

members. Romania will be entrusted to chair the OSCE in 2001, and it will join Austria and Norway in the OSCE Troika, starting January 2000.

The United States and Romania in 1997, established a strategic partnership resulting in close cooperation and consultations on all issues of common interest, particularly: NATO policies; promoting stability and security in Southeastern Europe, combating non-traditional threats; military and economic reforms in Romania and its region. Romania has also been a key supporter of U.S. and NATO policy in the Kosovo crisis, assisting the U.S. and NATO in actions meant to bring stability to the Balkans.

Romania's government and Parliament approved without reservation overflight rights for NATO aircraft at the height of the Kosovo conflict. Romania is among the regional countries which observes the embargo against Former Republic Yugoslavia, despite significant costs. Romania has proven to be a reliable partner of the U.S. and NATO and is consistent in improving its credentials for future integration with NATO. All Romanian political forces, as well as a large majority of the people, support the goals of integration with NATO and the EU. In December 1999, Romania will host the Southeast European Defense Ministerial (SEDM), in which the United States participates.

Within this framework, Romania takes part in efforts to operationalize the Southeast European Multinational Peace Force, the first ever attempt at peaceful military cooperation in the region. Romania is the Chairman in Office of the Southeast European Cooperation Process and, as such, has been instrumental in promoting joint positions and actions of countries neighboring Serbia.

Active participants in the U.S.-supported Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI), Romania has led the efforts to conclude a regional Agreement for the fight against transborder crime and corruption which was signed in Bucharest, on 26 May 1999. Romania hosts the SECI Regional Center for the fight against transborder crime and corruption. The Center was inaugurated on 16 November 1999 and acts as a critical instrument for promoting a healthy business climate in Southeastern Europe, combating non-traditional threats and transborder crime.

Therefore, it is suggested that: The United States Congress expresses support for Romania's nomination as OSCE Chair in 2001 and readiness to cooperate with Romania in the exercise of the resulting responsibilities. The United States Congress looks forward to sending a large delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Romania, in July 2000. The United States Congress acknowledges and highlights Romania's relevance as a regional role-model for inter-ethnic cooperation, steady evolution towards mature democracy as well as decisive efforts towards a functioning market economy, against the background of difficult challenges of the reform process.

The United States Congress encourages an enhancement of U.S.-Romanian Strategic Partnership, in order to enable Romania to perform as Chairman in Office of the OSCE and to exercise effectively its OSCE area, which includes the Euro-Atlantic as well as Eurasian space. The United States Congress expresses openness to expand inter-parliamentary links with the Romanian legislature,

in order to help promote the achievement of common goals and interest.

A TRIBUTE TO MARTIN STEIN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements of Lieutenant Martin Stein, a member of the New York City Police Department.

At a time, when police departments around this nation are under attack because of accusations of brutality, wrongful deaths and generally poor community relations, Lt. Stein continues to demonstrate a sense of professionalism and commitment which has made him a credit to law enforcement. He joined the police force in 1981 and has held a variety of positions of increasing responsibility during this time period. With a career that has covered various precincts in Manhattan and Brooklyn, Lieutenant Stein is currently the Special Operations Lieutenant for the 81st precinct. In this capacity, he is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the precincts specialized units: Anti-Crime; Street Narcotics; Warrants; Field Training and Community Policing Unit. He also ensures that these units work with the patrol force to respond to the calls and needs of the community.

Under Lieutenant Stein's leadership, the 81st Precinct has seen an overall 53% reduction in crime. It is particularly significant that homicides have been reduced by 37% and shootings by 70%. These statistics indicate a real quality of life improvement for my constituents who reside in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn which is served by the 81st precinct.

Lieutenant Stein was recently married to his wife, Mary, and has a 14 year old son Peter from a previous marriage. After three years at York College in Queens, he is currently pursuing his Bachelor's degree in the New York State Regents Degree Program. I commend his fine work to the attention of my colleagues.

THANKSGIVING

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, three hundred and seventy-eight years ago, Plymouth Colony Governor William Bradford "sent four men fowling, so they might in a special manner rejoice together after they had gathered the fruit of their labor." This event marked the first official Thanksgiving celebration in the New World.

Indeed, the colonists had much to be thankful for that winter of 1621. Following a long and treacherous journey across the Atlantic, they landed on a bleak New England coast and endured a year marked by hardship and hunger in which half of the 101 original Mayflower passengers died. Finally blessed with bountiful harvest and warm shelter how-

ever, the Pilgrims paused to give thanks to God for their divine good fortune and salvation.

The idea of developing a special day to give thanks for one's prosperity did not originate with the Pilgrims—in fact such practices date back to Greek and Roman times. But that first Thanksgiving, in what would later become America, marked the beginning of a new nation, and new form of government, that would forever change the world.

Americans in 1999 have much to be thankful for too. Prepared to begin a promising new Millennium, our great nation is the strongest, freest, and most prosperous in history. Though we have plenty of hard work ahead of us, Americans also have much for which to be thankful and proud.

We should be thankful for the strength and security of our nation. After years of woeful neglect and dangerous budgetary cuts, Congress is once again committed to properly and adequately funding a military structure and national security strategy worthy of our great nation. Only through demonstrated military strength—and the unequivocal to employ it, if necessary—will we have ability to ensure lasting peace and the protection of liberty at home and abroad, well into the next Millennium.

We should be thankful too for our prosperous and growing economy. Currently boasting the longest peacetime expansion in our nation's history, and by far the strongest of any nation in the world, our economy seems unstoppable. Consumer spending is up, while unemployment rates are down. Small business and corporate sector productivity, personal income, and sales of new homes are all on the rise. The stock market, and the percentage of Americans investing in it, have both grown exponentially over just the past five years.

This success is owing mostly to the sound and responsible fiscal policies of the Republican-led Congress. After four decades of wasteful government spending, rising taxes, and mounting federal debt, Congress reversed the cycle of unaccountable big government and balanced the budget, cut taxes, paid down the debt, and created budget surpluses as far as the eye can see—all while protecting the Social Security Trust Fund. Our commitment to continued fiscal responsibility will ensure our ability to foster such economic prosperity well into the next century.

Families this year can be thankful for an unprecedented level of personal freedom, security, and opportunity in their lives. Historic welfare reform legislation passed in 1996 has liberated millions of parents previously trapped in a devastating cycle of government dependence, allowing them to better care for themselves and their families. Americans now have better access to affordable, high quality health care than anytime in history. And legislation recently passed will help to strengthen Medicare, increase health care access for seniors and children, and give more flexibility to the providers who care for them.

This year on Thanksgiving, as our nation prepares to enter a promising new Millennium, stronger and more prosperous than ever in history, we would do well to say a special word of thanks this Thanksgiving—to God and to the courageous immigrants at Plymouth who made it all possible.