**NYPL Maloney IHP 34**

**Casement press interview on US arrival**

**24 July 1914**

Q. Sir Roger, will you just let the world know what is the present condition of affairs in Ireland?

A. Sir Roger:- I cannot have a short answer to that.

Q - Just go ahead and elaborate on it in your own way.

 Sir Roger - You know I could answer it by paradox. There is no Irish Question. As an Irishman, to me there’s only an English question. It is that that dominates our affairs. As an Irishman there is not even an Ulster question. There would be no Ulster question were there no English question. The Ulster question is a transmarine reflection of the greater question that dominates and obscures our affairs. We as Irish nationalists have to try and eliminate as well as we can that English question that is obsessing Ireland. If we could get both English parties to abstain from active interference in our affairs I believe Irish Nationalists and Irish Unionists could very soon find common meeting ground and would settle their own differences among themselves as say German Catholic and German Protestants do in Germany. Our question is abnormal, not through any defect of our own, not through any vice of the Irish character, but owing to the fact that Irish questions are not brought for settlement to the right tribunal, namely the Irish public opinion. They have been referred always to the tribunal of another public opinion, the public opinion of another which admittedly knows nothing about our affairs and settles them off hand, not on the merits of the case presented to it, but as the settlement will affect English interests. I hope I have made myself clear.

 The Ulstermen at bottom are Irishmen. I am one myself and I believe, were it not for the fact that one of the great English parties has taken up the cause of Ulster Protestants, for English ends, we should not have the acute and dangerous situation that exists in Ireland today. I admire the Ulster Protestants for their manliness and their determination to stick up for what they believed to be their rights, and I will not cast any reflections on their manhood. But I do not think there would be any danger of an armed conflict between Ulster and the rest of Ireland were it not that the Ulster Protestant are relying as a last resort upon English support. They agree that, being Protestants, Protestant England would never apply to them the rule that she applies to Catholic nationalists - one may not look in at the stable door, and another may ride off with the horse. They may arm, they may set the British government at defiance, because they wear a label, that of Protestant loyalists. If there were no England to intervene, there would be no Ulster question as we see it today.

 Now, the object of the Home Rule movement politically has been the settlement of all purely Irish questions and for the last twenty five years, may I say, the Irish party have advocated their claim - the claim I will say of the vast majority of Irishmen - in a constitutional way. They were told that England would not listen to an armed Ireland or to an Ireland that attempted to use force, that until Irishmen abandoned the dream or the hope of appealing to force there would be no audience for their claims, however just, in England. The Irish party have responded for twenty years or more by playing the game drawn by the predominant partner. They were told "you must appeal to us on the lines that we will dictate" "Very well" they replied, "We will do so." They have loyally obeyed those rules, perhaps I might say almost too loyally. Nevertheless, they played the game, and when within view of the end the party of law and order swept the cards off the table and said "we are not going to play the game that way at all; we are going to appeal to the rifle." The Ulster volunteers had been armed with the open support, financial aid and personal assistance of the governing classes of Great Britain, the aristocracy, and the government has looked on with folded arms and has for three years allowed a revolutionary movement to go unchecked, whose leaders declare that under no circumstances will they submit to the law if the law is distasteful to them, and that they will resist it by force. Irish nationalists who have obedient to the law in a sense that I think is not as widely understood as it should be -- they have really the most law abiding people in the world - now see themselves threatened with the loss of that legitimate freedom they were assured they had a right to expect if they kept the law and refused to appeal to force. Well some months ago, in November last year, feeling in national Ireland began to harden on this point and men felt that what was lawful for the Ulster Unionists to do was equally lawful fir Irish nationalists to do, and so in Dublin a public meeting was called and the Irish National Volunteers were definitely launched before the Irish people. The movement from that day has progressed rapidly, and we now have probably 130,000 Irishmen enrolled in the ranks of the Irish Volunteers. The Ulstermen have probably 80,000. But with this difference: that the Ulstermen are fairly well armed, they are certainly well disciplined, and they have no lack of leaders, of capable officers and of men of wealth and influence locally aiding them. As a military force, they are, I think, an efficient body of men and they do not lack for means; they have ample funds. The Irish Volunteers are man for man certainly as good, possibly better, than the Ulstermen. They are drawn more from the soil, the country, but what they lack are equipment, officers and men of local influence.

