

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2026

Remarks With Prime Minister Micheál Martin of Ireland at the Congressional Friends of Ireland Luncheon

March 17, 2026

Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Michael Johnson. Well, good afternoon, everyone. Shh! That's what we do on the House floor. Shh! It gets everybody quiet.

So, so grateful again to have you all with us. I hope you're enjoying this special event and the extraordinary meal that's still being prepared and presented. So thank you for that.

I know many of you have been attending this luncheon for many years. The President and I were just speaking, and I think this is his sixth of these events, and it's my third, and we look forward to it every year.

It's a tradition that, many of you know, began—it's been going for 4 decades because it began back in the Ronald Reagan era. Two proud sons of Ireland: One was a Republican; one was a Democrat. President Ronald Reagan and Speaker Tip O'Neill originally joined forces to celebrate the enduring bond of Ireland and the United States.

We have kept the tradition going ever since. The Friends of Ireland has been a bipartisan tradition, and we look forward to it every year. And of course, this luncheon is just one of the many ways that America is celebrating Saint Patrick's Day around the country.

Of course, New York City is a great place. Lots of Irish Americans there. They host the longest running Saint Patrick's Day parade in the world that dates back to 1762.

Senator Peter Welch. Really?

Speaker Johnson. That's right.

Sen. Welch. Wow.

Speaker Johnson. I can't believe you didn't know that, Senator Welch. Okay.

In our State—Steve Scalise and I hail from Louisiana—they celebrate a little differently. *[Laughter]* Saint Patrick's Day often falls in the midst of Mardi Gras. So they toss Mardi Gras beads, and they put on their own spin on everything. They even throw cabbages and potatoes from the Mardi Gras floats.

In Chicago, famously, of course, they dye the city's river bright green, and that's always interesting. I'm not entirely sure that's happening again this year because our Health Secretary, RFK Jr., might have banned it. But we'll see. We'll see. *[Laughter]*

Now, if you're familiar with this event, you know that speakers traditionally share their stories of their Irish roots and their long-lost relatives from the homeland.

I unfortunately am not Irish. My folks come from—my mother's side from Sicily. So Mike Johnson is so boring, you wouldn't know that. But my maternal grandfather was Nunzio Messina. Okay? I could have been somebody. I could have been Vinny Messina. I mean, you know—*[laughter]*.

But anyway, this is my third year hosting, and I've exhausted all my stories. But I do want to say I do have Irish credibility because I married a beautiful Irish woman. Kelly is my wife over here. Kelly, raise your hand.

Her maiden name is Lary—I-a-r-y. And it used to be—originally, it was O'Lary. So Kelly O'Lary. That's pretty Irish, right? I think I qualify.

I'm certainly a great admirer of the Irish spirit and, of course, the indelible mark that Irish men and women have left on our country. There's an old saying that the Irish, like the presence of God himself, are everywhere. *[Laughter]* And that certainly holds true here in Congress, as well as most of the history of our extraordinary Nation.

Irish influence in America dates back to the earliest days of our great country. In fact, some of the most fiery patriots—the ones who inspired our founders to declare their independence—were the Irish.

And when the father of our country, George Washington, needed an army, it was the Irish who made up roughly one-third of the fighting force.

Their determined spirit, their love of liberty were so well known that a top British official is said to have lamented, "We have lost America through the Irish." And that's bragging rights. *[Laughter]*

Perhaps it was that famous Irish charm or perhaps it was their rather exuberant ways that made a lasting impression on George Washington himself. Now, being the dutiful and stoic general that he was, he rarely picked favorites among his ranks. He was famous for how he did that. But if he ever did, it would have been in the winter of 1780.

On that winter, Washington's men were enduring some of the harshest conditions of the entire war, where—while camped at Morristown, New Jersey. The food had been rationed, supplies were scarce, and they had below-freezing temperatures that made every task somehow more miserable.

Washington knew he had to do something to improve the spirits and morale of his men. So, on March 16, he issued a rare order: The next day, March 17, all work would cease and every soldier would stop to properly celebrate this unexpected day off. It was a day of respite and recovery and merriment, and, as Washington noted, "a day held in particular regard" by the people of Ireland.

