

Irish-American Influence on the 1919 Creation of the Irish Parliament

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Abstract: *The creation of the first Irish Parliament, the Dáil Éireann, in January 1919 can be directly linked to events that unfolded during the First World War, primarily the Easter Rising of 1916. The Irish-American community, spear-headed by the organization 'Clan na Gael' provided military, moral, and most importantly, financial help. The ultimate goal was forming an Irish parliament and thus gain independence from Britain. It may be argued that without such donations from the Irish-American community, it would have hardly been possible to organize a rising, which conversely, had a significant impact on the process of achieving Irish independence from Great Britain. Irish-American backing also manifested itself as political support. John Devoy, a Fenian, was one of the principal Irish-American organizers who promoted Irish independence. In 1916 Devoy organized the Irish Race Convention, held in New York, when the organization 'Friends of Irish Freedom' was established. The aim of this body was to promote the cause of Ireland in the United States. After the end of the First World War an Irish-American delegation was selected to travel to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, lobby with the American Commission to Negotiate Peace, and thus ensure international recognition for the newly-established Irish Parliament. Both the work and influence of John Devoy, as well as that of the three-member Irish-American delegation in regard to the creation of the Dáil will be described against the backdrop of the First World War.*

Keywords: *Irish parliament, Irish-American community, Friends of Irish Freedom, John Devoy*

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