 Now, it is generally supposed that the question between Protestant Irishmen and Catholic Irishmen is purely one of religion or of religious differences. But this is not the case. The question at issue is a national question and nothing else. It is a very, very old battle and has not yet been fought out. And even whilst the Protestants appeal to Protestant memories, as they do when celebrating the battle of the Boyne, they make it equally clear that it is always a national issue between them and the rest of Ireland. They stand for the conquering cause and they look to England, whose emissaries their forefathers were, to support them. And it was just on that very ground that they, the loyalists were the English garrison in Ireland, and the wards of that British aristocracy, that the army at Curragh refused to support the government in passing into a law a measure designed to place the Irish nationalists on a footing of political equality with these descendants of the old ascendancy.

 I would describe the question, then, as in its broad sense a national question between England and Ireland, and if we reduce it to political terms, it would be a political question complicated by religious difference.

 I do not believe there has been any danger of civil war in Ireland. I was brought up in the North, in a strictly unionist Protestant environment, and whilst I give every credit to the Northern Protestant for determination and for energy, I do not for a moment believe that if left to themselves and not incited by England and counting on English help, they would ever dream of attacking the rest of Ireland. The Ulster question, if it could be left to Ireland alone to discuss and settle, would be settled peacefully, and now. Ireland, I believe, will not submit to political dismemberment. The talk of the exclusion of Ulster is not popular in any part of Ireland. No Ulsterman really wants separation from the rest of Ireland. It has been put forward only as a means of defeating the Home Rule bill. If carried into effect, it would not bring peace, but, I think would insure the very bloodshed it is designed to avert. The only argument used for the exclusion of Ulster or of any part of Ulster is that it may be the only means of preventing civil war. It is not the exclusion of Ulster but the exclusion of England will bring peace and healthy rivalry to Irishmen. I think that if the exclusion of any part of Ireland should be carried into effect at Westminster, it will not be accepted by the majority of Irishmen. For instance I see in the American press the argument in said to wax hot over the question of the County of Tyrone, the majority of whose people are nationalists. Unionists demand that Tyrone must be included in the excluded area. Now assuming, which I have refused to assume, that Mr. Redmond were driven to accept this as the only solution that would insure peace, I believe it would ensure war. I believe that the people of Tyrone, with the assistance of thousands of other Irish nationalists, would conceive a plan of campaign to resist by force their being cut off from communion from the rest of Ireland. \*[see note at end]\*

It should be clearly remembered that if the City of Belfast be excluded from the reckoning, the nine counties that make up the geographical term "Ulster" contain a clear majority of nationalists. It is only by throwing Belfast into the scales that the Unionist cam make good. The "province" of Ulster is a mere designation. It has neither legal nor economic existence apart from the rest of Ireland. It is merely a geographical term applying to nine Irish Counties inhabited by 1,580,000 persons. Of these, 888,000 are non-Catholics and 691,000 are Catholics. There is thus a majority of less than 200,000 persons - 197,000 non-Catholics; but this majority is represented by the excess of Protestants in Belfast.

 Belfast has a population of close on 400,000 inhabitants, and of these some 310,000 are Protestants and other non-Catholics. If we leave Belfast apart, Ulster, with an overwhelmingly rural population of some 1,180,000 souls would be pretty well equally divided between Catholics and non-catholics, and would certainly have a clear Nationalist majority in favour of Irish self-government.

 If the vote for or against Irish self-government be left to the Counties separately, it is certain that no more than four Counties (Antrim, Down, Armagh and Derry), with the city of Belfast would vote themselves out of Ireland, and it is not certain that these four Counties faced with the issue, by County option, would so decide. The remaining five Counties would assuredly vote to be included within the jurisdiction of an Irish Parliament. It is in order to capture these five Counties by the preponderance of Unionists voters over Nationalists in Belfast city that the Ulster Covenants demand a plebiscite not by County voting but by vote taken with Ulster as a single unit.