Now, here's what I find so interesting about this story. Despite the brutal conditions and despite the shortages in food and supplies, and despite some men going without shoes on their feet, the Irish somehow managed, by what I can only assume to be divine intervention, to find beer, Steve. They found beer in the midst of all that. *[Laughter]*

Ever since then, we've continued to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day, and we carry on that proud tradition here again today.

In many ways, the story of America cannot be told without the story of the Irish. We are intertwined in that way. Your love of freedom, your grit, and industriousness, and your proud and resilient spirit, all of which have shaped the character of our country through great servants like Kennedy and Reagan and O'Neill and countless others. Many of whom have Irish roots are serving with us still today—many here with us here today.

And America celebrates our 250th anniversary. And in the midst of that, we celebrate the great legacy and reaffirm this enduring and eternal friendship.

And now, without further ado, it's my honor to introduce our next speaker. It's a man who spent a lifetime working with the Irish—first to build skyscrapers and golf courses, and now trade deals and diplomatic ties.

It is my great honor to host him here in the Congress every time he comes down the street. He is our great 45th and 47th President, Donald J. Trump.

President Trump. [Inaudible] That's great.

Well, thank you very much everybody. What an honor this is. Yes, it's six times. Can you believe it? Moving along. But we like it. A healthy guy. Between you and you. You've done very well medically, I can tell you. [Laughter] But there's a lot of—it's too long a story to tell. But these two guys are very special.

I want to thank our great Speaker. He's a great Speaker, actually. He's a great Speaker. I guess, when you think of everything that we've passed, with a sometimes majority of one—when we get back to two, three, and four, Mike, we have—we think we have it really made. We lost a couple, and we had a couple of people—they're in Heaven now. They're looking. And that didn't help us with the vote, but we're doing all right, and you're getting things done like, really, nobody.

I think there's never been anything like it. So I just want to thank you. You're doing a fantastic job.

And I want to thank that beautiful—you're not allowed to say that about women anymore, but I say it anyway. Usually, it's the end of your career. You're not allowed to use the word "beauty" in any form to introduce a woman, but she happens to be beautiful.

Kelly, thank you very much. All Irish. I'm in deep trouble. I'm in deep trouble. There'll be headlines when I get out of this room, but I'm—I'll stick with it. [Laughter] But—and then your family is so incredible too. So thank you very much.

And to every friend of Ireland in this room today, I just want to wish you a very happy Saint Patrick's Day. A special day. It's very—great day.

And to Taoiseach, you are a man that I've gotten to know, and you mean business. And he can tell a story like nobody can tell a story. [Laughter]

And then he said, "How did you speak for almost 2 hours?" A couple of weeks ago, at a call—at—called "State of the Union." I said, "You could do it very easily. I guarantee you that." [Laughter] He could do it.

But we've—we have a really great relationship. And, Mary, thank you very much. Terrific. Thank you very much to be with you both. I hope you enjoy your stay.

Also with us is House Majority Leader Steve Scalise. Steve, great job.

Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, and they get along so well. I saw that. You get along very well together. That's the way it's supposed to be, huh? I don't know if I should be promoting merger. I love mergers, but I don't know. [Laughter] We're going to get in a little trouble. We're going to get in more trouble—more trouble with that than the "beauty."

But Emma Little-Pengelly. Thank you very much, Emma. Thank you very much.

And the Ambassador from the Republic of Ireland, Geraldine Byrne Nason. Geraldine. Thank you, Geraldine. Thank you very much.

Ambassador from the United Kingdom, Christian Turner. Christian, thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Christian. Thank you very much.

And the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland—a great golfer. This guy can play golf. [Laughter] He can play golf. Walshy, right? Can't you, huh? But Trump's not bad.

U.S. Ambassador to Ireland Edward S. Walsh. No, you're good. [Laughter]

President Trump. I know. [Laughter] He's a great player, and he's having a lot of fun over there. It's—what—is that—for a guy who loves golf, is that the best location? Can you imagine? Ambassador to Ireland. That's got to be the greatest job in the world.

Anyway, have a good time. Have a good time. You're doing a good job.

As many of you know, this year, we're celebrating something that is very special: the glorious 250th anniversary of America's founding. That's a big deal, and I'm very happy to be here. I didn't—I wasn't supposed to be President right now. I was supposed to be maybe in Ireland taking it easy or someplace taking it easy.

