

As the only member of the European Union from the region, Greece has played a stabilizing role in the area and helped advance its neighbors' progress toward political and economic security. Greece's own efforts to continue the modernization of its economy and its steadfast defense of democratic governance are critical to the promotion of democracy and stability in neighboring lands.

On March 25, Greece will commemorate the beginning of its quest for independence from four centuries of Ottoman rule. After nearly 10 years of struggle against tremendous odds, the Greek people secured liberty for their homeland and reaffirmed the individual freedoms that are at the heart of their tradition.

From the beginning of their revolution, the Greeks had the support—both material and emotional—from a people who had only recently gained freedom for themselves; the Americans. And since then, our two nations have remained firmly united by shared beliefs in democratic principles and mutual understanding of the sacrifices entailed in establishing a republic.

As a nation whose founders were ardent students of the classics, America has drawn its political convictions from the ancient Greek ideals of liberty and citizenship. And just as we looked to the Greeks for inspiration, Greek patriots looked to the American Revolution for strength in the face of their own adversity.

Since their liberation, the Greek people have never taken their liberty for granted. In both World Wars, Greece never wavered from its commitment to the United States and the other allied nations to resist the forces of totalitarianism. Faced with a Communist uprising after World War II, Greece received support from President Truman and the American people, who helped the Greeks rebuild their war-ravaged nation.

Along with our shared values and traditions, Greece and America share a bond by virtue of those individuals who have remained devoted to the ideals of both countries. The Greek-American community, which maintains an especially close relationship with Greece, also consistently makes significant contributions to American culture, business, and history. Truly, it is a community that enriches our life at home while strengthening our ties abroad.

At this time last year, First Lady Hillary Clinton was in Greece. Her visit was followed by a meeting here in Washington between Greek Prime Minister Kostandinos Simitis and President Clinton, which laid the foundation for even stronger Greek-American relations in the future, and the broadening of existing ties into new arenas.

This year, I was proud to cosponsor Senate Resolution 56, designating March 25, 1997, as "Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy," and

I was gratified to see it approved by the Senate last week. Emotionally and philosophically, Greece has remained near the hearts and minds of Americans since this Nation was founded.

President James Monroe aptly summarized these feelings in 1822, observing: "The mention of Greece fills the mind with the most exalted sentiments and arouses in our bosom the best feelings of which our nature is susceptible." Mr. President, more than inspiration, Greece today has a very important and tangible role to play in the democratic progress of its own region. I have no doubt that Greece is up to the task.●

#### THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIRST NUTRITION PROGRAM UNDER THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, on Saturday, March 22, our Nation will commemorate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the national nutrition programs for the elderly under the Older Americans Act. Since their inception, these programs have benefited thousands of our Nation's elderly by providing home-delivered and collective meals to those elderly facing serious challenges and limitations, including economic hardship, physical and health limitations, and rural isolation.

The elderly's ability to obtain meals under the Older Americans Act was originally limited to meal sites, where groups of elderly can congregate for a meal during the day. Following several successful years of service, nutrition programs expanded to serve the homebound elderly. Also, the parameters of the Older Americans Act were extended to allow Area Agencies on Aging to inform the elderly on how to obtain nutrition education, counseling, and screening. Nutritional services have proven to be critical for a significant population of the elderly who can continue to maintain a healthy, independent lifestyle.

Through this program, Vermont's five Area Agencies on Aging contract with various local nutrition service providers to expedite the delivery of meals to people's homes and continue to coordinate meals provided in congregate settings. Federal grants provided for our country's nutrition programs fill resource gaps where nonprofit and State organizations cannot.

Twenty-five years following the first meal served in the early 1970's, 242 million meals have been provided to 3.5 million of our Nation's elderly. Since taking office in the House of Representatives in 1975, I am proud to have been a steadfast supporter of these nutrition programs. They are a wonderful example of the Federal Government's successful contribution to improving the lives of our Nation's senior citizens.●

#### COST OF UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT IN BOSNIA

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the escalating costs of the United States involvement in Bosnia.

Recently, I asked the administration representatives for a ballpark estimate of the expected cost to the United States taxpayer of the American operation in Bosnia.

I was astonished to hear that administration estimates have been revised to \$6.5 billion.

Six-point-five billion dollars. To put that in perspective, we were originally told that the Bosnia mission would cost the United States taxpayer some \$2 billion. Later, the estimate was revised to \$3 billion. Now, it has risen to a staggering \$6.5 billion.

Mr. President, the cost has now risen more than threefold since the original estimates we were given. That is equal to just over half of the entire foreign operation budget for fiscal 1997 which is about \$12.2 billion.

Let me review what has happened here. In late 1995, when the administration negotiated the United States troop commitment outlined by the Dayton accords, the administration came to the Congress with an estimate for United States troop participation in the NATO Peace Implementation Force in Bosnia, commonly referred to as IFOR. According to information provided to my office by the Office of the Secretary of Defense [OSD], this initial estimate of \$2 billion was generated using a force deployment model based on experience in Desert Storm and Somalia \* \* \* [although] the types of forces, deployment schedules, field conditions, and security situation had not been determined." Once troops were deployed to Bosnia, new information about the field conditions became available and pushed the original estimate up by about 50 percent.

As I understand it, unexpected and adverse weather conditions, including major floods, further complicated the operation—delaying the establishment of land routes and altering placement of planned camp sites. According to the Defense Department, additional reserves were also required to back fill for troops that had been deployed to the region.

Further refinements of the cost estimate were again made in July 1996, when the Defense Department recognized the need for additional moneys—to the tune of almost \$310 million—for pulling out heavy armored forces and replacing them with military police, as well as additional communications requirements. A new total cost estimate of \$3.2 million for operations through the end of 1996—that is, for approximately one full year—was provided to congressional staff in July.

The conditions that led to these refinements also helped throw the time line for the 1-year mission out of whack. So, no one could have really been surprised by the announcement