment in the Country because it provides a clear proof to all shades of nationalist opinion that independence is an established fact. That contentment has reacted on our people in the United States and has had its measure of favourable influence on the issue of the repeal of the arms embargo. A departure from the policy of neutrality, of our own doing, would bring chaos at home, trouble with the United Kingdom, and unwelcome consequences in the United States. There is no body of opinion in the country in favour of going into the war. Those who occasionally speak behind the scenes in favour of such a course are not regarded as friends of Ireland and of continued good relations with Great Britain.

Experience has so far shown that, contrary to the view of some, neutrality can be maintained in practice.

There has been no question of the British Forces occupying the 'Treaty ports'. The occupation of those ports would be regarded as a violation of the sovereignty of the Irish State and any attempt to do so by force would be resisted. The respect shown by Great Britain for Ireland's right to be neutral and to maintain her neutrality in practice gives added moral strength to Great Britain's stand for Poland and Finland.

DOCUMENT 2: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A2

- Memorandum by Joseph P. Walshe of a meeting with Sir John Maffey
- (Secret)
- Dublin, 29 March 1941

Sir John Maffey called this morning at his suggestion. He told me that General Harrison had now become a permanent member of the Anti-aircraft Gun Research Committee and would no longer visit Ireland. No special substitute would be appointed.

The British Army in Northern Ireland was being reinforced by a further Division. Maffey presumed it was for the purpose of being able to give more effective aid should an invasion of this country take place. In any case, we should not imagine that the reinforcement was an indication of any intention to invade us.

The British Ambassador in America had recently informed the British Government that a responsible American had received a telegram from an American in France saying that he had been told by another American in France that the Germans would invade Ireland on the 29th March. Maffey did not attach any importance to the information.

The latest British air operational developments have made it clear that the lighting of our main towns in the vicinity of the coast were a navigational help to the Germans. The British authorities concerned would be grateful for a further reduction of lighting in these main towns. They referred especially to the amount of Neon lighting being used and to the fact that our trade and private lighting was still unrestricted.

DOCUMENT 3: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A2

- Memorandum from Joseph P. Walshe to Éamon de Valera (Dublin) concerning German air raids on Belfast
- (Secret)
- Dublin, 17 April 1941

The German Minister came to see me by appointment this morning.

He was clearly distressed by the news of the severe raid on Belfast and especially of the number of civilian casualties.*

I said to him that it was a pity that the German Government had departed from its policy of leaving the Six-County Area alone. I was afraid that the casualties were very heavy and that the bombing had been indiscriminate.

Dr. Hempel replied that he felt quite sure that his Government would not have ordered a raid on Belfast if it had not become absolutely essential for the prosecution of the war. Belfast has become a very important port, especially for the transshipment of foodstuffs, and to abstain any longer from bombing the port and the industrial area around it would have greatly handicapped the German blockade of Great Britain.

However, he would once more tell his Government how we felt about the matter, and he would ask them to confine the operations to military objectives as far as it was humanly possible. He believed that this was being done already, but it was inevitable that a certain number of civilian lives should be lost in the course of heavy bombing from the air.

* German aircraft bombed Belfast on the night of 15-16 April 1941.

DOCUMENT 4: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A2

- Extract from a memorandum by Joseph P. Walshe of a meeting with Sir John Maffey
- (Secret)
- Dublin, 21 April 1941

Sir John Maffey came to see me, at his request, at 11.30 this morning...

He went through Belfast the morning after the raid there on the night of 15th-16th April, and he said that it was more horrifying than London because of the number of small dwelling houses of poor people which were destroyed. He said that the Northern Government were extremely appreciative of the measures we had taken to help them, and he himself emphasised the extraordinary amount of good that was bound to come from such gestures.* He expressed himself as exceedingly gratified at the statement made by the Taoiseach at Castlebar on Saturday.**

* The Irish government sent fire fighters to Belfast in the aftermath of the German attack. However on 24 April 1951, Tim O'Driscoll, Assistant Secretary at the Department of External Affairs, minuted that 'Ambassador [Frederick] Boland's recollection of the incident is that the Taoiseach, on receiving word from Mr. Walshe of the request from Belfast, called a Conference in the early hours of the morning and after discussion the "go ahead" was given. Mr. Boland gave his personal opinion that the Taoiseach had even before the discussion given an "all clear" to the fire brigades.' (NAI DFA 243/431)

** Speaking after the bombing of Belfast de Valera told an audience in Castlebar that 'in the past, and probably at present' some members of the Northern Ireland government 'did not see eye to eye with us politically, but they are our people, their sorrow is our sorrow, and I want to say that any help we can give them will be given wholeheartedly': *Irish Times*, 21 Apr. 1941.

DOCUMENT 5: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES P43

- Clear telegram from the Department of External Affairs to the Irish Legations at Washington (No. 24) and the Holy See (No. 10) and to the High Commission in London (No. 11)
- Dublin, 27 January 1942

Following statement issued this evening. Begins.

'In reply to the Press, Mr. de Valera stated today that the Irish Government had not been consulted either by the British Government or the American Government with regard to the coming of the American troops to the six counties. Everyone knew, he said, that Ireland had twenty years ago been partitioned and the six counties cut off from the rest of the country by an Act of the British Parliament despite the expressed will of the Irish people.

