

Q. What did you tell him?

President Obama. I told him thank you.

President's Visit to Ireland

Q. Will you be going to Ireland, Mr. President?

President Obama. I would love to be going to Ireland.

Q. If St. Patrick comes—[inaudible]—got you the health care, the rub of the Irish green, would you then come to Ireland the next day to thank him. Would you?

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Luncheon
March 17, 2010

Thank you. Please, everybody, be seated. To Speaker Pelosi; distinguished Members of the House and Senate; Republican Leader Boehner; Majority Leader Steny Hoyer; my outstanding Vice President and his newest chief of staff—[laughter]—to Prime Minister Cowen and the entire Irish delegation, as well as the extraordinary leaders from Ireland and Northern Ireland: It is my privilege to welcome all of you for this wonderful St. Patrick's Day tradition.

And, Governor O'Malley, thank you for that outstanding rendition of our two national anthems. I had asked if Martin was going to do a rock 'n' roll version. [Laughter] Some of you know he's got a rock band and is in much demand.

This tradition, as most of you know, was begun by Tip O'Neill and Ronald Reagan, two men who agreed on their love of all things Irish, including a good scrum. But they also knew how to set aside time just to enjoy one another's company. President Reagan himself said that the two men could be friends after 6 o'clock. And I imagine they also made a midday exception for this luncheon every year.

Today is a day we speak with pride of being Irish American, whether we actually are or not. [Laughter] I am pleased to say that I can actually get away with it, and I've got the Taoiseach here to vouch for me. Prime Minister Cowen was born in County Offaly, and I can trace my ancestry on my mother's side there as well. I believe it was my great-great-great-great-

The President. If you have a vote in the House—

Q. Would you? [Laughter]

The President. All right, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom. He also referred to H.R. 2847. A portion of the first reporter's remarks could not be verified because of difficulties with the audio.

grandfather. [Laughter] This is true. [Laughter] He was a bootmaker, if I'm not mistaken.

Someone actually discovered my Irish lineage when I was running for President, and my first thought was, why didn't anybody discover this when I was running for office in Chicago? [Laughter] I would have gotten here sooner. [Laughter] I used to put the apostrophe after the "O" but that did not work. [Laughter]

So it is nice to have a little Irish blood today. It is, after all, a day to celebrate and give thanks for the profound and enduring relationship between Ireland and America. And it's also a day to thank the Irish people for all that they've done for America.

Few nations so small have had such an enormous impact on another. They came to our shores in waves, by choice as well as by necessity, building new lives even as they were building a new nation, enriching our heritage, enriching our culture in their own way. And in so doing, alongside so many others who sought a better life in America, they forged a better future for all of us.

But the truth is, they weren't always welcomed. There were times where the Irish were caricatured and stereotyped and cursed at and blamed for society's ills. So naturally, it was a good fit for them to go into politics—[laughter]—made sense. [Laughter]

When the fictional Mayor Skeffington of Edwin O'Connor's "The Last Hurrah" spoke of his life as an Irish American, he said, "When I be-

gan, it was long ago, and the situation around here was a bit different. I had no education to speak of, a good many roads were closed to our people, and politics seemed the easiest way out.” [Laughter]

Today, of course, we all feel the heavy absence of one of our greatest Irish Americans, a man who loved this day so much, a man who, I believe, is still watching this body closely, particularly this week, and that is our beloved Ted Kennedy. And I’m so grateful that Vicki and Patrick are here. Thank you for your presence.

I confess that one of my fondest memories of Teddy has been on my mind lately; it’s one that I shared before. Just a few years ago, on St. Patrick’s Day, so it would probably be, maybe, 5 years ago, when I had just gotten to the Senate, Teddy cornered me on the Senate floor for my support on a piece of legislation. And I told him, “You’ve got my vote, Teddy, but I got to tell you, this is not looking good. I do not think this thing is going to fly.” But it did, with votes to spare. And so I grabbed Teddy, pulled him aside, I said, “How did you pull that off?” And he just patted me on the back, and he said, “Luck of the Irish.”

