

The span of almost sixty years since the first Presidential inauguration has seen a nation transformed. This Ireland which stands so confidently on the brink of the 21st century and the third millennium is one our forbears dreamed of and yearned for, a prospering Ireland, accomplished, educated, dynamic, innovative, compassionate, proud of its people, its language, and of its vast heritage; an Ireland, at the heart of the European Union, respected by nations and cultures across the world.

The scale of what we have already accomplished in such a short time allows us to embrace the future with well-based confidence and hope.

It is the people of Ireland who, in a million big and small ways, in quiet acts of hard work, heroism and generosity have built up the fabric of home, community and country on which the remarkable success story of today's Ireland is built.

Over many generations there have been very special sources of inspiration who have nurtured our talent and instilled determination into this country. Many outstanding politicians, public servants, voluntary workers, clergy of all denominations and religious, teachers and particularly parents have through hard and difficult times worked and sacrificed so that our children could blossom to their fullest potential.

They are entitled to look with satisfaction at what they have achieved. May we never become so cynical that we forget to be grateful. I certainly owe them a deep personal debt and as President I hope to find many opportunities both to repay that debt and to assist in the great work of encouraging our children to believe in themselves and in their country.

Among those who are also owed an enormous debt of thanks are the countless emigrants whose letters home with dollars and pound notes, earned in grinding loneliness thousands of miles from home, bridged the gap between the Ireland they left and the Ireland which greets them today when they return as tourists or return to stay. They are a crucial part of our global Irish family. In every continent they have put their ingenuity and hard work at the service of new homelands. They have kept their love of Ireland, its traditions and its culture deep in their hearts so that wherever we travel in the world there is always a part of Ireland of which we can be proud and which in turn takes pride in us. I hope over the next seven years there will be many opportunities for me to celebrate with them.

At our core we are a sharing people. Selfishness has never been our creed. Commitment to the welfare of each other has fired generations of voluntary organisations and a network of everyday neighbourliness which weaves together the caring fabric of our country. It has sent our missionaries, development workers and peacekeepers to the aid of distressed peoples in other parts of the world. It has made us a country of refuge for the hurt and dispossessed of other troubled places. It is the fuel which drives us to tackle the many social problems we face, problems which cynicism and self doubt can never redress but painstaking commitment can. We know our duty is to spread the benefits of our prosperity to those whose lives are still mired in poverty, unemployment, worry and despair. There can be no rest until the harsh gap between the comfortable and the struggling has been bridged.

The late Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh, Ireland's fifth president and, dare I say it, one of three lawyers to grace the office, said at his inauguration in 1974:

"Presidents, under the Irish Constitution don't have policies. But * * * a President can have a theme."

The theme of my Presidency, the Eighth Presidency, is Building Bridges. These bridges require no engineering skills but they will demand patience, imagination and courage for Ireland's pace of change is now bewilderingly fast. We grow more complex by the day. Our dancers, singers, writers, poets, musicians, sportsmen and women, indeed our last President herself, are giants on the world stage. Our technologically skilled young people are in demand everywhere. There is an invigorating sense of purpose about us.

There are those who absorb the rush of newness with delight. There are those who are more cautious, even fearful. Such tensions are part of our creative genius, they form the energy which gives us our unique identity, our particularity.

I want to point the way to a reconciliation of these many tensions and to see Ireland grow ever more comfortable and at ease with the flowering diversity that is now all around us. To quote a Belfast poet Louis MacNeice "a single purpose can be founded on a jumble of opposites."

Yet I know to speak of reconciliation is to raise a nervous query in the hearts of some North of the border, in the place of my birth. There is no more appropriate place to address that query than here in Dublin Castle, a place where the complex history of these two neighbouring and now very neighbourly islands has seen many chapters written. It is fortuitous too that the timing of today's Inauguration coincides with the commemoration of those who died so tragically and heroically in two world wars. I think of nationalist and unionist, who fought and died together in those wars, the differences which separated them at home, fading into insignificance as the bond of their common humanity forged friendships as intense as love can make them.

In Ireland, we know only too well the cruelty and capriciousness of violent conflict. Our own history has been hard on lives young and old. Too hard. Hard on those who died and those left behind with only shattered dreams and poignant memories. We hope and pray, indeed we insist, that we have seen the last of violence. We demand the right to solve our problems by dialogue and the noble pursuit of consensus. We hope to see that consensus pursued without the language of hatred and contempt and we wish all those engaged in that endeavour, well.

