

HARVEY L. GOULD

October 19, 2006

The Honorable Bertie Ahern  
Taoiseach  
Department of the Taoiseach  
Government Buildings Upper  
Merrion Street Dublin 2  
Ireland

Taoiseach Ahern, a chara,

Ba maith liom me fein a chur in aithne duit. Although I was born in Chicago, and am descended from Jewish grandparents from Poland and Russia, I am writing to request that you certify me as a full blooded Irishman. Here's why.

In 1988, my wife brought me to Ireland for the first time. Although I had no emotional connection to the country (and making matters worse, had never had a Guinness), quickly I fell in love with the beauty of the countryside, the Irish people and the good craic.

Ever since then we've spent a holiday in Ireland every year. First, we did the typical tourist stuff, but now we just "live" in your country, always staying at the same cottage outside of Adare. We know the local postmistress, the librarian, the grocer and the owners of many local businesses. We know a local sheep farmer and bought ten ewes from him as a gift for friends who live in Adare. We know the Master of the Hounds for the Limerick Hunt Club. Sometimes, he stops by our cottage in the summer surrounded by his forty hounds which he is training for hunt season. I've gone on two hunts, both in Ireland, one in Clare and one in Limerick, and both the thrill of a lifetime.

Perhaps none of this qualifies me to be an honorary Irishman, but here's what does. I have a rare blood disorder and while we were in Adare this past July I ended up receiving 12 units of good Irish blood at the Cancer Day Ward at the Midwest Regional Hospital in Limerick. In fact, as I was getting my twelfth unit, for cross checking purposes, the nurses asked me my name. I said, "After this next transfusion my name will be either Taoiseach Ahern or Seamus Heaney so either I'll make a political speech in Irish or I'll recite a poem for ye -- or both."

I know you have a few other items on your agenda, but what could be more important than a Taoiseach deciding who is Irish? In my case this should be an easy decision. Since a person typically has ten units of blood or less, literally I am now a full blooded Irishman, so I'm just looking for you to officially recognize my already existing status. Besides, this will help you with the Jewish vote, which could mean up to another six or seven votes at the next election.

Tugaim buiochas leat roimh re as do chabhair.

Lea meas,

Harvey L. Gould (soon to be O'Gould)

p.s. After receiving word from you confirming the certification, I'll let you know when we'll next be in Ireland this coming summer. In that way you'll know when you can stop by our cottage; have a cup of tea (or something stronger if you prefer) and a scone or two and drop off the certificate, unless you want the ceremony nationally televised. Just let me know so I'll be sure to bring the appropriate attire on our holiday. Slainte chugat.