

SPEECH OF HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, M. C. 2ND DISTRICT RHODE ISLAND
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The Ancient Order of Hibernians, with its long and distinguished history goes back to the time in 16th century Ireland when its first members set for themselves the goal of devoted service to God and country. As we survey the modern scene, grateful for the splendid way in which those who have gone before us in the Order carried out their ideals, we must be struck by the special importance which Ireland and the qualities she represents have for our own modern world. And we cannot but recognize the challenge which our times present to the members of our Order right here in America to carry on and to advance the motives and aims which animated its early founders.

It could truly be said of Ireland that she represents the way in which God often chooses the small and the materially poor to bear witness to the most enduring truths. Ireland can rightly say to all the world, "I am very small but my heart is big enough to go out in love and generosity to the ends of the earth." Through centuries of trial and difficulty, through times that have seen the rise and fall of great empires and powerful dictatorships, Ireland has preserved and nurtured her identity and kept true to her message.

All the world has felt and benefited from the love and the loyalty of Ireland for the things of the mind and the spirit. Here in America we can say with all modesty that many of the things we most cherish in the American

spirit have a touch of the Shamrock in them. One of the marks of the Irishman everywhere is his idealism, and at the heart of that idealism there lies his inherent love of the good God Who made each man in His own image. Of all of his gifts to American life, of all the ways in which the Irishman in this great country has showed his gratitude for the gifts she has given him, none is more outstanding than the gift of himself and the goodness of his heart. It is not too much to say that much of the warmth and friendliness of spirit which foreigners admire in Americans was drawn from Irish hearts and hands.

If the purpose of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in the last century was to help the Irish immigrant to find his place in American society, that task today is no longer paramount nor does it now present itself in the same form. The contemporary problem is not how to help its members be good Americans, but to be the best Americans, examples to our fellow countrymen at home and to the world, pillars of strength and guiding lights. There can be no conflict between our profession of Christianity and our loyalty to our country, because our greatness as a nation can only be in the precise measure that we are Christian both in spirit and in action. The strength of the Church does not reside in political influence nor in possessions, not even in a mighty apparatus

of institutions, important and valuable as all these things may be in given circumstances. It is fundamentally and primarily in the Christian quality of the individual lives of its members. There is no other basis for Christian strength than in the excellence of our individual daily life, making holy the routine of our duties and of our obligations to ourselves, our families and our neighbors. It is doing this that gives to life its Christian perspective and unique value.

America today is engaged not only in a struggle to overcome the economic drive of Communist imperialism and its aggressive purposes in the political field. We are also involved in an even deeper battle: the struggle for the minds and hearts of millions of men and women in new nations that are just emerging from the colonial stage. At home, too, the warfare of ideas goes on and the pressures of materialism mount around us.

In that conflict the faith and devotion of America's citizens of Irish origin provide an abiding source of interior strength. Grounded upon fixed principles of morality, humbled by a true sense of the limitations of man's nature, enlightened by the truths of religion, the Irish mind seeks to put

all things in their true and proper order under God. Out of that proper order, that habit of putting first things first, comes real spiritual strength, the kind of strength that is so vital to our endurance in the modern war of nerves, the daily battle for the souls and the hearts of men.

Side by side with our own United States, Ireland annually makes her unique and glorious contribution to the struggle to win the fight against Communism's insidious program to enslave the mind of all humanity. I refer, of course, to the vast missionary endeavor that is one of little Ireland's biggest contributions to mankind.

Last year almost one thousand Irish missionaries, priests
nuns and brothers went to the mission fields of Africa and Asia.
They are teachers, doctors and nurses to staff schools, hospitals,
training centers of many kinds in these primitive areas, in which
at present 15,000 other Irish missionaries are working. Try to
imagine the total value of the work involved in all this. It goes
on every minute of the day, year in, year out, and -- please note
this -- is always expanding. It cannot be measured in terms of
money because only dedicated men and women can possibly perform it.
We could estimate, however, that the cost of maintaining the same
number of lay men and women in the same areas would run, I am sure,
to not less than 10 million dollars a year. Yet these Irish missions
are maintained by a country of 3 million people with a per capita
income one fifth that of the United States. I mention this single
example of Irish international activity because so few of us think
about it, and because it is so characteristic of the great-heartedness
of the Irish people. The peoples of Nigeria, of Ghana, of Korea and
China, of India and Ceylon know of the benign Irish presence in their
midst with affection and gratitude.

In addition to her role as a potent ally in the never-ending battle with Communism's false philosophy of materialism, Ireland stands today as a true test case of the free world's devotion to its often-proclaimed belief in the right of each nation to its self-determination. We of the free world have said again and again that it is our conviction that no people should be compelled to endure the rule of foreign powers against their will. We of the free world have stood up for the principle that free and open elections should determine who is to rule. A hundred years ago the Irish people were emerging from the ordeal of their experience in the 18th century. You know only too well the milestones that marked the path of their struggle: first the winning of religious and civil freedom, then the gaining of the rights of property and ownership of the land, the struggle for an educational system, the founding of the great literary and cultural movements, and finally, as a result of the never ending political struggle in 1921 they succeeded against seemingly impossible odds in regaining control of their own destiny in 26 of the 32 counties of Ireland. That triumph still lacks completeness for the partitioning

of Ireland, by which Britian retains control of 6 of the 9 counties of the ancient province of Ulster, still continues.

The marks of Ireland's nationhood are incontestable--a geographic unit, a national language, a separate culture and code of laws, a homogeneous people, a distinctive national tradition. Her churches and religious bodies -- Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, the Religious Society of Friends, the Jewish Congregations, and other denominations -- are now, as in the past, organized on a national all-Ireland basis. Her learned bodies, her major universities, her sports organizations are, and have been, nationwide. The people in all parts of the country are, and speak of themselves as, Irish.

The unity of Ireland would most certainly be to the best interests of all people there, without distinction of politics or religion. That unity must and can be achieved through peaceful means, one of which certainly ought to be the making known of the fact that America believes that the people of the Northern Counties should be given a chance to express themselves in a true plebiscite. I am proud to say

that I have introduced resolutions in the Congress to provide for the declaration that just as America calls for a united Germany, a united Korea, and a united Viet Nam, so she also upholds the right of the Irish people to seek their unity by truly democratic means. Our Congress has heard its champions of Hungarian freedom from Russian domination, its defenders of the right of Free China to protection from aggression and foreign domination, and I commend these sentiments. But just as I supported them, so would I ask that Ireland be granted similar consideration before the bar of international justice.

I pledge to you that I will continue to fight for the right of the self-determination of all people and that I will never let it be forgotten that this includes Ireland, one of the first and oldest victims of aggression and imperialism. We in this great Order of ours can join in that effort, and we can also do everything in our power to aid Ireland by encouraging travel there and the purchase of distinctly Irish products.

In our own hearts and minds we must keep ever alive that deep Irish sense of the primacy of things spiritual, which is our most

precious distinction, and while we do so, we may look to Ireland with hope for her role in the future of mankind. Once Ireland led a great cultural and spiritual revival as the early Middle Ages emerged from the darkness of the barbarian invasions. Still in the world of today she is a burning and a shining light. Her cause is not only vital to the realization of international justice and the principles of the United Nations, but out of a united and strong Ireland of the future, another great spiritual dawn may be looked for in the world.

To that promise we who rightly and humbly take pride in our Irish heritage may look forward with the justifiable expectation that a United Ireland and the United States will march together into a brighter tomorrow.