

REMARKS OF HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, U. S. REPRESENTATIVE
SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND AT 10TH ANNUAL
COMMUNION BREAKFAST OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS AT
BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT ON SUNDAY, MARCH 13, 1960

It is indeed an honor to be with you this morning
and to join with my brothers of the Ancient Order of
Hibernians and our sisters of the Ladies Auxiliary in
celebrating the approaching feast of the National Apostle
of the land of our fathers - the great Saint Patrick.
Surely that feast must rank unique among the national
festivals of the world. It is probably the oldest of
its kind, for the Irish Nation, and its sons and
daughters, have celebrated it consistently and con-
tinuously from year to year for now well nigh on 1500
years. This is no local festival honored in a small
island off the west coast of Europe. No, it is a feastday
marked with solemnity and attended with rejoicing throughout

the length and breadth of this planet of ours, wherever and in whatever corner of the globe the sons and daughters of the Gael have in their great diaspora found themselves a home and a haven. It is a day - or rather it is a season - acknowledged and welcomed by people of all nationalities and many creeds - and is it not characteristic of the warm-hearted generosity of the Celt that the Irish people in their homeland do not endeavor to appropriate the spirit of this glad day all to themselves? Instead, they rejoice mightily to see the countless numbers of their fellowmen participate in the commemoration of the Saint they honor and revere, partake of the happiness, and join in the joyous and traditional ceremonial of the seventeenth of March of each year - that day of days when from all the

world over millions upon millions of thoughts center on the Green Isle of Erin and its National Patron.

And so we are gathered here this morning, some of Irish birth - all of Irish blood and heritage, on the eastern shores of this favored and predestined land of America - a land which for so long was indeed a land of promise for the sons of St. Patrick in their days of sorrow and tribulation - to recall once again to our minds the significance in time and in eternity of the glorious Apostle of Ireland, of whom it has been said that he brought to the noble Gaelic people a soul and to their Chieftains a conscience, and to pledge anew our abiding fidelity and loyalty to that Faith and to those traditions which the Saint so firmly implanted in our forebears 15 centuries ago. The strong emotions that each one of us

feels tonight are blended inextricably with the joys and sorrows of our ancestors over the years.

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 the Irish role in the development of the American spirit has been an exceptional and exalted one. Out of the sweat of their brow successive Irish generations have studded our country with works that breathe their love of God and of their fellowmen; with churches and schools; with hospitals and home and houses of fraternal service; they have come in due time to participate in the leadership of our country, in its national life, its administration, in the professions. They have fought and bled and died to make secure their ideals of American society and its precious values.

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 00 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 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.

It seems to me that in our preoccupation with our
own problems here we may have permitted our relations with

Ireland, that great motherland of the Christian millions, to have become remote and nebulous. If that is the case, it is a calamity that it should continue for we can only impoverish ourselves thereby. Think for a bit how meager has been the contribution to Ireland from the world at large and how immense her own contribution.

How strange it is, that this land that sent her sons as soldiers to the defense of every stricken nation should receive so little outside help in her struggle for independence and statehood. France, Spain, Austria, Canada and the United States felt the rallying force of the Irish volunteer in every fight for freedom; and more, Washington felt not only the power of Irish manhood in the Continental Army, but the might of important financial contributions when they were needed most.

And this same intrepid, dauntless devotion to the ideal of nationhood lived through the centuries, until on July 11, 1921, Ireland became a nation. Alone, unaided, an unarmed people, against the might of an empire, won for itself recognition and independence. Army without banners, is the description given by the poet, to the little band that won that age-old fight. Army without banners indeed -- army without adequate arms equipment -- army poor in everything material with which wars are won. But army rich in courage, rich in the justness of its cause, rich in the spirit of its patriots, transmitted to them by their heroic fathers; rich in the consciousness of nationhood; rich with the determination to live like heroes, and die like men; rich in the armor of justice and Christianity; rich in the teachings and prayers of Saint Patrick; and

rich in the graces of Almighty God.

We withdraw, as it were, for a moment into times long past to contemplate the golden age of Irish missionary achievement, the fading of that golden light into the darkness of civil and religious persecution, the long and unrelenting resistance that culminated in the freedom that has in our day been secured for five-sixths of the Irish homeland.

Listen to the words of Robert L. Taylor.

"If I were a sculptor, I would chisel from the marble my ideal of a hero. I would make it the figure of an Irishman, sacrificing his hopes and his life on the altar of his country."

"If I were a painter, I would make the canvas eloquent with the deeds of the bravest people who ever

lived; whose proud spirit no powerican ever conquer,
and whose loyalty and devotion to the hopes of free
government, no tyrant can ever crush. And I would
write under the picture -- Ireland."

"If I were a poet, I would melt the world to
tears with the pathos of my song. I would touch the
heart of humanity with the mournful history of Ireland's
wrongs and Erin's woes. I would weave the shanrock and
the rose into garlands of glory for the Emerald Isle,
the land of martyrs and memories; the cradle of heroes;
the nursery of liberty."

Surely these sentiments, so eloquently expressed,
must find an echo and touch a chord in the heart of every
liberty-loving American of to-day. This morning, in this
month of Patrick, let us in whose veins flow the blood of

the Gael, dedicate ourselves anew to bringing to complete
fruition in our day that solemn but long deferred hope of
generation upon generation of Irishmen - - "That all of
Ireland may be free, from the center to the sea."