When the United States was entering the last war, President Wilson declared that America meant to fight for democracy and for the right of peoples to national self-determination. The Irish people took him at his word, and in the General Elections of December, 1918, by an over-whelming vote (more than three for to one against) declared for National Independence and for the establishment of a Republic. This decision was reaffirmed after two years of conflict with Britain in the General Elections of 1921 when the Partition candidates returned were again less than one-fourth of the total representation.

Nevertheless, the British Government cut the nation in two and set up a separate Parliament for six of the thirty-two counties. These six counties formed no natural historic or geographic entity. The area was chosen solely with a view to securing a majority within it for the anti-national minority. In one-half of the area, including the city of Derry and the whole territory adjoining the boundary with the twenty-six counties, a majority of the inhabitants are against partition.

To partition the territory of an ancient nation is one of the cruellest wrongs that can be committed against a people. The partition of Ireland is in essence not different from the former partition of Poland, nor are the evils that flow from it less in kind than those Abraham

Lincoln foresaw from the projected partition of the United States, when he determined to prevent it even at the cost of fighting one of the bitterest civil wars in history. The people of Ireland have no feeling of hostility towards and no desire to be brought in any way into conflict with the United States. For reasons which I referred to a few weeks ago, the contrary is the truth, but it is our duty to make it clearly understood that, no matter what troops occupy the six counties, the Irish people's claim for the union of the whole of the national territory and for supreme jurisdiction over it will remain unabated. Four years ago, the British Government and Parliament recognised fully the sovereignty of the Irish nation over that part of the national territory included in the twenty-six counties, and the bond has been honourably kept in that regard. But the maintenance of the partition of Ireland is as indefensible as aggressions against small nations elsewhere which it is the avowed purpose of Great Britain and the United States in this war to bring to an end.' Ends.

Possible questions

1. Why did neutrality produce a feeling of contentment in the country? (doc 1)
2. What does John Hearne think would happen if the policy of neutrality ended? (doc 1)
3. What concerns did Hearne have about the Treaty ports and why? (doc 1)
4. Why was the British Army in Northern Ireland being reinforced in March 1942? (doc 2)
5. What are the concerns of the British authorities in the final paragraph? (doc 2)
6. Why did the German Minister visit the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs Joe Walshe on 17 April 1941? (doc 3)
7. Why according to Hempel did the Germans attack Belfast? (doc 3)
8. What were Sir John Maffey's impressions of Belfast after the blitz? (doc 4)
9. What measures were taken by the Dublin government to help Northern Ireland at this time? (doc 4)
10. What had the Irish government not been consulted about in January 1942? (doc 5)



A member of the Defence Forces using an Irish-made wireless radio set in 1943 (Military Archives).

SECTION 7:
Technology and
Communications

Introduction

The technology used for communications was vitally important to the conduct of the Second World War. This was far less advanced than modern communications, with radar, radio and telegraphic cables being the principal means of communication discussed in the documents reproduced below. These facilitated the flow of information into, and out of, Ireland during the war. Such information was vitally important for de Valera's government to determine how the war was progressing, and what issues might arise that could concern them.

On the other hand, the flow of information was closely monitored by the government, and the use of private radio sets was very tightly controlled. This was in keeping with the policy of neutrality, in case information from Ireland could be seen to benefit either the Allied or the Axis powers. For example, as the war went on the Irish government was increasingly concerned about how the German Legation in Dublin (the equivalent of the German embassy) was using its radio transmitter to communicate with Germany.

The following documents show how communications technology had a role to play in how the Irish government sought to navigate the upheavals of the war, including during the Battle of Britain in 1940 and the preparations for D-Day in 1944.

DOCUMENT 1: NAI DFA 205/55

- Extracts from a memorandum from Frank Gallagher to Éamon de Valera (Dublin)
- Dublin, 12 August 1940

Submitted to An Taoiseach Concerning the Establishment of a Regular High Speed Morse Wireless Receiving and Transmitting Station

General

Apart from steamships and Air Mails, the only means of communication between Ireland and the rest of the world are via Great Britain; there is a Cable to Newfoundland passing through Valentia, but this Cable is controlled by Great Britain. The result of this position is that Ireland is now completely cut off from the whole of Europe and can only communicate with America by the good will of Great Britain.

It can, I think, be stated definitely that Ireland is the only country in Europe which has no independent means of communication. All the other European countries have, in addition to their telegraphic and cable lines, regular wireless communication systems which leave them independent of their neighbours.

The lack of proper wireless receiving and transmitting facilities here is one of the factors which prevents the direct receipt and despatch of news to and from Ireland. The bulk of news from Ireland has to be sent to London from where, after being sub-edited, it is sent to the Rugby Wireless transmitter; from there it is sent by high speed Morse to various parts of the world. The bulk of the news reaching Ireland is likewise received by wireless in Rugby and sub-edited in London before it reaches Ireland.

It is now generally recognised that wireless high speed Morse is the most satisfactory method of transmitting news and this method is now in general use, both in Europe and America. All the big newsagencies which have offices in London transmit and receive the bulk of their news by this method from Rugby. The Rugby Transmitter itself is operated by the British Post Office.

If an Irish wireless transmitting and receiving station were established, it would be possible to get away from the present news distribution system. It would certainly facilitate at some future stage the establishment of an official Irish newsagency.