 Belfast, with a considerable number of non-Irish inhabitants, having no Irish interests outside their factory walls or shipyard boundaries, seek to impose its will on the people of Donegal, Cavan, Monaghan, Tyrone and Fermanagh, where Irish sympathy, feelings and national instinct are strongly in the ascendant.

 "Civil War" to exclude Ulster from the scope of the Dublin parliament is only another term for imposing the will of a majority of one town consisting of operatives and workmen who rarely read a book or understand anything about Ireland, armed with rifles furnished by an English party (with the tacit connivance of the authorities) over a widespread region inhabited by Catholics and men whose national convictions are based on the impregnable rock of long sustained and heroic effort and much suffering endured in a cause that is wholly impersonal.

 As to the ultimate end of the struggle, whatever may be the immediate fate of the Home Rule bill, between those who love Ireland and those who do not, I have no doubt. There will be, there can be, no exclusion of Ulster, or permanent alienation of any part of Ireland from communication with the rest of the land that from the very earliest times has preserved a consciousness of national unity that I think cannot be paralleled anywhere else on earth. \*\*

 The political question is always presented to us as something to be settled at Westminster, but the issue really will have to be settled and perhaps fought out in Ireland and by Irishmen and not by British politicians. No Irishman believes for a moment that the cutting off from the rest of his country of any large area of Ireland can prove a permanent solution or one that can ever be accepted by Irishmen. Granted that it might possibly be carried into effect today, I believe it would only be a question of time and opportunity for Ireland to assert, by force of arms if necessary her right to recover the separated portion and to include it again politically and economically with the rest of the country.

 When the later, I might say military, development of the Irish situation became prominent, say from September of last year, there was still a fairly large body of Protestant opinion in the North of Ireland not hostile to home rule. I myself in October of last year addressed a large meeting of Country Antrim Protestants in the town of Ballymoney. No Catholic was present. The meeting was held in what has been called "homogenous Ulster", and to a man, this very large gathering of Protestant farmers expressed their cordial desire to live in peace and closest relations - under a Home Rule Parliament - with their Catholic fellow-countrymen. But owing to the fact that the Ulster volunteer movement has been very ably and very efficiently led, the appeal to force as the determining factor has practically displaced such moderate opinion. We have no reached the point where the appeal is made to the man with the rifle. The British Government have announced that they cannot argue with the man with the rifle, and practically asked him to state his terms. When Mr. Churchill denounced the gun running episode at Larne, whereby the Ulster Volunteers obtained a large consignment of rifles in defiance of the Government proclamation, of Government warships, of the British Army, police and customs, the government which denounced these acts as constituting a gross and unprecedented outrage, in the same breath declared they were anxious to come to terms with the perpetrators and to see how far they could meet them half way. This incident, following on the refusal of the military heads in Ireland to support the authority of the crown, has convinced the majority of Irishmen that the game is being played against them with loaded dice, and just as the Government is prepared to deal with the man with the rifle, Irish Nationalists now see that the man with the rifle will ultimately rule Ireland. And that would bring me on the question of the Irish Volunteers.

Q. Now will you tell us, Sir Roger, how did the Irish Nationalist volunteers come to be formed? Were they in existence before the Ulster movement?

Sir Roger. No. They were the natural reply of the Irish nationalists to the Ulster movement. The Irish Volunteers were called into existence by this manifesto I hold in my hand, (I will give you a copy of it). This was issued at a great meeting, one of the greatest probably ever held in Dublin, on the 15th of November of last year. At that meeting this statement of the aims and objectives of those who conceived the project of the aims of the Irish volunteers was placed before the Country, and there and then in Dublin some 3,000 men enrolled. The Committee was formed and a series of meetings held in various parts of Ireland closely following this initial meeting of the 15th of November.