But I'm President now. And I got the Olympics, I have the World Cup, and I have the 250th year. And we all have it together.

U.S. Military Operations in Iran

And I just do want say that the war is proceeding very, very strongly. We're doing very, very well on Iran—knocking the hell out of them, and you have to do that. We can't let them have a nuclear weapon. They were 2 weeks away, in my opinion—two weeks away from having a nuclear weapon.

If those beautiful, magnificent machines—those B-2 bombers—if they didn't do their job 7 or 8 months ago, they would have had—they would have had a nuclear weapon, and there would have been no talking to them. No talking at all. They would have used it very gladly, very happily.

And you sort of see that by the fact that they were sending missiles—ballistic missiles—powerful missiles to all of their neighbors. And, for the most part, they were supposed to be somewhat friendly with their neighbors. They were going to blow the hell out of them.

And that was going to be the Middle East—between Israel, the Middle East. And Europe would've been there, and we would've been there. There would've been no stopping.

And we did a good job, and a lot of people appreciated it.

A lot of Presidents know they should have done it. It was 47 years of terror. Every time you see somebody with no legs; no arms; a face that's been really so badly damaged, so badly hurt; lives destroyed, 95-percent chance it was—it came right out of Iran. They loved that bomb. They loved that bomb.

And the father of that was, as you know, Soleimani. General Soleimani. And we got rid of him in my first term. And if we didn't get rid of him, I think it might've been a different story, because he was a bad guy. But he was a brilliant guy, if you liked to fight dirty. And he fought as dirty as you can.

So we've done something that a lot of people said that other people should have done long before I got here. But it's my honor to do it.

And we've had a very big day today. We knocked out things that nobody thought were possible to knock out. Today was a very big day already.

Congressional Friends of Ireland Luncheon

As part of this great celebration, we also honor 250 years of cherished Irish-American friendship and 250 years of fierce, proud, tenacious Irish American heritage. These are incredible people.

Oh, I know so many Irish. They're difficult though, you know? [*Laughter*] They're very difficult. They're—and they're great politicians.

You know, I was just told—right?—that 23 American presidents have some Irish blood in them. Right? Some. Some, a little bit; and some, a lot. Right? That's a pretty big number. I don't think any—nobody else competes with that.

But out of the 56 signers of our Declaration of Independence, 11 were patriots with roots in Ireland. Back in July 4, 1776, it was a son of Ireland who actually printed that sacred document for the first time. Who knew that? And it was also an Irishman who first read its immortal words to the American public, proclaiming aloud that we are all made free and equal by the hand of our Creator and endowed by God with rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That's—came out of the blood of Ireland.

The Irish did not come to America. They helped found America, the fact is. And they helped build America. And these are incredible people. I know them well.

And with a little bit of Irish luck, they helped make America into the most exceptional nation the world has ever seen.

And we're doing better—we had to do a little excursion, if you don't mind—a little excursion to take care of nuclear weaponry in the hands of maniacs. But other than that—in a couple of weeks, and won't be much longer—it's moving along fast. We're way ahead of schedule.

Did you know that, Mr. Speaker? I'm trying to save a lot of money by being ahead of schedule. We're way ahead of schedule. Nobody would've thought.

Somebody—a great war historian told me today, "Nobody would have thought you could do that much damage in that little time." Two weeks. But we're way ahead.

But we had, prior to that—and, really, I guess you could say after that—but prior to that—and it'll bounce back so fast. The oil prices will drop like a rock. And the economy is so powerful, so strong.

And you know, we hit 50,000 on the Dow. Think of that: 50,000. I was told: "You'll never hit 50,000. Not for the first 3 years. Maybe, at the end of the fourth year, you might be able to hit it." We hit it in the first year.

And we then hit 7,000 on the S&P, and that was even more of a long shot, Steve. That was a chance that—they said, "You couldn't do that." That was harder than 50 on the Dow. Seven thousand on the S&P—we hit that before the end of the first year. And all of those things. And then I said to myself: "Well, we're doing great. We're doing great."

I went to Susie—my beautiful Susie Wiles. There's nobody like Susie. I went to Susie. Right? And everybody's with her, and she's a great woman. Really, she's a great woman.

But I went to Susie. I always go to Susie. I said: "Susie, do you mind if I take a little excursion here? Do you mind if I"—you know, we're hitting all these records. Right? Most—more people are working in the United States today than ever before.