Under present conditions, it is very likely that some of the big American and Continental newsagencies would operate from Ireland instead of England if proper facilities were made available.

I have dwelt on the advantages of an Irish wireless transmitting station from the news point of view because this is a question with which I am familiar. There are, however, other considerations which are, perhaps, even more important from a Governmental and business point of view. For instance, communication difficulties between External Affairs and Irish diplomatic Representatives abroad could be maintained even in time of stress, when they become more important. Financial and business dealings could, likewise, be carried on even when cable and telegraphic communications are interrupted. Such a transmitter could also be used for internal communications by Government Services and also for communications between Ireland and Great Britain in the event of the cables breaking down.

[matter omitted]

Urgency.

If this scheme is to be adopted, there are a number of reasons which favour its being put into operation with the least possible delay.

The first of these is the necessity for independent means of communication with the outside world in the present situation. Another reason is that the present war situation would favour the use of the proposed transmitter by newsagencies. If the war situation develops on British soil, it is quite possible that Ireland would find itself completely cut off from America and Europe.

DOCUMENT 2: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A25

- Memorandum by Joseph P. Walshe to Éamon de Valera (Dublin)
- (Most Secret) (Copy No. 2)
- Dublin, 17 February 1942

I asked the German Minister to come to see me this morning at 12.30.

After the usual opening conversation, I spoke to him quite frankly about his transmitter. Up to now, I had used evasive terms, but this time I thought it better to be quite blunt and to call a spade a spade. In any case, your instructions obliged me to take this course.

I said that he would have seen in Sunday's British papers that the Legation had been accused of sending meteorological messages which could have helped the German battle units to get through the Channel on Thursday and Friday last. From our records of his transmissions, I had noted that he had sent messages on the 10th, 11th and 12th February. I did not wish to say that these messages contained meteorological information, but he must realise that the British Government (which, of course, recorded all the operations of his transmitter) would be justified in concluding that there was some connection between the sudden resumption after a long interval of his wireless activities and the German coup in the Channel. As a matter of interest, we had enquired from our own Meteorological Department whether weather information from this country would have been useful to the German Admiralty on that occasion, and the reply we got was that, as the weather front for some days preceding the incident had been travelling from the north-west to the south-east, the information would in effect be valuable.

We were now face to face with this situation. The German Government had informed us through him in the most explicit manner that they would respect our neutrality. He himself had assured us on several occasions that his Government would never depart from that policy. In actual fact, the greatest danger which threatened our neutrality was the use of a transmitter by the German Legation. Nothing was so calculated to give the British, and the Americans (especially since their troops arrived in the six counties) a better excuse to demand that we should

break off diplomatic relations with the German Government. The two Governments could say, as their newspapers had very frequently said, that the use of a transmitter in the Legation constituted a constant source of danger to their security. No other circumstance that I could imagine was more likely to initiate trouble leading eventually to a break between ourselves and Germany.

The time had therefore come for me to say to him—and I was acting on the formal instructions of my Minister, the Taoiseach—that he must cease absolutely using the transmitter. If he used it again, my Minister would have to require its transfer to the custody of the Department.

The German Minister, who looked very troubled while I was speaking, said first of all that he would not discuss the legal right which he thought his Legation had to have a transmitter. (I told him at once that we did not share that opinion.) He would look at it from a purely practical point of view, and he was ready to admit that all the dangers I spoke of were inherent in the situation, especially since the arrival of the American troops. He had done his best to comply with the various requests I had made of him in this matter, as I must have noted. He would now inform his Government of the further step that had been taken and he would comply with our wishes.

He referred—as he had very frequently done before—to the length of time which his telegrams via Berne took to get to Berlin (usually four days). I replied that the time gained by the transmitter was as nothing compared to the danger it presented for his whole position here as well as for our neutrality.

I must say that I found Dr. Hempel very understanding and ready to accept your decision as inevitable.

DOCUMENT 3: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A2

- Memorandum from Joseph P. Walshe to Éamon de Valera
(Dublin)
- Dublin, 15 April 1944

Sir John Maffey called this morning at 11.30 to convey the following decision of his Government:-

It is proposed, for military reasons, that foreign diplomatic representatives will not be permitted to send or receive uncensored communications, and no member of the diplomatic staffs will be allowed to leave Great Britain. The restrictions will apply not only to neutral Governments but also to Allied Governments, including the exiled Governments in London, and to the French Committee of Liberation. They will not apply to the United States or the U.S.S.R.

These restrictions will cease as soon as military operations have reached the stage where secrecy is no longer necessary, i.e., when the invasion has taken place.

It is contemplated that this notice will be issued to the Press on Monday evening for publication on Tuesday morning, 18th instant, and that the restrictions should be operative as from Tuesday, 18th instant.

I told Sir John Maffey that we should, of course, be obliged to maintain the principle of the immunity of our diplomatic bag, and the only way to maintain the principle in so far as the bag was concerned was not to send one at all. We should, therefore, be obliged to communicate with Dulanty through the ordinary post so that our correspondence with him would be taken out of the diplomatic category.

Maffey said that, in so far as he was concerned, he would be ready to help in every possible way. Where we had lengthy documents, such as requisitions, likely to be held up for a long time by the ordinary censorship, he would be very glad to put them in his bag.