That it can be done—we know. We need look no further than our own European continent where once bitter enemies now work conscientiously with each other and for each other as friends and partners. The greatest salute to the memory of all our dead and the living whom they loved, would be the achievement of agreement and peace.

I think of the late Gordon Wilson who faced his unbearable sorrow ten years ago at the horror that was Enniskillen. His words of love and forgiveness shocked us as if we were hearing them for the very first time, as if they had not been uttered first two thousand years ago. His work, and the work of so many peacemakers who have risen above the awesome pain of loss to find a bridge to the other side, is work I want to help in every way I can. No side has a monopoly on pain. Each has suffered intensely.

I know the distrusts go deep and the challenge is awesome. Across this island, North, South, East and West, there are people of such greatness of heart that I know with their help it can be done. I invite them, to work in partnership with me to dedicate ourselves to the task of creating a wonderful millennium gift to the Child of Bethlehem whose 2000th birthday we will soon celebrate—the gift of an island where difference is celebrated with joyful curiosity and gener-

ous respect and where in the words of John Hewitt "each may grasp his neighbor's hand as friend."

There will be those who are wary of such invitations, afraid that they are being invited to the edge of a precipice. To them I have dedicated a poem, written by the English poet, Christopher Logue, himself a veteran of the Second World War.

"Come to the edge.
We might fall.
Come to the edge.
It's too high!
Come to the edge
And they came,
and he pushed
and they flew."

No one will be pushing, just gently inviting, but I hope that if ever and whenever you decide to walk over that edge, there will be no need to fly, you will find there a firm and steady bridge across which we will walk together both ways.

Ireland sits tantalizingly ready to embrace a golden age of affluence, self-assurance tolerance and peace. It will be my most profound privilege to be President of this beautiful, intriguing country.

May I ask those of faith, whatever that faith may be, to pray for me and for our country that we will use these seven years well, to create a future where in the words of William Butler Yeats.

"Everything we look upon is blest" •

RECOGNITION OF WILFRED WOODS

• Mr. GORTON. I would like to call attention to Wilfred Woods, who has recently announced he will step down as the publisher of the Wenatchee World newspaper after 47 years. Wilfred is the son of Rufus Woods, who purchased the Wenatchee Daily World in 1907, and was one of the earliest promoters of the Grand Coulee Dam project. Beginning in 1918, Rufus used the pages of the newspaper to promote the concept of using the Columbia River for hydroelectric power as well as for irrigation of the fertile but arid Columbia Basin. Half a million acres are irrigated by the Columbia Basin project. This valuable irrigation project allowed the central Washington desert to bloom and is responsible for producing the valley known as the Apple Capital of the World.

Wilfred Woods and his late father, Rufus, have played significant roles in the development of central Washington during their 90 years of service. Wilfred succeeded his father as editor and publisher in 1950 and has been an active advocate for resource and economic development in central Washington. He served as a State parks commissioner, a trustee for Central Washington University, and in various capacities in countless civic organizations.

Wilfred's son, Rufus, will now become the editor and publisher of the Wenatchee World and carry on the great traditions of his father and grandfather.

Wilfred has been a great personal friend of mine for more than 30 years, dating back to the time I first ran for Washington State attorney general. I have always valued his wisdom, foresight, and the manner in which he and

his father guided the Wenatchee World to become one of the State's finest daily newspapers. Wilfred and his father were truly part of a legendary experience that has forever changed the political and economic landscape of north-central Washington. While the Woods family will be remembered most for their influence over the management of the Columbia River system, I will remember Wilfred as a true friend. During my years of touring Washington State for various political engagements and meetings, I always looked forward to my stop in Wilfred's newsroom and valued our countless conversations, whether we were in agreement or not. I will miss our exchange of ideas and his insights into the central Washington community. I wish him continued success in future endeavors.●

NEW MEXICO HISPANIC CULTURAL CENTER PERFORMING ARTS FACILITY

● Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, S. 1417, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to provide for the design, construction, furnishing, and equipping of a center for performing arts within the complex known as the New Mexico Hispanic Cultural Center, was introduced and passed the Senate on November 7, 1997.

Because the measure was considered and passed on the same day as its introduction, the Committee on Environment and Public Works was not referred S. 1417, and a report was not filed. Subsequent to the passage of the legislation, however, the Congressional Budget Office issued a cost estimate, as required under the Senate rules. Therefore, I ask that the letter from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office, dated November 17, 1997, be printed in the RECORD.