As we have—I could name this—I don't want bore you, because this is all about Ireland. This is all about—[laughter]—but you're a big part of it, because you're a big part of this country.

But I said, "Do you mind if I take a little excursion?"—my chief of staff—"Because I want do this."

I have Marco here. We have a lot of our great people. J.D. is here. They're all here.

And I say, let's do this. We've got to do it right. Should have been done by many Presidents. Should have been done long before 47 years. It's 40 years of living in terror.

You know, they're called the bully of the Middle East, but they're really the bully of the world because they used oil to bribe—right?—they used oil to bribe and to, you know, gain power. I don't know what they gained. What did they gain? What the hell? How are they doing? Not so good. They're all gone now. Every one of them, they're all gone.

We don't even know who to—our biggest problem: We don't know who to deal with. Over here, I can call the Speaker of the House. He's so powerful. I can call him. I can make a deal, maybe. I can even call your Democrat counterpart. This guy.

I said to Kelly, "What do you think of your counterpart?" He said, "He's a great guy." This is Republican, Democrat. I never thought I was going to hear that about you. Let me shake your hand for a second.

When Kelly—when Kelly tells me that, I said, "That's the way it used to be." You know, that's the way—not so long ago, and maybe someday that's the way it'll be again. It's really great.

But I said: "Do you mind if I take a little excursion? Because we have to do something, and it'll be a short-term excursion." But we have all these great things going. And we had a s—you know, we could have—we could have gone up, up, up. It was only going in one direction, but I think now it's going to go much higher than it would have gone had we not taken this little journey.

And so I appreciate all of the people that—that worked with us. That was a—not an easy decision to make. We have a country that was hotter than any country anywhere in the world and doing great in every way. And I say, "Oh, we have to put out this cancer." It's a cancer. We had to take that operation, and we did. And it was very successful.

And it continues, frankly—as somebody said, very—they could leave today and it would take 10 years to rebuild the damage that's been done. But I think we have to make it a little bit more permanent, because no other President has to go through this. And we shouldn't have any other President having to go through this kind of a thing. And if they didn't want to do it—if for some reason they didn't want to do it, we'd have the same problem. We don't ever want to have that problem again. Not with lunatics. We can't have lunatics controlling nuclear weaponry.

So I just want to thank you, everybody.

Let's get back to Ireland. Do you mind? *[Laughter]* Ireland, we don't mind. Ireland is a nice place. I love Ireland. In fact, we're going to have the Irish Open at a property that happens to be owned by yours truly. But I have nothing to do with it. *[Laughter]* I own it, but I have nothing—I don't even like to talk to my son. He says, "Dad, we're doing great with the property"—I'm allowed to. I'm allowed to run it, but I don't choose to. "Dad, we're doing great," Eric calls up. He's doing a good job.

Do you like Eric? I think so, right? Who doesn't like Eric?

But he calls up, "Dad, we're doing a great job in Ireland." "What's going on?" "Well, we're doing this and that," he told me. I said: "Don't tell me about it. I don't want to know about it. I don't want to know about it."

Of course, if things were—if we were treated badly, I'd let him know very quickly. *[Laughter]* But I think—I think you are very—I think you are very proud of what's been done over there by the Trump Organization, right? It's one of the greatest places, one of the greatest golf courses in the world.

And it's an honor to hold the Irish Open there. It's coming up very shortly, and it's a great honor. Thank you.

And say hello to Rory McIlroy and all of those great players, because they are truly great talents, and they're wonderful people and friends of mine.

But over the centuries, 130 Members of the House and Senate have been born in Ireland and been elected to work in these great halls. Think of it. That's a lot. Our national anthem itself was

signed by the sight of the Star-Spangled Banner, waving over the fort named for the son of Ireland, Fort Henry—Fort McHenry.

When Americans ventured west on the Oregon Trail, they were guarded by troops stationed at Fort Riley, named for the Irish American warrior who President Grant called "the finest specimen of physical manhood I've ever looked upon." We didn't know that about President Grant. I think we just learned something. *[Laughter]*

But I could say that about your sons. Okay? Kelly, I could say that about your sons. One's a boxing champion. They're like champions. Who would think from this one? It's got to be from—*[inaudible]*. *[Laughter]* Well, I didn't know about your Italian roots either. I thought he was a super WASP. You know, to me—*[laughter]*—no, to me, Mike was always a WASP. Now I learned that this is serious Italian stuff, right? Well, that will good for you, I think.

