

[English]

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Madam Speaker, today is St. Patrick's Day. It is the anniversary of the death of St. Patrick and it is a day on which the Irish, and those who wish they were, celebrate being Irish.

Although historians are uncertain about precisely where St. Patrick was born, one thing is certain, St. Patrick was an Italian. I know that some members will say: "There he goes again. He has kissed some kind of Italian version of the Blarney Stone".

I have checked the facts and history records that St. Patrick was the son of Calpornius, a Roman official in Britain. He was born about 389 A.D. and died around 461 A.D. History tells us that he was carried off by raiders at the age of 16 to pagan Ireland. It was there that he met his life-long friend, Shamus O'Nunziata, who travelled with St. Patrick to Rome in the year 432 when St. Patrick became a bishop.

Of course, the rest is history. O'Nunziata stayed in Rome, dropped the O from his name and St. Patrick returned to Ireland. Have you ever wondered why the Italian and Irish flags are virtually identical? Or why you see a shamrock on all Alfa Romeo cars? The moral of the story is that on St. Patrick's Day there is a little Irish in all of us.

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CANADIAN MERCHANT MARINE

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (South Shore): Madam Speaker, I again rise to bring to the attention of the House the need to fully recognize for full veterans benefits the members of the Canadian Merchant Marine who served on the high seas during World War II.

My late uncle, Captain Ernest Shatford was one such man. From 1939 to 1945 he traversed the Atlantic Ocean many times, from Nova Scotia to Europe, from Newfoundland to the Caribbean. For six years, his life was on the line for Canada and for Canadians. Yet he died two years ago this week ineligible for long-term care in a veterans hospital.

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Canada's merchant marine veterans should be eligible for all veterans benefits including full benefits under the Veterans Independence Program.

There should be a book of remembrance with the names of Canada's merchant mariners who gave their lives in the cause of Canada.

The Minister of Veterans Affairs should use his good office on behalf of the government of Canada to encourage the construction of a suitable memorial to honour the memory of Canada's merchant seamen.

These suggestions should not only be accepted by the government but accepted and implemented as soon as possible.

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[Translation]

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE ROGER LEMELIN

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Madam Speaker, Roger Lemelin is no more. Perhaps better than anyone else, he depicted our social history. It was therefore very natural for the people to recognize themselves in his books and television series.

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A man of letters, he won all the awards and was the first writer from outside France to sit on the jury for the Goncourt Prize.

A man of action, he skilfully directed America's largest French-language daily for 10 years.

Roger Lemelin was also a great patriot. In his last editorial in *La Presse*, published in 1981, the author of the Plouffe family series wrote that in taking his positions, he always wanted a stronger, more united Canada where a French Quebec, with its wonderful distinctness, could enjoy the riches of the vast territory of Canada while strengthening its cultural identity as a young nation.

He told members of the Canadian Press in Toronto on May 2, 1979 that never did he think that he would stop being French and that he had fought for French culture all his life. "I am glad to be a French Canadian," he said.

On behalf of my party and myself and, I am sure, all members of this House, I would like to express to his widow and his whole family our admiration and our deeply felt condolences.