

The ties that bind America and Greece go, of course, far beyond their parallel and noble struggles for freedom. The philosophical and cultural connections, although little known to the public at large, could not be stronger or better assimilated. Such connections were born almost at the same time with the birth of our nation, if not before. In his excellent study of "Lincoln at Gettysburg," Gary Wills tells us:

"America as a second Athens was an idea whose moment had come in the nineteenth century. . . . In the early 19th century, an era that became known as America's Greek Revival was taking shape. Archaeological discoveries in Greece at the time brought the ancient democracy to mind just as modern Greece began its struggle for freedom from the Turks.

"Edward Everett, President of Harvard, founder of Mount Auburn, congressman, Massachusetts's governor, minister to the Court of St. James's in London, senator, secretary of state and principal speaker at Gettysburg years later, was the leader of the Greek Revival. Harvard established its new chair of ancient Greek studies for him. While studying in Germany, Everett went to Greece, 'to walk over the battlefields where the first democracy of the West won its freedom.' He returned to America convinced that a new Athens was rising here. His appearances, 'prompted rallies for Greek independence'—a favorite cause of Everett.

"Everett's prestige influenced others, including historian George Bancroft, whose 'main interest was Greek history.' . . . Bancroft was ahead of the wave of histories that would glorify Periclean Athens in Victorian England. Direct democracy, a flawed system in republican theory, was rehabilitated, for its usefulness in the parliamentary reform movement, by British historians like George Grote. In America, a similar motion toward government by the people, not just for the republic, was signaled by an enthusiasm for Greek symbols. Bancroft became a Jacksonian Democrat when he began to apply historical skills formed on the Attic democracy to America's development. Walter Savage Landor recognized what was happening in America when he dedicated the second volume of his *Pericles and Aspasia* to President Andrew Jackson."

Greece and the United States, bound by their absolute commitment to freedom and justice, have always been the strongest of the allies. Greece stood by us and fought with us in every single war or conflict since we both gained our freedom. And we always stood by Greece, and although at times we appeared to have forgotten how loyal and valuable the Greeks had been to us, our ultimate commitment to their freedom and well-being never wavered.

And as we commemorate and fight to free all people, let us remember that some other friends of ours are still agonizing and asking for our help in fighting forces of evil still occupying their land and their homes. The people of the Republic of Cyprus, Greeks and Turks and all others, should be given more active support by our great nation in their efforts to reunite the island and get rid of the occupying forces. U.S. leadership is essential, and now it is the time that we should remember that the Cypriot people are where we had been, and they are striving for what we have earned long time ago, that is, their right to freedom, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It is essential that American leadership urges Turkish and Turkish Cypriot leaders towards peace. These are the two sides that hold in their hands, to the largest extent, the peaceful solution to the Cyprus problem. A solution that undoubtedly will benefit all the people of Cyprus, but it will also benefit

the nations of Greece and Turkey, will stabilize the region, and will strengthen the bonds and relationships between the United States and the countries involved in the conflict.

As we commemorate Greek Independence Day, we are celebrating the strength and the resolve of the human spirit as well as man's unbending will in the pursuit of freedom. The people of ancient Greece gave us values and ethics and showed us how to fight for freedom and democracy. Our country, more than any other country, shares those values and ethics, and in days such as this we reaffirm our common democratic heritage with the Greek people. The commemoration and celebration remind us also that we should stay forever vigilant in fighting for and protecting our freedom and our democracy, least we lose the right to determine our lives and our future.

Dionisios Solomos was the great poet who transformed in his poetry the unparalleled struggle and the sacrifices of Hellenism in the pursuit of Freedom. The Revolution so much influenced his poetry that he is considered the national poet of Greece. One of his most inspired poems, *Hymn to Liberty*, has almost become synonymous to that Revolution and it became Greece's National Anthem. The poem was published in 1825, along with translations in Italian, French and English.

The Revolution would have never been the same without Solomos. The enthusiasm of the fighters, as well as the international sympathy among the Philhellenes would have definitely been smaller without the *Hymn to Liberty*.

Probably nowhere was Solomos's vision of Liberty depicted better than here, in the United States. Here, in the Rotunda of our own Capitol Hill, we see a most wonderful painting of Liberty, with the sword in hand chasing her enemies, exactly the way Solomos envisioned her in his *Hymn to Liberty*. This figure was painted by another son of Greece, one who really grasped Solomos's vision of Liberty, Constantino Brumidi.

And as a tribute to the United States, Solomos envisions our country rejoicing in seeing Greece fighting for Freedom. He describes the American feelings this way:

Most heartily was gladdened
George Washington's brave land:
For the iron bonds remembered,
Her old slavery's cruel brand.

We live today in a great, free country. Our country became great, and will always be so, because the spirit and the morals that we share with Greece, as so eloquently expressed by Solomos, will always be with us.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CHARLOTTE MAYOR MARK T. WILSON

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mark T. Wilson, Mayor of Charlotte, Texas, for his dedicated service to his community.

Mayor Wilson is one of Charlotte's proudest native sons. Born and raised in Charlotte, he graduated from Charlotte High School and attended TSTI in Waco, TX. While in school, he studied farming and ranching in preparation for a career as a rancher.

Mr. Wilson's family has been in the ranching business for many years, and he has estab-

lished himself in the business community as well, owning and operating heavy equipment and providing road construction and land clearing for local ranchers. In addition, he has given back to the community through his work as a public servant for the City of Charlotte. He began his service as an Alderman, and rose through the rank of Mayor Pro-Tem to become Mayor, a post he has held with distinction for the past 8 and 1/2 years.

He has left his mark on the community in other ways, as well. He and his wife, Jenci, are the parents of four children of their own, and have selflessly given their time to the foster parents' program. Mayor Wilson continues to give his time to his local church, the 4-H, and the Future Farmers of America.

Mayor Mark Wilson is a tremendous asset for the City of Charlotte, Texas. His work as a public servant, a successful businessman, and a dedicated father serve as an example to the rest of us. I am proud to have the opportunity to thank him here for all he has done.

HONORING THE DEDICATION OF THE OLIVIA HERMAN TRACK AND FIELD COMPLEX

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2005

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend Olivia Herman, whose life will be commemorated in Lehigh, Pennsylvania, as the school district dedicates its new athletic complex as the Olivia Herman Track and Field Complex.

Olivia served on the Lehigh Area School Board for 13 years, from 1991 through 2003. She succumbed to cancer in March 2004 after a short battle with the disease.

Olivia was elected as president of the school board from 2001 through 2003. When she attended her very last school board meeting in December 2003, the board voted to dedicate to her the new athletic complex that was being built. Olivia had worked diligently to obtain funding for the new facilities, and the school district wanted to show its appreciation.

For eight years—from 1996 through 2003—Olivia served on the board of directors for the Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit. Prior to that, she was the Director of Literacy for Carbon County, and was a volunteer reading teacher. Olivia Herman was a tremendous asset to the field of education. She was a lifelong advocate of reading and always stressed the importance of literacy.

Olivia received her college degree later in life after working professionally as a social worker for many years. She went to the University of Delaware, graduating in 1971. Olivia's husband, William, was sick at the time and the two stayed in Delaware for a few years before returning to Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Olivia, herself a 1942 graduate of Lehigh Area High School, was by many accounts one of the most gifted athletes to ever graduate from the school. She was especially active in gymnastics, but she also participated in basketball, cheerleading, and track. She remained active in the school district throughout her life, organizing reunions for her former classmates every few years. When she retired, she decided she still had more to give of herself.