Our situation is, of course, made much easier by the fact that the restrictions cover Allied as well as neutral Government communications.

DOCUMENT 4: UCDA P150/2571

- Memorandum from Joseph P. Walshe to Éamon de Valera (Dublin)
- (Secret)
- Dublin, 16 February 1945

Sir John Maffey came to see me at 10 o'clock this morning about what he described as a very urgent matter and in regard to which he asked for a decision by this evening.

He explained that the Radar posts on the Six Counties and Scottish coasts were proving ineffective owing to the damping of the signals by the Donegal mountains. His Government, therefore, earnestly requested us to allow them to establish a mobile and temporary post at Malin Head. The purpose of the post would be to pick up the radio pulsations from planes of the trans-Atlantic* airlines crossing the Atlantic to Scotland and to reflect them on to a post at Saligo Bay (Islay). It appears from what Sir John Maffey told me that it has become vitally important in recent times to know the exact situation of the planes crossing the Atlantic (which may be sending out by radio a special kind of information). The Radar gives the location of the plane and the Malin Head mobile post would merely reflect to the Scottish post the directional impulses received.

This mobile post would be operated by fifteen civilians. The British would be very glad to allow some of our technicians to work with them and to learn how to operate a Radar post.

The Malin Head wireless station (Staff 11), which is operated for the British by us, has been transmitting signals by telegraph to Scotland giving information about submarine activities etc. The transmissions are frequently in code and the contents are, of course, not known to the operators. This station has been particularly valuable to the British because most of the Convoys had to go around by the Ulster coast and Malin Head would be the first and last station to pick up their signals and messages.

Valentia (Staff 12) served a similar purpose. The messages are transmitted by telegraph to London (Admiralty) and Devonport. The station would not have the same interest in relation to Radar because it is off the ferry route.
** Considerable additions to the apparatus were made about eight months ago without provoking comment.

*The word 'Canadian' has been handwritten above the word 'Atlantic'.

**Walshe is referring to transatlantic 'ferry flights' delivering new aircraft to Europe.

Possible questions

1. Why did Ireland have no independent means of communicating with the outside world? (doc 1)
2. What are the different forms of communication mentioned? (doc 1)
3. What do the documents tell you about the war in Western Europe and the North Atlantic Ocean? (docs 2, 4)
4. Why was the German radio transmitter important? (doc 2)
5. What kind of information might have been communicated to and from Ireland, by either the Allied or Axis powers? (doc 3)
6. What was John Maffey requesting and why? (doc 3)
7. Compare the views of Joseph Walshe and Maffey on the importance of communications. (docs 2, 3)
8. What do the documents tell you about diplomacy and Irish neutrality during the war? (doc 3)
9. How might the technology described in the documents – radio, telegraph, radar – have been used in the war? How might they have been useful to the Irish government? (doc 4)
10. What kind of challenges did this older communication technology present? (doc 1)
11. How might modern technology make a difference? Reimagine the documents in light of more modern technology such as the internet and satellite communications.



German military plans and maps that were to be used in 'Operation Green', a proposed German invasion of Ireland (UCD Archives).

SECTION 8:
Espionage

Introduction

Espionage – spying and information gathering – by either the Allied or Axis powers was an issue of great concern to the Irish government during the Emergency. It was feared that any evidence of spying or intelligence gathering by one of the belligerent countries could compromise Ireland's neutrality in the eyes of the other warring powers and could have the potential to lead to attacks on Irish soil. As a result, the Irish government kept a very strict eye on possible subversive activities that could be seen to be aiding one side or the other in the war.

Espionage could take a number of forms and could be carried out by a range of individuals. It was suspected that the various belligerent embassies and diplomatic missions were providing information to their governments. There were also elements in Irish society who were sympathetic to either the British or the Germans, and who might provide them with information that could be used. Spies were active in Ireland, and some German spies were parachuted into Ireland during the war. In the early years of the war there was also a possibility that the IRA might enter an alliance with the Germans, while later in the war there were fears that information might be leaked from Ireland in the run-up to the D-Day landings. While Ireland was neutral, the various powers at war attempted to make use of Ireland to obtain information about their enemies throughout the war years.

DOCUMENT 1: UCDA P150/2571

- Letter from Joseph P. Walshe to Éamon de Valera (Dublin)
- (Most Secret) (Copy No. 1)
- Dublin, 15 July 1940

Interview with Sir John Maffey, 4.30 p.m.,
Monday, July 15th, 1940

I then went on to speak of Tegart's* visits. I told him once more of the expressions he had been known to use and of his efforts to persuade deputies of the folly of our neutrality. I said that the frequency of Tegart's visits, the extreme facility with which he was allowed to pass to and fro (in contrast to the great difficulties experienced by other travellers the legitimacy of whose business was more apparent), and the persistence with which he adhered to a course in which he, as an individual, could have only a passing interest, were giving grounds for the suspicion that he was being used by the Ministry of Information. I then told Maffey that such efforts on the part of Tegart or any other agent, if continued, would render his position here as the Official Representative of Great Britain quite impossible. Certain people, not members of the Government, were already beginning to suspect a serious intention on the part of his Government to interfere in our internal affairs. I knew perfectly well that he, Maffey, knew our history well enough to realise that such methods were foredoomed to failure. And I did not merely mean that the efforts themselves would be unsuccessful; the very fact of their being made would render fruitless all the splendid work he had done to establish the relations between the two countries on a basis of real friendship and understanding. At this, Maffey turned to me quite earnestly and said that he was in a real difficulty about these agents. He would be very grateful to me if I instructed Dulanty to go to Caldecote and tell him not to send Tegart or any other agent here in future, that they were doing nothing but harm, etc. He begged me not to mention his name in this connection, as he felt his position would not allow him to object to such missions. I was naturally amazed at this sudden complete avowal of the truth. It quite clearly arose from his conviction, however belated, that a very grave error of judgment had been made.