You know, your image—his image has changed a hell of a lot very quick. Oh, he's great.

Even today, when Americans visit Gettysburg, they find a Celtic cross honoring the soldiers of the famed Irish Brigade and defended our Union in its pivotal hour—most pivotal hour. They were there.

And it's said that more than 50 percent of all congressional Medals of Honor are awarded—think of that: 50 percent went to people who had parents, one or the other, Irish American. That's a lot. We're going to have to look. That's because we have so many Irish politicians. That's how that works. But we can't let that—we got to make some changes on that. That's too many. Don't you think, Kelly? I think—*[laughter]*.

But from 1776 to today, our country has stood strong and free in no small part due to the spirit of the warriors—you really are warriors; you're incredible—and the fighting Irish. You know, Notre Dame—the Fighting Irish. There's a reason for it. I don't know how many Irish people are playing on the team, though. How many Irish people do we have on the team? I'm not sure we have so many.

Well, you've got him. You have Kelly. Kelly's a warrior, let me tell you.

As the taoiseach has said and presence reminds us today, the United States and Ireland continue to build upon the age-old bond. Together, we are strengthening the ties of culture.

We have a tremendous deficit, by the way. I want to tell you right now. I looked at the numbers. You guys are much better businesspeople than our past politicians. We have to talk about that deficit. Are we allowed to talk about that today? It's a substantial deficit.

Ambassador Walsh. Tomorrow. Tomorrow.

President Trump. Okay, tomorrow. Okay. Walsh said tomorrow.

And cooperation that really does stretch back many, many generations.

Under our leadership, as we speak, Irish companies are investing more than \$6 billion into the United States, including \$45 million in Pennsylvania, \$70 million in Colorado, and over \$100 million in New Mexico and Ohio.

And I'm hopeful that we'll soon reach a deal to let American liquified natural gas, and that will bring down your deficits a lot. So I think you have to make this deal with us. We, you know, got to do something.

But these companies are going to be fueling your homes and factories and all of the other things. We've got a lot of—we have a lot of energy in this country. We have more than anybody. We have the most energy of any country in the world by far. So we want to sell a little of that to

you—[*laughter*]—and the deficit will come down, down, down. And everybody's going to be happy. So you've got to buy a lot of our stuff.

But in this small and beautiful—it's a beautiful room. I love this room. It's been a very warm room. I've had a good time. I have so many friends and so many relationships that I've gotten from this room, mostly from this event.

But on this Saint Patrick's Day, as we press ahead toward the opportunities that await, let us remember the beautiful words of Saint Patrick himself: "May the power of God preserve us. May the wisdom of God instruct us. May the hand of God protect us. May the way of God direct us. May the shield of God defend us. And may the host of God guard us." That's beautiful. Thank you.

And today we add, may God bless the people of Ireland, and may God bless the United States of America. And it's great to be with you.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much.

I'm happy for you.

Thank you, everybody.

Participant. Well, top that.

Speaker Johnson. Well, right. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Mr. President, for saying that my sons are tougher than me. That's really—appreciate that on national television. [*Laughter*] As you say, thoroughbreds make thoroughbreds. Okay? And we'll go with that. [*Laughter*]

Mr. President, I am so honored to introduce our special guest. And this is not his first one of these luncheons, the Friends of Ireland. And he has been a great friend to us. And without further ado, I will bring up and introduce the Taoiseach himself, Mr. Martin. Thank you so much.

Prime Minister Martin. Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Chairmen Neal and Kelly, Representatives, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for welcoming me—and Mary, of course—to Washington, DC, to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day.

I'm delighted that I'm here today with, of course, the Deputy First Minister from Northern Ireland, Emma Little-Pengelly, and, of course, the secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Hilary Benn, who is also with us.

Mr. Speaker, I greatly appreciate your kind words and for hosting this lunch. And may I pay tribute to your wisdom in choosing an impeccable Irish woman with great heritage as your wife. [*Laughter*] And with a name O'Lary, you have to be from my part of the country in Ireland.