 Now I would like to point out, and this is very pertinent, that for two years previously the Ulster volunteers had been i existence with an avowedly illegal object in view. I do not use the term "illegal" harshly, but they were out to prevent a certain purpose of Parliament being carried into effect, by force, if necessary. No attempt was made to interfere with them. The Government allowed them to arm; allowed them to enroll, to secure officers, and to announce that they would have no hesitation in appealing to force to achieve their purpose. For two years they went on drilling and arming themselves, as Lord Haldane, the Lord chancellor of Great Britain said "in a grossly illegal and utterly unconstitutional manner", and they were not interfered with. Within two weeks of the first meeting of Irish volunteers in Dublin, the Government announced that they would allow no arms into Ireland, proclaimed the whole country, and took active measures immediately to prevent arms reaching the Irish Volunteers. The Irish Volunteers have some right to complain that if the appeal is to be made to force, and if the Government is going to admit the argument of the rifle, that they should have not been given equal facilities to obtain rifles along with the Ulster Volunteers.

 The Irish Volunteer Movement differs from the Ulster Volunteer Movement in several important particulars. In the first place, it is non-sectarian, whereas the Ulster Movement is founded on a sectarian basis, and the Ulster covenant is an exclusively Protestant declaration. There is nothing to prevent an Irish Protestant from entering the National Volunteers, and as a matter of fact, many are Protestants. In the second place, the Ulster Volunteers do not themselves subscribe towards the expense of their equipment of upkeep. The National Volunteers do so, every man contributing a fixed sum, and whenever possible himself paying for his arms and equipment. The rifles distributed to the Ulster Volunteers have not been paid for by the men, but chiefly have been purchased with English money contributed for political purposes by an English party. Already, in Nationalist Ireland quite considerable sums have been raised locally in towns, in country districts, with a view to purchasing rifles and ammunition for the Irish Volunteers. Contrasted with the Ulster movement, the Irish Volunteer Movement is a self-helping one and probably a more self-reliant one, because it springs from the hearts of the people themselves. It has had to face the opposition of the constituted authorities and has had practically no help from abroad. Speaking as one of its founders, if I might address my fellow countrymen here in America, I would appeal to them not to send money to Ireland, but to secure rifles and take steps to get those rifles into Ireland. There is no shame in Irish nationalists asking this, or in appealing to the manhood and the courage of their kinsmen abroad, to come to their assistance in this way. When I left Ireland a few days ago the coast was ringed round with British warships, and chiefly on the nationalist seaboard to prevent gun running. At a meeting in the County of Antrim, my own county in the north, I attended last month, at which we started a Volunteer corps in the glens of Antrim, a torpedo destroyer accompanied my motor car all along the coast road, anchored within 200 yards of the spot where I was addressing the meeting, and the Captain at once was pulled on shore to hear what was said. The same thing took place three days afterward in the County of Down. Within half an hour of my arrival at Ardglass a torpedo destroyer entered the harbour.

 And do not think I am unfair when I say that the activity of the authorities is more obvious in the direction of preventing National Irishmen from getting arms than in prohibiting the Ulster Volunteers. If one section of the Irish population is to be allowed to arm and equip the able bodied manhood of the country and the rest are to have every obstacle put in the way of obtaining arms, it is clear that no question could be equitably discussed between these two parties. The armed man will always beat the unarmed man, and since the appeal to the rifle has been admitted as the ultimate one in solving the Home Rule question, the Irish Volunteers are determined at all costs to get rifles.