*Sir Charles Tegart was a native of Derry, and had been a senior member of the Indian police service (1901-36); he also organised the Palestine Police Service (1937). On retirement he worked in Ireland for British intelligence.

DOCUMENT 2: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A8

- Memorandum from Colonel Liam Archer to Joseph P. Walshe (Dublin) 'Mrs Clissmann'*, Copenhagen - Correspondence'
- (G2/2272) (Secret)
- Dublin, 7 March 1941

Dear Joe,

I was disturbed to ascertain recently that Mrs. Clissmann had written to her father stating her husband was serving with the German army in Belgium and that we had not seen the letter in Censorship. I have since ascertained that in the same letter she also mentioned the receipt of £50 from her father, Mr. Mulcahy, through a person described as [Leopold] Kerney, Madrid; obviously our Minister there.

This, combined with the following facts, more or less convinces me that the correspondence we did not see in Censorship was sent under cover per Mr. Kerney.

Packets from Maeve Mulcahy, Oakfield, Sligo, have been noted in Censorship addressed to Mr. Kerney, Irish Legation, Madrid. These packets would have been specially submitted to us by Censorship except for the 'official address'. It has also been noted in Cable Censorship that Mr. Kerney has been used as an intermediary for communications between the Clissmanns and Mulcahys. The Memo. I sent you on Frank Ryan also contains numerous instances of Mr. Kerney having been used as an intermediary between these people.

In view of both Helmut Clissmann's** and Mrs. Clissmann's previous associations with the I.R.A. and people of that type here, and friendly knowledge of, if not actual association with, Frank Ryan and similar people on the Continent, I think it desirable that no communications to or from them should be allowed without the usual examination.

My desire to have these communications examined is further reinforced by the fact that an Annie O'Farrelly has recently written to Mrs. Clissmann at Copenhagen. Miss O'Farrelly is, in fact, believed to be the wife of some mysterious Swede who was on one occasion accused of being interested in an attempt to send arms to Ireland. More

important, however, she is alleged to be a very intimate friend of Seán Russell*** and to be one of the few people who might know of his whereabouts and activities, and she is very well known to members of the extreme Irish Group in the U.S.

For all these reasons, I am most anxious to ensure that no further Clissmann-Mulcahy or similar correspondence escapes censorship.

I should add that although the address mentioned gives immunity from Irish censorship that it presumably does not from British as there is no immunity claimed. As most of the people mentioned are known to, and presumably blacklisted by the British authorities, the position is still further complicated.

* Elizabeth 'Budge' Clissmann née Mulcahy, wife of Helmut Clissmann. The Mulcahy family of Sligo were a prominent republican family.

** Helmut Clissmann (1911-97) worked in Ireland in the 1930s under the auspices of the German Academic Exchange Service and developed connections with the IRA. He played a role in intelligence operations including Frank Ryan's escape from Spain to Germany and later served in the Brandenberger Regiment of the Wehrmacht during the Second World War.

***Seán Russell (1893-1940), Chief of Staff of the IRA (1938-9). On 14 August 1940 Russell died on board a German U-boat bound for Ireland and was buried at sea.

DOCUMENT 3: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A2

- Memorandum by Joseph P. Walshe for Éamon de Valera (Dublin)
- (Most Secret)
- Dublin, 18 March 1941

Sir John Maffey called to see me this morning at his request. He came for the ostensible purpose of giving me further details about Sir Francis Shelmerdine's* visit to this country tomorrow. He presumed we would talk to Shelmerdine about both the Lisbon link and the trans-Atlantic service.

He then came to the question of a wireless transmitting station in the Dublin area.

I told him I informed my people of this matter, and they would be glad to hear further details about the time and character of the reception; did the transmissions, as far as they knew, take place at regular intervals, were they frequent, and were they quite sure that the signals came from this area. He would remember that on a former occasion, the British Intelligence had told us that a transmitter was operating some 25 miles south of Dublin. At that time also the call station was Nauen. We had made every effort to discover the origin of that transmitter and had failed. We had also presumed that, having heard nothing further about it from the British side, it had ceased to operate. The circumstances might be similar in the present case. Our people were certainly hearing signals from all over the place, mainly from ships and perhaps from the two wireless transmitters in the control of his office. That was why we should have to have very close particulars about the signals received so that we might be able to segregate them from all other signals.

Sir John Maffey promised to get the further particulars.

He then asked about the parachutist who was captured a few days ago.** I had made enquiries from Col. Archer and Chief Supt. Carroll,*** and I gave him the following information:-

The prisoner's name was Hans Marschner. He was born at Schwidnitz in 1912. His father was a chemist. He went

to England in April, 1939, and worked in the dispensary attached to the German Hospital in London.

