

THE SENATE

Wednesday, March 17, 1982

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.
Prayers.

PARLIAMENT

HOUSE OF COMMONS—CESSATION OF RINGING OF DIVISION
BELL

On Presentation of Petitions:

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I do not have any documents to table, but I understand all is quiet on the western front. I am sure we all welcome that.

Hon. Jacques Flynn (Leader of the Opposition): If you want the front to be quiet on this side, I will show you that it can be very quiet.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

TRIBUTES TO ST. PATRICK AND THE IRISH PEOPLE

Hon. C. William Doody: Honourable senators, may I for just a moment impose on your generosity and take advantage of today's being March 17, which is an important date in my part of the world. I wish to share the good feeling and good fellowship that people of Irish descent have towards each and every one of you on this day.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Doody: There are some of us who have the double advantage of having Gallic and Celtic blood mixed together in our veins, like Senator Flynn, and sometimes they get more exercised than even the most adamant of us Irish. Nevertheless, to all of you who share the Irish blood that I have, and to all the rest of you who wish you did, I offer "the top o' the mornin'."

Hon. Andrew Thompson: Honourable senators, like Senator Doody, I sense a rare feeling of Christian tenderness, warmth and charity among all of us in this chamber. Of course, it is because we are celebrating the day of the Apostle of Ireland—St. Patrick's Day.

Senator Doody: You don't look Irish!

Senator Thompson: On such an occasion as this, it could happen that someone in this chamber might interject and ask why on earth I am talking about St. Patrick; but I suggest that such a person resist that temptation. I notice that my good friend, Senator Riley, is not in the chamber. He knows the perils I have faced in New Brunswick when I have talked of the origins of St. Patrick. If I did expand on his origins here, I would be glad if Senator Bosa was not present, because he could surely be claiming other virtues for his ancestry.

I wish to say, however, that my credentials are good, despite what some honourable senators may think or what the Immigration Department may have thought, because my mother was born in Dublin.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Thompson: I am inclined to exaggerate a wee bit and say that she "wheeled her wheelbarrow through streets broad and narrow," but I do not think I can go that far. My father was born in the north, in the misty green valleys. I have an idea that I was born on the border, although my birth certificate does not say so—but I think I will stick to that. I was actually born somewhere near Ballytogue.

I visited my native land several years ago and felt as much at home in Dublin as I did in the north. I only wish that the people of Ireland could feel as much at home as I did in every corner of their native land.

On this day the thoughts and hearts of Irish men and women all over the world are attuned to the haunting music of Ireland, as gentle and as pure as the lovely lush green carpets that sweep down from the mountains. From the lilt of their speech to their songs which express joy and sorrow—it is all part of my homeland. We are hoping that honourable senators will share that spirit, and any other spirits they may feel inclined to share, today.

Dr. Johnson once said that the Irish are a fair people—they never speak well of each other. I would dispute that. I shall therefore not dwell on the fanatics who defame and shame the true patriotism of Ireland by their obscene distortions about medieval religious hatred, and their grotesque violence and brutality in their attempt to espouse the cause of peace and tranquility in Ireland. I shall not talk of them. I could talk of their positive accomplishments in so many areas, but I will just focus, in view of this being the eve of patriation, on the Fathers of Confederation: seven out of the 35 from the "Auld Sod".

● (1410)

I would like to leave with you the message of St. Patrick, a message of compassion and charity, which I hope will spread to Ireland, as well as all across this land of ours. It was a message of peace and mercy, delivered by St. Patrick in the Dark Ages. I hope that in my homeland, both north and south, both orange and green, that path to peace and charity will be found.

Though ye can't be "near"
And ye must be "far",
May the luck o' St. Pat
Be where ye are.