

The intangible synergy necessary to win the State Championship cannot easily be replicated. These young ladies have reached the pinnacle of their sport through outstanding athleticism and teamwork. Team members Kali Kuhl, Petra Whitcraft, Veronica Rood, Emily Fahrre, Tara Breske, Lexi Leonhard, Amy Zuccarelli, Kelsey Cousino, Stephanie Champine, Jamie Swick, Michelle Obert, Hanna O'Connor, Jackie Blaida and Courtney Riehle all deserve recognition for their phenomenal achievement.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all of my colleagues join me in commending the Bedford High School girls' volleyball team on its exceptional season and 2005 Class A State Championship.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
JOHN YATES

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2005

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of the members of the greatest generation our nation has known. The Honorable John Yates, a member of the Georgia House of Representatives exemplifies a life of service to causes greater than himself, and his example should be known and followed across this nation.

During his youth in rural Spalding County, Georgia, Representative Yates grew up on a family farm, working in the cotton fields to help pay for his family's food.

Representative Yates served in the military during one of the greatest struggles for human freedom our nation has known—World War II. He flew his plane, providing air cover for vulnerable ground troops, and destroying German targets. He was involved in key aspects of the Battle of the Bulge, and participated as a military observer during the liberation of the Dachau death camp.

After his service to our country, Representative Yates went on to work for the Ford Motor Company for many years, while raising his family. In that same Spalding County where he grew up, Representative Yates continued his service to the community.

In 1989, the citizens of his home county recognized his past service and committed to him yet another great trust—a seat in the Georgia House of Representatives. When he took his position there, the Democratic Party was still the majority, and Republicans were very few. But Representative Yates did not give up. He stuck with it, and is today a member of the majority party, as Republicans took control of the House of Representatives in Georgia during the 2004 election cycle.

As a result of his commitment and dedication through the years, the new House leadership gave Representative Yates even more responsibility—the chairmanship of the Defense and Veterans' Affairs Committee in the Georgia House. Representative Yates has continued his valiant service to his nation and state in that capacity during the course of this 2005 regular legislative session.

But there is more to Representative Yates, and this is revealed by his deep personal commitment to his wife, Annie. Although she has been afflicted with some health problems,

Representative Yates has continued his valiant service by serving and caring for his wife, demonstrating his deep affection and the character that is the foundation of every area of his life.

Representative Yates has spent his life in service to his nation, his state, and his family, and is an example to all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I lay before you the life and work of Representative John Yates—a man that deserves the highest praise of our nation, a dear friend of mine, and a man that embodies the values that make America great. I am grateful to call Representative Yates my friend, and am grateful for this opportunity to bring the valiant service of John Yates to his country, his state, and his family to the attention of the American people.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today and join the millions of my fellow Americans in commemorating Greek Independence Day which, on March 25th celebrated the 184th anniversary of the rebellion and the struggle of the Greek people against the Ottoman Empire.

What makes Greek Independence Day so special here in America is that it reminds us of the strong principles and bonds that the U.S. and Greece share. In looking into the struggles of our two nations, we realize how much our struggles have in common, and how much each country has been influenced by the other.

Greece and the United States are bound by an absolute commitment to the democratic ideals of justice and freedom and continue to be strong allies. By commemorating Greek Independence Day, we also celebrate the strength and the resolve of the human spirit that has been the inspiration of us all.

I am very pleased to place into the RECORD a statement made on this 184th anniversary of Greek independence written by one of my constituents, Constantinos Nicolaou:

STATEMENT OF MR. CONSTANTINOS NICOLAOU
OF MARYLAND

The greatness of the human spirit, regardless of any efforts to suppress it, will always rise against tyranny and oppression and will start revolutions where heroism will pay any price, even the ultimate sacrifice of life, in order to gain freedom and independence.

Every time we commemorate heroism such as the one exhibited by the Greeks on March 25, 1821 and during the ensuing struggle for their freedom, we cannot help but think of our great Founding Fathers, who were so much influenced by the ancient Greeks in their struggles for freedom and the creation of what had become the freest, most democratic country in history, the United States of America.

Thomas Jefferson looked to the ancient Greek philosophers and their teachings as an inspiration in trying to create a fair, strong, democratic state. And it was not accidental that many of the Greek leaders of the 1821 revolution, turned to America for inspiration as they were embarking in their struggle for freedom.

Both nations were faced with seemingly insurmountable struggles, rising against empires to claim their rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Both nations became triumphant at the end, because of their love of freedom. The great American Patriot, Patrick Henry, proclaimed, "Give me liberty or give me death." The Greek patriots went to battle proclaiming, "Eleftheria I Thanatos"—liberty or death.

As with the American Revolution, the Greek revolution is filled with stories of heroism and sacrifice. News of such heroism and sacrifice met with strong feelings of support by the American public and by their politicians, including President James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, who expressed their support for the Greek revolution through their annual messages to Congress. Henry Clay, our secretary of state in 1825, was very vocal in his support of Greece's fight for independence. Daniel Webster, more often than not, influenced his colleagues in looking into the Greek struggle with sympathetic interests.

It is, of course, no surprise that our Founding Fathers and other prominent Americans were supportive of the Greek struggle for independence. As mentioned, they themselves had been inspired by the ancient Greeks. Thomas Jefferson, of all the Founding Fathers, had a particular affinity for Greece, not only because of its classical republican philosophy but also because of his studies of the origins of languages. He expressed that affinity many times, as in a letter to John Brazier on August 24, 1819. In that letter, Thomas Jefferson addresses "Mr. Pickering's Memoir of the Modern Greek," and the Memoirs review by Brazier. He tells Brazier, "I had been much pleased with the memoir, and was much also with your review of it. I have little hope indeed of recovery of the ancient pronunciation of the finest of human languages, but still I rejoice to the attention the subject seems to excite with you, because it is evidence that our country begins to have a taste for something more than merely as much Greek as will pass a candidate for clerical ordination. . . . Among the values of classical learning, I estimate the luxury of learning the Greek and Roman authors in all the beauties of their originals. And why should not this innocent and elegant luxury take its preeminent stand ahead of all those addressed merely to the senses? I think myself more indebted to my father for this than for all other luxuries his cares and affections have placed within my reach."

Jefferson expressed his empathies with Greece revolting against its Ottoman rulers. In an 1823 letter to Adamantios Coray, the Greek patriot and scholar that he had met in Paris years earlier, he stated:

" . . . You have certainly began at the right end towards preparing them [the Greek people] for the great object they are now contending for, by improving their minds and qualifying them for self-government. For this they will owe you lasting honors. Nothing is more likely to forward this object than a study of the fine models of science left by their ancestors; to whom we also are all indebted for the lights which originally led ourselves out of Gothic darkness."

No people sympathize more feelingly than ours with the suffering of your countrymen; none offer more sincere and ardent prayers to heaven for their success. And nothing indeed but the fundamental principle of our government never to entangle us with the broils of Europe could restrain our generous youth from taking some part in this holy cause. Possessing ourselves the combined blessing of liberty and order, we wish the same to other countries, and to none more than yours, which she first of civilized nations presented examples of what man should be.