 If we were in a position today to arm 50,000 men in the South and west of Ireland, I believe we should be able to prevent the dismemberment of Ireland, to so-called exclusion of Ulster, and to achieve a peaceful settlement of our relations with the men of the Northeast. The danger of Civil War really consists in one of the parties being armed and the other being disarmed, and the blame for that I hold lies with the British Liberal Government. Whilst professing themselves anxious to pass Home Rule, they have either deliberately or by supine action been forced into a position where the passage of the Home Rule bill as originally laid before parliament has become practically impossible. The concessions now being offered to Ulster or to Protestant Ulster will really afford no final, or I think even immediately peaceful settlement of the Irish question. I place more confidence in the existence of the Irish Volunteers and of the spirit that has grown up throughout National Ireland than I do in all the professions of good will of the English liberal government. I believe Ireland will get the assurance of Home Rule that she deserves - no more. If the people are determined to rely upon their own manhood, they will obtain in the end, and perhaps much sooner than we can see today the fullest legislative freedom. There has not been - certainly during my lifetime - any movement in Ireland that has so deeply appealed to the patriotism and loyalty of Irishmen as this present Volunteer movement. Everywhere men are joining and joining with the fixed intention that once they get rifles they will never lay them down. No matter who may order, or who may command it, I believe no regiment of Irish Volunteers that is once armed will consent to surrender its arms. Sir Edward Carson as a matter of fact did a very good thing when he called the Ulster Volunteers into existence. Whatever the intention may have been the effect has been to recall Irish Nationalists from mendicancy to manhood. At one Volunteer meeting at which I was present, a very ardent, I might say Fenian, nationalist said he would like to present a vote of thanks to Sir Edward Carson for having brought back guns to Ireland. So that if the purpose of the Ulster Volunteers was to defeat Home Rule, a purpose they may possibly achieve, they have put something else in the hearts of the Irish people that will not die in a day. They lit a fire on the hills of Antrim and Derry when they called the Ulster Volunteers out that has kindled the mountains of the west and flames on hills of Kerry. So that whatever may be the fortune of the Home Rule bill now before the British parliament, I believe the settlement of the differences amongst Irishmen will in the end be made easier through the fact that Irishmen are recovering the right to bear arms, and to look each other in the face not as wordy disputants, but as students of the gospel of the gun, that practical manual of patriotism that hitherto it has been treason to touch in Ireland.

 Q - Sir Roger, how do you account for the present attitude of what is called a majority of the business men of the north of Ireland, remembering that over a hundred years ago they were the first leaders in the movement for the establishment of the Grattan parliament?

Sir Roger - I said previously that the question at issue between Irishmen was a political one, complicated by religious differences. Now, at the earlier period when the Protestant north stood out as the leaders of Irish nationality, it must be remembered that all governing power was in the hands of the Protestants, and the Parliament that was destroyed by the Act of Union was a Protestant Parliament. Nevertheless these men of 1782 were patriots and desired that the political disabilities pressing on Roman Catholic Ireland should be removed. The Act of Union was designed by the British Government of the day to permanently divide Irish Protestants from Irish Catholics, and the administration of the country since 1801, until the last few years, has been a part and parcel of that scheme, and it accomplished its purpose. The Irish Protestant were, as a matter of fact, withdrawn by the Act of Union from Ireland. Their interests were taken bodily you might say, over to England, and for four generations all the forces of the state were directed to permanently allying Irish Protestantism with Great Britain and arraying it in hostility against the rest of the Irish nation. Today when a Belfast ??? declares that he will not have Home Rule, he is partly the victim of the policy of Pitt, the policy of the Union, and partly, I think, the victim of those religious complications that enter so largely into political life in Ireland. He is also, and here I think with some reason, afraid that his business would suffer at the hands of the Dublin Parliament. Whilst he regards Home Rule as only a form of Rome Rule, to use his own words, he is also profoundly convinced of his own superiority to those who would control the political life of the country. He argues somewhat as follows: - Without discussing the ethics of the Act of Union, and he reads nothing about it and is taught nothing about it in his schools, he says the Union has worked well for the Protestant north; his business, he believes, flourishes under it; comparing the business development of Belfast with that of say, Dublin, cork or Limerick, he says that he is much better off than the Nationalist of the south and west in the matters of business; he says then "why hand over the control of my affairs to these men who have not made a success of their own lives?" He is not convinced, and very few arguments have been put before him that would convince him, that an Irish Parliament would make for the prosperity of Ulster. On the contrary, he believes that even if there were no set purpose to impoverish him, of necessity the less efficient portion of the population as he conceives it would make a bad government.

 I think the latter reason is probably stronger with businessmen in the north than differences of religion. The difference of religion would be acuter with the working population of the north. The businessman in is opposition to Home Rule is very largely sincere and has some ground, I think, for his sincerity. I do not share his suspicions or mistrust, but I do say that no sufficient arguments have yet been put before him to induce him to change his point of view. My grandfather was one of the businessmen of Belfast; and while I am personally convinced that Belfast industry and commerce must benefit from the exclusion of England I think it is up to Irish Nationalists to place clear economic arguments for Home Rule before the business North.