He said that his intention was to land at Naas, but that the pilot had dropped him near Taghmon. According to his story, he hid his parachute, his flying suit and a military tunic in the hollowed-out bank of a stream. When discovered by the Guards, he was walking along the road carrying a wireless set in a box in his hand. The flying suit and the parachute were discovered eventually at the place pointed out by Marschner, but the tunic was not there. It is naturally assumed that the story about the tunic was intended to give the impression that he was not an ordinary spy.

In the course of further conversation, and in reply to questions by Sir John Maffey, I told him that Marschner disavowed any intention of interfering with our neutrality or giving any information about Ireland, and that his purpose was to get to England where he would use his set for some purpose unknown. Generally, the prisoner did not show much intelligence. His English was good on the whole. His authorities seemed to have deceived him into believing that getting back to Germany (via Lisbon) was a relatively easy task. I remarked to Maffey how exceedingly difficult it was for a foreigner to escape notice in Ireland. They were too few in number not to become immediately objects of suspicion. This parachutist, once landed in England, might have passed unnoticed amongst the very large population of foreigners scattered all over Britain.

Maffey agreed, and commended the watchfulness of the Guards in all cases which in any way had come under his notice.

The capture of the parachutist seems to have given him a general feeling of relief, and I doubt that he is going to worry any more about the matter.

There is just one other point. I think he finds it difficult to believe that the parachutist ever intended to leave Ireland.

*Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Francis Shelmerdine (1881-1945), Director-General of Civil Aviation, British Air Ministry.

**Günther Schütz (aka Hans Marschner) parachuted into Co. Wexford on the night of 12 March 1941, landing near the village of Taghmon. He was arrested by Gardaí the following day.

***Chief Superintendent Patrick Carroll (1903-75), appointed head of Garda Special Branch in 1939 and worked closely with G2 on state security matters during the Second World War, Garda Commissioner (1967-8).

DOCUMENT 4: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A25

- Memorandum by Joseph P. Walshe
- (Secret)
- Dublin, 20 December 1943

On the instruction of the Taoiseach, I asked the German Minister to come to see me to-day for the purpose of bringing the wireless issue to an end. In giving me this instruction, the Taoiseach told me that I could inform him about the parachutists who landed on Thursday and Sunday.* The Taoiseach thought it would be a good introduction and would give me an opportunity to make Dr. Hempel realise how dangerous the situation had become for us. When Dr. Hempel came in, I told him about the parachutists and the wireless sets which they had brought with them, and I recalled the conversations I had with him on other similar occasions. I said that this new incident filled us with alarm about Germany's intentions. It might well be that his Government had no designs on this country but we had to protect our own interests, and it was my duty on behalf of my Minister to protest against this violation of our neutrality. He realised, as well as I did, that although these parachutists were immediately apprehended, the mere fact of their arrival would of necessity give an opportunity to the other belligerents to question once more the expediency of respecting our neutrality. I also recalled the solemn statement frequently made by the Taoiseach that he would not allow this country to be made a base of operations against Great Britain. The appearance of two parachutists would naturally make them suspect that two might not be the total number landed. I asked him to warn his Government once more about the folly of thinking that parachutists could be landed here without escaping arrest. It was a very small country where everybody knew everybody else's business and no stranger could escape notice for long. It was the very extreme of folly to send two young Irishmen who could have no real interest or desire in risking their lives for Germany. Their natural allegiance was to Ireland, and the German Government should know that these young men would quickly realise after arrival here that their action was likely to do far more harm to their own country than to Great Britain or the United States.

2. This new incident made the matter about which I had

spoken to him last Wednesday of still greater urgency. It would most certainly provoke something like an ultimatum from the British and the Americans concerning his wireless transmitter. I was therefore, on the instructions of my Minister, asking him formally and definitely to hand over, or destroy, the set at once.

3. Dr. Hempel was clearly very worried indeed at the news of the parachutists, about whom, I feel sure, he had not been given notice. He had, he said, informed his Government on each of the former occasions of our view on the sending of agents to Ireland and of the danger it constituted for our relations and for our neutrality itself. With regard to the wireless transmitter, he had given it a good deal of thought since last Wednesday and he had now thought of a definite plan. He would ask that he be allowed to put it in the safe of his bank in Dublin and that there should be two keys of the safe—one in the custody of the Department of External Affairs and the other in that of the Legation. Neither party could go to the safe without the presence of the other. This would also be part of an agreement with the Manager of the Bank. I told him that we would accept that solution but, of course, we should be obliged to make quite certain that the wireless set was intact in all its parts before it was sent to the Bank. Dr. Hempel then said that he would make immediate arrangements in that sense.

Tuesday, the 21st December, 1943

Dr. Hempel called me on the 'phone this morning to suggest that he should tell Herr Thomsen to make contact with Mr. Boland and that they should jointly complete the terms of the arrangement we had discussed.

I informed the Taoiseach on the 'phone that the transmitter was being handed over. I also informed G.2.

Note

Mr. Boland completed the arrangements with Herr Thomsen. He took Colonel Neligan** to examine the set before it was put in its container. Colonel Neligan declared that every detail in the set was complete. Later, Mr. Boland and Herr Thomsen deposited the set in the Bank's safe. The Department key is attached to this file.