The letter follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, November 17, 1997.
Hon. FRANKLIN D. RAINES,
Director, Office of Management and Budget,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. RAINES: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for the pay-as-you-go effects of S. 1417, the Hispanic Cultural Center Act of 1997.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them.

SUMMARY OF PAY-AS-YOU-GO EFFECTS
(In millions of dollars)

	By fiscal year									
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Change in outlays	0	6	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Change in receipts						Not Applicable				

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Christina Hawley Sadoti. This estimate was approved by Paul N. Van de Water, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.●

RADIO STATION MERGERS

● Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, during the course of the last several months, the number of broadcast radio station transactions has increased due to the liberalized station ownership provisions contained in the Telecommunications Act of 1996. However, with this increase in transactions has come an increased concern that, in authorizing these assignments, the FCC may try to impose terms and conditions on the assignors or assignees neither contained in, nor intended by, the 1996 act.

Radio mergers must be permitted to go forward when they satisfy the requirements under the plain meaning of the statute. While the Senate is in adjournment, I expect the FCC to follow the law, not rewrite it, when they review radio station mergers.

Given the number of broadcast media outlets available today, traditional concerns about how mergers affect viewpoint diversity are greatly mitigated. This is especially true because, in addition to traditional broadcast media outlets, various multichannel video programming services and online services over the Internet, as well as nonbroadcast media outlets like magazines and newspapers, are available in today's market.

In light of these facts, Mr. President, the FCC should not block sensible radio mergers or approve them only with additional, unwarranted terms and conditions attached.●

JUDICIAL CONFIRMATIONS IN THE 105TH CONGRESS

● Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, now that we have concluded the 1st session of the 105th Congress, I want to again focus the attention of the Senate and the American people on the glacial pace of Federal judicial confirmations during this session.

Mr. President, the reluctance of the Senate to confirm the President's nominees to the Federal bench is a carryover from the 2d session of the 104th Congress, during which the Republican-controlled Senate, in an unprecedented display of election-year inaction, confirmed only 17 district court nominees and no circuit court nominees.

This pattern of inaction has continued into the 105th Congress, during which the Senate has confirmed only 36 of the President's judicial nominees—7 circuit judges and 29 district court judges. Admittedly, there was some effort made in the waning days of the session to confirm judges, but the overall numbers remain highly disturbing and worthy of attention.

In the last 2 years, the Senate has confirmed 53 judicial nominees, while a total of 81 seats on the bench continue

The CBO staff contact is Christina Hawley Sadoti.

Sincerely,
JUNE E. O'NEILL, Director.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE

PAY-AS-YOU-GO ESTIMATE

S. 1417.—Hispanic Cultural Center Act of 1997

S. 1417, the Hispanic Cultural Center Act of 1997, would require the Secretary of the Interior to make a grant to the state of New Mexico to pay for one-half of the costs of the design, construction, furnishing and equipping of a Center for Performing Arts within the New Mexico Hispanic Cultural Center. Based on the amounts S. 1417 would count toward the state share, the federal share of these costs is estimated at about \$18 million. However some funds have been appropriated for this purpose for the 1998 fiscal year: \$2.5 million in the VA, HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act and \$3 million in the Interior Appropriations Act. Because S. 1417 would not restrict this grant to the availability of appropriations, New Mexico would be entitled to receive the remaining costs even if no additional appropriations are made. Enactment of S. 1417 would therefore increase pay-as-you-go spending by about \$13 million between fiscal years 1999-2001, as shown in the following table.

to lie vacant, and 41 nominees await committee or floor consideration.

In other words, there are still more nominees pending in the Senate than were confirmed this year, and more than twice the number of nominees confirmed last year.

Compare the number of nominees confirmed thus far this year and in the 104th Congress to the number confirmed in the last two Democratically controlled Congresses, one of which featured a Republican President. In the 102d Congress, the Senate confirmed 124 Federal judges, while in the 103d Congress it confirmed 129 Federal judges. In the 104th Congress, the Republicans confirmed but 75 judges, while this year it confirmed 36. In other words, in the last 3 years, the Republican majority in the Senate has confirmed fewer Federal judges than the Democratically controlled Senate did in either the 102d or the 103d Congress.

I ask my colleagues to further compare the figures of the last 2 years with the number of judicial nominees confirmed by Democratically controlled Senates during years when a Republican White House faced a Democratic challenge—when, as in 1996, the party in control of the Senate had an incentive to delay confirmations, in the hopes that the Presidential election would effect a transfer of the White House to its party.