Q - Will the people of Ireland, in order to get Home Rule, sacrifice any more than the present Home Rule bill sacrifices?

Sir Roger - I should say they will not. I believe the people have gone as far as they can go. The proposal first made to give a county option to the Ulster counties of voting themselves out or in to the Home Rule Parliament was most unpopular in Ireland. Nobody had a good word to say for it, Nationalist or Unionist. From the Nationalist point of view it was believed that possibly four counties - Antrim, Down, Derry and Armagh, including the town of Belfast - might vote themselves out of the jurisdiction of an Irish parliament, but no more. It was doubtful, exceedingly doubtful, if the vote were taken by counties, whether even those four counties would vote themselves out. The worst at any rate the nationalist had to face was the possible exclusion of the four northeastern counties of Ireland with the City of Belfast. Beyond that as a concession I do not think the Nationalists of Ireland would consent to travel, whatever decision might be come to by English parties.

 If the present conference called by King George fail, as it would seem likely to do, it is impossible to predict what would be the next step taken. But I am firmly of opinion that under no circumstances could the Irish Nationalists consent to any larger dismemberment of Ireland or to the clean-out of the whole of Ulster demanded by Mr. Balfour.

 I think people here do not realize that Ulster is only a geographical expression. It has no corporate or legal existence. It is merely a term, a geographical term, applying to one part of Ireland. The unity of the country has never, in all the long years of British misgovernment, been tampered with. Whatever bad things were done to Ireland in the past, her political unity, her corporate existence as an ancient European State, was never called into question. The price Irishmen are now being asked to pay for a partial measure of legislative freedom is a very heavy one, and speaking not as a politician, for I have never taken any part in political affairs beyond the Volunteers, I don't think Mr. Redmond would dream of consenting to further partitioning than that possibly of the four counties named. If I am right here, then I cannot see how the present conference can be anything but a failure, and a very dangerous failure at that, more dangerous for England and for the political future of the English people than for Ireland. However, I am not concerned with the bearing of this conference on English politics, but I do not think my own countrymen will allow it to deprive them of any more of their birthright than has been already imperiled by the negotiations between the two English parties.

Q - Sir Roger, will you please state for readers of The World the reasons for the seemingly conflicting appeals that come to us from Ireland in the matter of the Volunteer cause? In the first place we are told by the representatives of the Irish Parliamentary Party that funds are needed, and needed badly. In the second place, we are told by the Chairman of the Volunteer Movement in Ireland that what is needed mostly at this time is not money but arms?

Sir Roger - The conflict may be more apparent than real. You must remember that the Irish Volunteers were not founded by a political party in Ireland. When first called into existence, the provisional governing body was constituted of representatives drawn from practically every leading national organization in the country. The object was to make the movement wholly representative of all Irish Nationalists. The Committee had on its foundation representatives of the United Irish League, or members of the United Irish League, members of the Gaelic League, men who might be called "physical force men", others who were Sinn Feiners, and the object in view was to create an armed force for the defense of the rights and liberties of all the people of Ireland. From that program the founders of the movement have not departed. I speak as one of them. As the number of Volunteers grew and grew rapidly it was obvious they would consist largely of followers or men in sympathy with the demand for Home Rule. Mr. Redmond was engaged in a constitutional effort to obtain Home Rule by appeal to the Parliament in Great Britain. It was not possible, certainly not easy, for a constitutional leader of a political movement to identify himself with what was practically an appeal to force, a movement that the Lord Chancellor of Great Britain declares to be utterly unconstitutional and illegal. However, owing to the force of circumstances, Mr. Redmond recognizing the great value to his own constitutional efforts of this resurrection of Irish manhood, asked the provisional committee of which I am a member to accept 25 nominated members on the governing body who should be guaranteed to his political supporters that the movement was one he fully approved of. To this request the Provisional Committee has acceded, loyally, as I believe, to the desire of the Irish people that there should be no breach today amongst Irishmen and nothing that should tend to a revival to the factious spirit amongst Irish Nationalists. Doubtless Irish nationalists differ amongst each other, as men of other parties in other countries may do. But the Provisional Committee determined that no reproach of factionism should apply to the Volunteer movement they had controlled up to the beginning of last month. With the acceptance of Mr. Redmond's twenty-five nominees, national unity was assured. We were determined to face the difficulties lying before us in a spirit of co-operation and as far as possible of loyal god-will between Irishmen, however much we might differ upon certain points. That was the rule that guided our acceptance of Mr. Redmond's proposal. There is today, therefore, only one governing body of the Irish National Volunteers, and that is the Provisional Committee sitting in Dublin, of which Professor McNeill is Chairman.