*On Thursday 16 December and Sunday 19 December respectively, German agents John F. O'Reilly and John Kenny parachuted into Ireland from German aircraft over Co. Clare. Both were arrested soon after landing. They were the last German agents sent to Ireland.

**Colonel Neligan, Signals Officer, G2.

DOCUMENT 5: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES A52/1

- Memorandum by Joseph P. Walshe
- Dublin, 28 February 1944

I saw the German Minister at 4.30 this afternoon. He had requested an interview. I had informed the Taoiseach of his request and he instructed me to use the opportunity to ask the German Minister to warn his Government once more of the fatal consequences of sending any further agents to this country, and generally to warn him of the difficulties of the present critical period which required the exercise of the very greatest care on his part.

The purpose of the German Minister's visit soon became apparent when he asked me if there was any basis for the rumours about an American ultimatum.

I told him the rumours were the natural consequence of the recent talk about parachutists, the talk itself having been occasioned by the arrival in December of the two agents concerning whom we had already protested. It was natural that such rumours should increase at a time when the whole world expected critical developments in the war. I had been instructed by my Minister to tell him once more how very uneasy we felt that it could still be possible for the German Government, notwithstanding his (the German Minister's) advice, to send agents to this country by air or otherwise. My Minister wished him to be informed that the Government would have no alternative, if another agent arrived in this country, but to regard such an act as a major incident. The incomprehensible folly of the German Government in sending the two parachutists in December left the Government here with very little confidence as to future possibilities. My Minister hoped that he (Dr. Hempel) would send a still stronger warning to his Government about the wickedness, the folly and the complete uselessness of such missions. He should again emphasise with his Government that even one more such incident might make the continuance of our relations impossible. It was, so far as we were concerned, a matter of the utmost gravity, and I begged him to take the protest in all seriousness and to be quite convinced that the present disturbing rumours were the direct result of the last incident.

The German Minister said that he did, in any case, intend to send his Government a further warning. He was completely frank in expressing his own opinion of his Government's folly in this matter of sending agents to Ireland. He felt, he said, that it was due to the absence from the Foreign Office of officials who understood the Irish situation. I would remember that one of them was now Ambassador to the Holy See and the other Ambassador in Nanking.

I then went on to speak of rumours which had reached me about the relations between a certain group of Italians and the German Legation. I thought that relations of any kind between the German Legation and Italians here were unnecessary and uncalled for. They could only lead to more rumours and more talk about spy plots. His Legation should, moreover, remember that the great majority of the Italians here were Irish citizens and that our Government was absolutely opposed to any political activity on their part. The new Bulletin being distributed by this group was being suppressed and measures were being taken to prevent the formation of any new organisation. I was quite aware that a lot of the trouble had been caused by the Italian Representative here who had organised Italians in this country without any reference to the allegiance which they owed to their adopted country.

The German Minister seized the opportunity to tell me that Berardis, at the beginning of the war, had made 'the most fantastic proposals' to him about the use which could be made of the Italians and the Germans residing in this country. Indeed, he said, he had saved us a great deal of anxiety by his successful efforts to restrain the anti-Irish activities of his former colleague.

DOCUMENT 6: NAI DFA SECRETARY'S FILES MEMORANDA TO TAOISEACH 1944

- Memorandum by Joseph P. Walshe for Éamon de Valera (Dublin)
 'Suggestions for increased Precautions on the Border'
- Dublin, 2 March 1944

Messrs. Duff* and Costigan,** Colonel Bryan, Chief Superintendent O'Carroll, Mr. Boland and myself, discussed today how best to lessen the possibilities of leakage of information from the Six Counties into this territory. It was generally agreed that no measures could be really spy-proof. On the other hand, it was thought that a good deal of the responsibility for leakage could be placed on the shoulders of the British authorities, and it would be advisable to do so by making the following suggestions to them:-

- a) no person during the critical period should be allowed to travel from the six to the twenty-six counties without a permit issued by the British;
- b) we should set up an inspection of these permits on our side of the Border;
- c) the possession of a permit or passport by persons travelling from the twenty-six to the six counties, which is not yet a legal obligation, should be made such, and the document should be inspected on entry into the six counties;
- d) the permits of travellers returning to either area should be stamped at the Border before re-entry into the home territory.

It would place the onus much more definitely on the British if, in addition, travellers to the six counties had to obtain an exit visa from the British before entering the six counties. Such a measure, however, might cause real difficulty to our people in the counties near the Border, and it has the political disadvantage of obliging Irish people to seek the permission of the British authorities to enter a section of their own country.

There is no doubt that these regulations, if put into force, would bring about a considerable decrease in the number of travellers between the two areas, and it might lessen the flow of recruits who are at present completely free to cross the Border.

*John Duff (1895-1949), Assistant Secretary, Department of Justice, later Secretary of the Department (1949).

**Daniel Costigan (1911-79), Assistant Principal Officer, Department of Justice, later Assistant Secretary (1949-52), Commissioner of An Garda Síochána (1952-65).