But we greatly appreciate your kind words, and a proud tradition this is since its inception back in 1983, as you've said, through the shared vision of President Reagan and Speaker Tip O'Neill. And this gathering signifies the ties that bind our two countries and the bipartisan commitment to peace and reconciliation in Ireland.

Almost 250 years ago, this country embarked on a great democratic experiment, one driven by the idea that we all share natural rights to life, to liberty, and to the pursuit of happiness. Those values were eloquently expressed in the Declaration of Independence, signed by three men born on the island of Ireland and many others of Irish descent and first printed by Irishman John Dunlap.

Since the founding of the United States, Irish people have been at the—been the beating heart of American democracy and civic life. As politicians, faith leaders, police officers,

firefighters, nurses, community leaders, and construction workers, Irish people helped to build the American dream with tenacity and with courage.

As all of us in this room know, courage comes in many forms. Mr. Speaker, today I am reminded of Margaret Haughery, a woman born into deep poverty in County Leitrim in 1813, who found a better future in your own State of Louisiana. Through hard work and determination, Margaret overcame tragedy to set up a number of businesses, first, a small dairy, and then a bakery, which grew to employ 40 people.

She was renowned for her business acumen, her deep faith, and her charity. The orphanages she helped to build across New Orleans remain as her legacy. Margaret's grit and determination, her hard work, entrepreneurship, and innovation, and her dedication to giving back to her community embodies the best of what it is to be Irish here in the United States and at home in Ireland.

Margaret Haughery was an entrepreneur to her bones, but she would marvel at the economic relationship that exists today between Ireland and the United States.

Every day across this great United States, more than 200,000 Americans go to work each morning in nearly 800 Irish-owned companies, operating in every sector, in every State. And Ireland is the fifth-largest foreign investor in the U.S.

From little acorns, mighty oaks grow.

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, on my journey to Washington this year, I stopped by Philadelphia, the birthplace of the American Revolution and the home of your remarkable Declaration of Independence. Viewing the exhibition at the Museum of the American Revolution, I was struck by how those who signed the declaration knew that the profound and serious step they were taking would change not just this part of the world, but the course of human history. Nothing would ever be the same again.

As Thomas Jefferson himself declared: "May [our Declaration of Independence] be to the world what I believe it will be [to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all] the Signal of arousing men to burst the chains . . . and to assume the blessings and security of self-government. All eyes are opened, or opening to the rights of man."

The American Revolution gave hope and example to all who yearned to be free, including in Ireland. That the Great Republic launched in 1776 exists today owes much to the vision and wisdom of its founding figures, but it also owes its enduring strength to all those who have played their part in sustaining it, including in those who have served in this august building.

Mr. Speaker, Congress continues to play its vital part in the story of American democracy under your leadership, Mr. Speaker. Congress has also brought people together across the aisles to play a pivotal role in achieving and securing a lasting peace on the island of Ireland.

I pay tribute to the generations of people who have served here and who believed in and invested in this peace. We will never forget them. We will always remember that in our darkest and bleakest hours, they kept the faith.

And we still need your support and your energy to maintain that peace and to support reconciliation. Mr. President, thank you for your friendship for Ireland, a country you know well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your gracious hospitality, for this opportunity to break bread with so many true friends of Ireland. There is truth in the Irish proverb that "the road to a friend's house is never long."

Thank you, Cochairs Mike Kelly and Richie Neal, for your unstinting commitment to peace and prosperity on the island of Ireland. And thank you for bringing so many members of the—of this house from both sides of the aisle together on Saint Patrick's Day and throughout the year.

A very happy Saint Patrick's Day to you all.

As we say in Gaelic, *Go raibh míle maith agaibh agus beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig oraibh go léir*. Thank you very much indeed.

Speaker Johnson. Thank you so much, Taoiseach and Mr. President, again.

I told him he had an hour and 47 minutes, Senator Welch, because that's how long the State of the Union was, and he was much shorter. [*Laughter*] So thank you for that.

It is a short road to the People's House, and we're glad to have you again.

Now, my friends, I get to introduce two musical acts for us today. We're very excited about this. We're blessed to have twice the entertainment today.

So the first is a musical very much in the spirit of this historic year for us, the American 250th anniversary. "Where Eagles Fly" tells the story of one Irish family's difficult journey across the Atlantic here to America. It is a journey of hope, resilience, and faith as they sought to build a new life in this grand, new land.