 Professor McNeill's appeal to Irishmen in America to send rifles and not money met with my warm approval. In fact, I say the same thing. The object of the Volunteer Movement is to have an armed force in Ireland. If Irishmen in America send money for the Volunteers, it is with the hope or with the intention that the money should be turned into rifles in Ireland. Professor McNeill, in asking for rifles rather than money, was really giving a guarantee to Irishmen in America that there should be no other application of their money save for the purpose of arming the Volunteers, for a rifle once bought cannot be turned to any other use than that for which it was intended. It would be perhaps as easy for men in America, if they were in earnest in their wish to arm Irishmen at home, to get rifles into Ireland, as for my Committee sitting in Dublin. In both cases the ring of British warships has got to be got through, somehow. If you send money to Dublin, we have to spend it either in England or in Europe, in purchasing rifles, in hiring vessels, and in getting guns into Ireland. We want our countrymen here to feel sure of one thing and that is we desire to have an armed Ireland, and we are not asking for money for any other purpose. I know nothing of any appeal for funds in America save that emanating from the governing body of the Volunteers, which is now constituted partly of representatives of the Irish parliamentary Party at the request of Mr. Redmond. There is no other responsible control of the Volunteers and no appeal for funds or help is an official one unless put forward by the Provisional Committee in Dublin, and all funds or rifles should go through them. I have seen Mr. Redmond on this question of the Volunteers and our interview was of a very friendly character. My views may possibly not be altogether his, but I would be the last Irishman to fail to recognize his long efforts on behalf of Home Rule. When I left Ireland our ranks were closed up and every Volunteer was determined that no internal strife or discord should weaken this great movement which seeks to win the freedom of Ireland by reliance on armed and disciplined Irish courage. I would personally prefer that arms should be obtained here in America by Irish-Americans than that money should be sent to Ireland for this same purpose. I think too, it might appeal to Irishmen in the States. In this I speak of course as a complete outsider. But the giving of money is a comparatively easy thing to a man who happens to have a few dollars to spare. Whereas the task of getting arms into Ireland is not an easy one at all, and will tax all the resources of Irish Nationalists to break through the barrier around our country. Ireland on the eve of Home Rule is practically in Jail! If then Irishmen here have sympathy with the Volunteers in Ireland, they can, I think, best show it in either one way or the other. Either by themselves purchasing rifles in this country and taking upon themselves the risks and task of getting those rifles into Ireland with a necessary supply of ammunition, or else by remitting to the governing body of the volunteers in Dublin such funds as they may be pleased to contribute for this sole purpose. One thing I would wish to make absolutely clear is this: that any money Irishmen in America may remit to Professor McNeill and the Provisional Committee will be spent on rifles and ammunition, and those arms, once obtained and placed in the hands of Irish Volunteers will not be peacefully surrendered to any British Government, Liberal or Tory.

 I may conclude with reading you something from a letter I have just received from a distinguished Irish woman, Mrs. John Richard Green, whose work in Irish Nationality is so widely known, writing to me from Ireland on the 10th inst. Mrs. Green says: "The whole thing is now in good swing. The spirit of the people in Ireland is up. Our strength now is that even if we don't get the bill, we have the Volunteers."

Note for McNally:

 A few paragraphs have been added at page six at the point marked to make clear the arrogance of the Unionist claim for the exclusion of the entire province of Ulster.

 Elsewhere a good many corrections have been made in the text, where either errors had crept in or the matter needed straightening.

R.C.

24 July 1914