Possible questions

1. Why was Joseph Walshe so concerned about Tegart? (doc 1)
2. Who were the Clissmanns associated with? (doc 2)
3. What kind of different activities do you think that a spy in Ireland might have been involved in during the war? (docs 2, 3)
4. What kind of Irish people, or people living in Ireland, might be willing to spy for one of the countries at war, or to help spies? (docs 2, 4)
5. What had Éamon de Valera promised not to do? (doc 4)
6. What do these accounts of intelligence gathering reveal about how Ireland could stay neutral in practice? (doc 4).
7. Based on the documents, what type of espionage activities in Ireland do you think either the British or the Germans were involved in? (docs 4, 5)
8. What might spying in Ireland during the war, by any of the belligerent powers, hope to achieve? (doc 6)

Glossary

Aidé-memoire: a French term meaning ‘aid to memory’, used for official documents describing proposals, agreements, or points of detail.

Attaché: a diplomat with expertise in a particular area.

Axis: the alliance between Germany, Italy and Japan in the Second World War.

Belligerent: a term for aggressive behaviour, also used to describe a state at war with another.

Benevolent: well-meaning and kindly.

Blockade: a tactic used in wartime, in which military forces prevent the movement of peoples and/or goods and supplies to an enemy power.

Cable: a colloquial term used for older telegraphic communications, which were sent by physical cables.

Chargé d’Affaires: a French term (loosely meaning ‘charged with affairs’) for a junior diplomat acting in the place of an official ambassador to a country.

Commonwealth: the political association of independent states aligned with Britain that evolved out of the British Empire.

Custodian: a person who has responsibility for taking care of or protecting something.

‘Diplomatic Bag’: the traditional term for secure packages containing communications with embassies and diplomatic missions.

Éire: the Irish-language name for Ireland, as stated in the constitution. It was often used by the British instead of Ireland in the decades after independence.

‘5th column’: a term used to describe a group within a country or state who are willing to assist its enemies.

Geopolitics: politics and international relations, as influenced by geographical factors.

High Commissioner: a term used instead of ‘Ambassador’ for heads of diplomatic missions in the Commonwealth.

National interests: a country’s goals, interests and survival.

Newsagencies: international companies (such as Reuters) that collect and report news and sell the information on to other media outlets, such as TV and print media.

Morse: a form of communication in which individual letters are spelled out by sequences of dots and dashes, ie, individual long and short signals in a range of formats. In telegraphic communications these were usual aural.

‘Six Counties’: a term sometimes used to describe Northern Ireland.

Seriatim: a Latin word meaning to examine issues in a sequence.

Telegraphic: the term for transmitting messages along a physical cable or wire.

Wireless: an older term for radio broadcasts that were not sent along physical infrastructure such as cables.

Further resources for RSR, local studies, biographical studies and group projects

The subject of the Emergency has great potential to be explored via local studies and group projects, and also as a source of topics for the Leaving Certificate History Research Study Report. Below are a few possible resources that are freely available online, and which can be explored to reveal more about the period through subject, date, and keyword searches. Most are freely available online, and the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* and Irish Newspaper Archives can be accessed through public libraries and Scoilnet.

Dictionary of Irish Biography. This contains biographies of all of the major figures referred to in the text, as well as many others of relevance to the Emergency. All of the biographies come with lists of sources for further research: <https://www.ria.ie/research-projects/dictionary-irish-biography>

Documents on Irish Foreign Policy. The DIFP online archives contains hundreds of documents from the period 1939-45, which cover a very wide range of topics (not just the ones covered here): <https://www.difp.ie/>

History Ireland. There are lots of articles and reviews on the Emergency in the back catalogue of the magazine, all of which are heavily illustrated: <https://www.historyireland.com/>

Irish Newspaper Archives. While newspapers were censored during the Emergency, the national and local papers available in this online archive can be explored for details of the period: <https://www.irishnewsarchive.com/>

Military Archives. Contains a wide range of photos, documents and oral accounts of the Emergency: <http://www.militaryarchives.ie/home>

Oireachtas. The Dáil debates from the years 1939-45 also give a strong flavour of the kind of issues that affected Ireland in these years, and also reveal the attitudes of many Irish politicians to them: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/>

Ordnance Survey Ireland. The maps available here can be used for local studies, amongst other things: <https://www.osi.ie/>

RTÉ Archives. Contains a lot of audio and visual material relating to Ireland in the 1940s: <https://www.rte.ie/archives/>

Further reading:

Catriona Crowe, Ronan Fanning, Michael Kennedy, Dermot Keogh, Eunan O’Halpin (eds), *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy, Vol. VI, 1939-1941* (Dublin, 2008); *Vol VII, 1941-1945* (Dublin, 2010).

Daniel Ayiotis, John Gibney and Michael Kennedy, *The Emergency: A visual history of the Irish Defence Forces, 1939-45* (Dublin, 2019).

Acknowledgments

Thanks to the following for their assistance in developing this resource: Comdt Daniel Ayiotis (Military Archives), Seán Delap (Coláiste Íosagáin), Dr Michael Kennedy (RIA), Fintan O’Mahony (Department of Education and Skills), Deirdre Mac Mathuna (Muckross Park College), Zoe Reid (NAI), Tom Quinlan (NAI). Illustrations reproduced courtesy of the Director of the National Archives of Ireland, Military Archives, and UCD Archives.

Cover image: detail from a 1940 edition of the LSF (Local Security Force) Gazette. The LSF was a part-time reserve force. Courtesy of the Military Archives.

