

**The original documents are located in Box 26, “3/17/76 - Remarks Upon Proposing a Toast to Prime Minister Cosgrave of Ireland at a State Dinner in Commemoration of St. Patrick's Day” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . . .

MR. PRIME MINISTER, MRS. COSGRAVE,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

MRS. FORD AND I HAVE HAD THE LUCK OF THE

AMERICANS TO HAVE YOU WITH US THIS EVENING.

YOU HAVE BEEN IN OUR COUNTRY BEFORE AND ARE OUR

FRIENDS. BUT ON THIS VERY SPECIAL DAY, WE HAVE

HAD THE GREAT PLEASURE TO WELCOME YOU ON YOUR FIRST

VISIT AS PRIME MINISTER OF IRELAND.

ON THIS ST. PATRICK'S DAY OF THE UNITED

STATES' BICENTENNIAL YEAR, ALL AMERICANS KNOW THERE IS

MORE THAN A BIT OF GREEN / IN THE RED, WHITE / AND BLUE

OF AMERICA.

WE HONOR THE HISTORY OF OUR NATION AND THE GREAT  
CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE IRISH TO AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE  
AND GROWTH•

NO COUNTRY COULD BE MORE WELCOME OR  
ENTITLED TO JOIN IN OUR BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION THAN  
IRELAND. WE ARE PROUD OF THE IRISH CHAPTER IN THE  
DEVELOPMENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE HIGH PROPORTION OF IRISH-AMERICANS IN GEORGE

WASHINGTON'S ARMY IS NO BLARNEY, I CAN ASSURE YOU.

AS I OBSERVED THIS MORNING -- ELEVEN SIGNERS OF THE

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WERE IRISH-AMERICANS.

THE WHITE HOUSE ITSELF, / WHERE WE MEET TONIGHT, / WAS

DESIGNED BY A NATIVE OF KILKENNY, JAMES HOBAN, IN

1792.



WE ARE TOLD BY YOUR HISTORIANS THAT THE

IRISH MAY EVEN HAVE HAD A HAND IN DISCOVERING AMERICA.

ST. BRENDAN THE NAVIGATOR MAY HAVE CROSSED THE ATLANTIC

IN THE SIXTH CENTURY.

I BELIEVE THAT SOME OF YOUR HARDY COUNTRYMEN WILL

ATTEMPT THE SAME CROSSING THIS MAY IN A BOAT LIKE

ST. BRENDAN'S. WE WILL WELCOME THEM TO

THE IRISH-DESIGNED WHITE HOUSE.

THE IRISH CONTRIBUTION TO AMERICA IS     

NOT RESTRICTED TO THE PAST. TODAY, SOME 20 MILLION

IRISH-AMERICANS ARE BUILDING ENERGETICALLY ON THE

GREAT LEGACY OF THEIR ANCESTORS.

THEY ARE HELPING OUR COUNTRY TO MAKE EVEN GREATER

ACHIEVEMENTS AS WE ENTER OUR THIRD CENTURY•

MANY DISTINGUISHED AMERICANS OF IRISH

HERITAGE ARE HERE TONIGHT TO HONOR YOU. THEIR

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE IN ALL FIELDS OF ENDEAVOR: EDUCATION,

MEDICINE, RELIGION, THEATER, THE LAW, THE ARTS, THE

BUILDING TRADES, AND BUSINESS.

BUT NOWHERE HAVE AMERICANS OF IRISH DESCENT BEEN

MORE PROMINENT THAN IN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS.

THE IRISH HAVE THAT LOVE OF PEOPLE, GIFT  
OF LANGUAGE, WARMTH OF HEART, AND CAPACITY OF  
COURAGE THAT MAKES THEM GRAND COMPETITORS.

WE PAY TRIBUTE TO THE LONG FRIENDSHIP AND

KINSHIP OF THE IRISH AND AMERICAN PEOPLES. BUT

WHILE HONORING THE PAST, WE FACE THE CHALLENGE OF THE

FUTURE.



AS WE VALUE YOUR FRIENDSHIP, SO WE VALUE COOPERATION

WITH YOU ON THE GREAT ISSUES OF OUR TIME.

YOUR VISIT AND THE TALKS WE HAVE HAD ARE OF IMPORTANCE,

NOT ONLY FOR AMERICAN-IRISH RELATIONS, / BUT FOR OUR

EFFORTS TO WORK TOGETHER ON ISSUES CONFRONTING THE

ENTIRE WORLD COMMUNITY.

IRELAND HAS MUCH TO GIVE THE WORLD.

POSSESSED OF AN ANCIENT CIVILIZATION AND RICH CULTURE,

THE IRISH ARE DEVOTED

AS WE ARE

TO DEMOCRACY,

INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM, AND CONSTRUCTIVE PARTICIPATION

IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

IRELAND IS A LEADER IN THE QUEST FOR A JUST

PEACE AMONG NATIONS. YOU HAVE CONTRIBUTED ACTIVELY

AND EFFECTIVELY TO THE UNITED NATIONS. YOU HAVE DONE

MUCH TO PERFECT UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS.

DISTINGUISHED IRISHMEN HAVE SERVED AS

PRESIDENTS OF BOTH THE UNITED NATIONS AND ITS

PREDECESSOR / THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS•

MORE RECENTLY, IRELAND HAS TAKEN ITS PLACE

AS A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY• WE DEEPLY

APPRECIATE YOUR ACHIEVEMENT OF CLOSE CONSULTATIONS

BETWEEN THIS COMMUNITY AND THE UNITED STATES DURING

YOUR SERVICE AS ITS PRESIDENT•

MR. PRIME MINISTER, I KNOW FROM OUR

DISCUSSIONS TODAY, THAT WE ARE BOTH DETERMINED TO

EXPAND THE EXCELLENT RELATIONS OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES.●

WE HAVE DEDICATED OURSELVES TO PEACE AND

PROGRESS FOR OUR NATIONS AND ALL PEOPLES, WITH A

FIRM COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE WITH ONE ANOTHER AND

WITH ALL HUMANITY TO SOLVE COMMON PROBLEMS.



THAT IS IN THE FINEST TRADITION OF THIS

WONDERFUL DAY WHICH IS DEDICATED TO ST. PATRICK.

I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT TODAY IS NOT ONLY A GREAT DAY  
FOR THE IRISH BUT IT HAS ALSO BEEN A GREAT DAY FOR

MRS. FORD AND FOR ME.

THANK YOU MR. PRIME MINISTER, AND

MRS. COSGRAVE FOR SHARING ST. PATRICK'S DAY WITH

US AND WITH ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA●

I NOW ASK YOU ALL TO JOIN IN A TOAST TO THE

PRIME MINISTER OF IRELAND AND TO THE SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP

BETWEEN IRELAND AND THE UNITED STATES

PAST, PRESENT

AND FUTURE, AND TO ALL THE IRISH EVERYWHERE.

END OF TEXT