And it’s nice when the luck of the Irish can bring to the Senate and to Congress such an extraordinary leader as Ted Kennedy. I think it’s a little providence, as well as a little luck. It’s also nice when the luck of the Irish can bring us all together, Republicans and Democrats. That was one of Teddy’s talents. Even as he waged epic and unyielding battles in this building, he too was a believer that we were all friends after 6 o’clock.

And more importantly, he was a believer in building consensus, in forging compromise, in the idea that the only way that we can accomplish the work of the American people is to work together. And one of the greatest testaments to his life and his work, I think, was that

so many of his colleagues, past and present, Republican and Democrats, came forward to honor him in similar terms.

Now, that work—the work of setting aside old differences and softening hardened positions, taking the tough steps to do what’s right in the long run over what’s easy in the moment—has also paid dividends in terms of the remarkable progress that we’ve seen in Northern Ireland, particularly in recent months. And so I want to salute First Minister Peter Robinson and Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness for their outstanding leadership, their continuing example. We are grateful for that. Thank you.

It is such leadership that keeps me convinced that our best days—for this legislative body, for this Nation, for Ireland, and for Northern Ireland and for the friendship between our peoples—those best days are still ahead.

So, Taoiseach, I thank you and your lovely wife for coming. To you and to the people of Ireland, America is grateful for our shared past, hopeful for our common future, and I assure you we will be a faithful partner in the work of progress and prosperity and a just and lasting peace.

Happy St. Patrick’s Day to all of you. And with that, please welcome the Prime Minister of Ireland, Brian Cowen.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. at the U.S. Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Finnegan Biden, granddaughter of Vice President Joe Biden; Gov. Martin J. O’Malley of Maryland; Victoria R. Kennedy, wife, and Patrick J. Kennedy, son, of former Sen. Edward M. Kennedy; First Minister Peter Robinson and Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness of Northern Ireland; and Mary Cowen, wife of Prime Minister Cowen.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Protocol Additional to the Agreement Between the United States of America and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards in the United States of America
March 17, 2010

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

This letter submits additions and deletions to the list of sites, facilities, locations, and activities in the United States declared in 2009 to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under the Protocol Additional to the Agreement between the United States of America and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards in the United States of America, with Annexes, signed at Vienna on June 12, 1998 (the “U.S.-IAEA Additional Protocol”). This letter constitutes the report and notifications required by section 272 of Public Law 109–401 and the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the United States Senate of March 31, 2004. Further, I hereby certify that:

- (1) each site, location, facility, and activity included in the list has been examined by each agency with national security equities with respect to such site, location, facility, or activity;
- (2) appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that information of direct national security significance will not be compromised at any such site, location, facility, or activity in connection with an IAEA inspection; and
- (3) any additions to the lists of locations within the United States that are provided to the IAEA pursuant to Article 2.a.(i), Article 2.a.(iv), Article 2.a.(v), Article 2.a.(vi)(a), Article 2.a.(vii), Article

2.a.(viii), and Article 2.b.(i) of the U.S.-IAEA Additional Protocol will not adversely affect the national security of the United States.

None of the deletions to the list of locations that was previously declared to the IAEA pursuant to Article 2.a.(i), Article 2.a.(iv), Article 2.a.(v), Article 2.a.(vi)(a), Article 2.a.(vii), Article 2.a.(viii), and Article 2.b.(i) of the U.S.-IAEA Additional Protocol were due to such locations having direct national security significance.

The IAEA classification of the enclosed declaration is “Highly Confidential Safeguards Sensitive.” The United States regards this information as “Sensitive but Unclassified.” Under Public Law 109–401, information reported to, or otherwise acquired by, the United States Government under this title or under the U.S.-IAEA Additional Protocol shall be exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code. Therefore, none of the enclosed documents should be printed, published, posted on any website, or otherwise made publicly available.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick’s Day Shamrock Presentation Ceremony With Prime Minister Brian Cowen of Ireland
March 17, 2010

President Obama. Good evening, everybody. Welcome to St. Patrick’s Day at the White House, on a day when springtime is in the air. And this is—even though Taoiseach hasn’t even

shared his shamrocks yet, but we can fill—we can feel spring coming.

Before I say anything else, let me just say that I could not have a better partner in a difficult