And please give a very warm welcome to the performers of "Where Eagles Fly." Thank you.

"Where Eagles Fly" Executive Producer Trevor Marshall. Mr. Speaker.

Firstly, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for your kind invitation to perform at this very prestigious lunch. We're very—and good afternoon, Mr. President, Taoiseach, and very distinguished guests.

My name's Trevor Marshall, and I'm very proud and delighted to be here today. I'm the executive producer of this new musical called "Where Eagles Fly." And it celebrates the contribution the Scotch-Irish made to the history of the land of the free.

Many other nationalities have also played a significant part in the creation of this great nation. But today, on Saint Patrick's Day, it's all about the Irish, yes? [*Laughter*] And their story's remarkable.

This year, you celebrate 250 years—you don't make it easy—the semiquincentennial—got it; got it, I think—[*laughter*]—since the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. Many do not realize the impact the Scotch-Irish have had in building this great country. The musical is intended to tell their story in a most amazing way.

I'm a direct descendant of the leader of one of the first expeditions to America. The Reverend Robert Blair set off with—it was 140 Presbyterians in the year 1636—400 years ago, almost.

They left a little town called Groomspoint, near Belfast, and fleeing persecution, seeking freedom to live and worship according to their consciences in the new world. His story inspired this musical.

The Scotch-Irish are the bedrock of the United States. Their deeds have shaped the nation, from the Declaration of Independence to the Moon landings and beyond. They've provided leadership out of all proportion to their numbers, whether it's politicians, soldiers, businesspeople, inventors, or clergy. And 19 out of 47 Presidents claim Scotch-Irish roots.

There's been—may surprise some to learn that the early Presbyterian settlers were responsible for soldiers such as Davy Crockett; performers such as Dolly Parton; business leaders such as Thomas Mellon; and, of course, many, many presidents, including Andrew Jackson.

Now, Andrew Jackson has for a long time been regarded by many as the greatest President in American history. Many, I think, is about to be trumped. [*Laughter*] I think so. Thank you. Thank you.

The contribution of the Scotch-Irish goes far beyond famous dates and famous people. It is their character and ideals, especially their love for freedom, that has had the greatest impact, for they have literally defined what it is to be American.

Finally, the creator of this great musical and my great friend, John Anderson, sadly passed away before realizing his ambition of bringing this show to America. John would have been a very, very proud man today.

So here's a short excerpt from the musical. I hope you enjoy it. It's called "Where Eagles Fly." Thank you.

[At this point, musicians performed a song from "Where Eagles Fly."]

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1:35 p.m. in the Rayburn Room at the U.S. Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Mary Martin, wife of Prime Minister Martin; Secretary of State Marco A. Rubio; Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance; and Reps. Richard E. Neal and George J. "Mike" Kelly, Jr., in their capacity as cochairs of the Friends of Ireland Caucus; Colin and George Kelly, sons of Rep. Kelly.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Congressional Friends of Ireland luncheon; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Ireland, Prime Minister Martin.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Johnson, J. Michael; Johnson, Kelly; Kelly, Colin; Kelly, George J. "Mike," Jr.; Kelly, George, III; Little-Pengelly, Emma; Marshall, Trevor; Martin, Mary; Martin, Micheál; McIlroy, Rory; Nason, Geraldine Byrne; Neal, Richard E.; Rubio, Marco A.; Scalise, Stephen J.; Trump, Eric F.; Truner, Christian; Vance, James D. "J.D."; Walsh, Edward S.; Welch, Peter; Wiles, Susan.

Subjects: America's 250th birthday celebration; Bipartisanship; California, 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles; Economic improvement; Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup; Golf; House Majority Leader; Iran, regional involvement; Iran, U.S. airstrikes on nuclear facilities; Iran, U.S. military operations; Ireland, Ambassador to U.S.; Ireland, Prime Minister; Ireland, relations with U.S.; Ireland, trade with U.S.; Ireland, U.S. Ambassador; Liquid natural gas, U.S. exports; Medal of Honor; Oil and natural gas, domestic production; Saint Patrick's Day; Secretary of State; Speaker of the House of Representatives; Stock market; United Kingdom, Ambassador to U.S.; United Kingdom, Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland; Vice President; White House Chief of Staff.

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