

arts. Greek civilization has inspired our passion for truth and justice. And for more than a century, Americans of Greek descent have continued to lend their wisdom, energy and talent to our nation while weaving their own unique history into the social fabric of America.

Greek Independence Day marks an important milestone for lovers of freedom and democracy worldwide. I congratulate Greece for 179 years of independent rule and for a legacy that will extend for an eternity.

TRIBUTE TO WAYNE ASPINALL

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2000*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay homage to a man who sat in this august body for 24 years, from 1948 to 1972. Mr. Speaker, he served with six Presidents during that time, and was Chairman of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. It was during his tenure in the House that the focus cleared on land and water issues in this great country. Mr. Speaker, I am referring to the late-Congressman Wayne N. Aspinall from the small peach and winery town of Palisade, Colorado.

Not only did Wayne Aspinall serve with distinction here, but his career in public service spanned over 48 years, including six years on his Town's Board of Trustees and 16 years in the Colorado Legislature. His six years in the Colorado House of Representatives included service as House Speaker for two years. As a state Senator for ten years, he served as both Majority and Minority leader. He was also a sergeant in the Air Service of the Army Signal Corps during World War I.

But let me talk further about Wayne Aspinall's time in the U.S. Congress. In 1956, as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Irrigation and Reclamation, he crafted the Colorado

River Storage Project Act of 1956, which authorized Glen Canyon, Flaming Gorge, Navajo and Curecanti projects, plus several smaller projects authorized for construction and others designated for study. Aspinall's legislation was signed into law by President Eisenhower on April 11, 1956.

In 1959, Congressman Aspinall became Chairman of the U.S. House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, as I mentioned. The ensuing 14-years of his leadership were probably the most productive in history in terms of water projects and national parks authorized and built or developed, wilderness areas designated, redwoods protected, the states of Alaska and Hawaii were admitted to the Union, public land law review, and so much more.

Mr. Speaker, this remarkable Congressman's accomplishments continued. In 1964, he paved the way to the Wilderness Act, which became law September 3 and designated 9.1 million acres of wilderness and set aside more for study. At the same time, the Land and Water Conservation Fund was established primarily for parks acquisition.

Then, in 1968, he created the Colorado River Basin Development Act, signed into law by President Johnson on September 30, which balanced development in the basin. On October 2 of the same year, his bill was signed protecting 58,000 acres of California redwoods and the Land and Water Conservation Fund was further beefed-up.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, he returned to his hometown of Palisade, Colorado in 1973 to live in a new home overlooking the Colorado River which his life's work had done so much to preserve as a valuable resource for the entire western United States. He died October 9, 1983.

Now, the citizens in his hometown plan to honor his memory with a one and a half time life-size bronze sculpture by renowned North Carolina artist Thomas Jay Warren. The statue will be the central feature of a Memorial which will include the representation of a dam and river. Several adjacent Memory Walls will

be inscribed with the major achievements of the man known affectionately even today in Colorado as "Mr. Chairman." Members of the Aspinall Memorial Commission envision the Congressman Wayne N. Aspinall Memorial as an educational one, designed as much to teach students and others of the importance of sound water conservation, good government, and the history of water in the West as to record Mr. Chairman's stellar accomplishments.

The \$165,000 Memorial will sit in the southeast quadrant of what is now known as Palisade Park, on a bluff above the Colorado River about 50 yards from the home to which he had retired.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the people of Palisade and of the entire State of Colorado for their effort to honor a man who served the great American West with such distinction. And I urge all of who can do so to support this project financially.

ASPINALL MEMORIAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

Tilman N. Bishop, Retired State Senator and Educator.

Greg Walcher, Executive Director Dept. of Natural Resources.

Atty. Charles J. Traylor, former Aspinall Washington aide.

Dean Smith, Mayor of Palisade.

Rich Helm, Executive Director, Museum of Western Colorado.

Robert Helmer, Fruit Grower, President of Palisade Chamber of Commerce.

Robert C. Dougherty, Associate Publisher, Palisade Tribune.

George Distefano, Fruit Grower, representing American Legion.

Harry Talbott, President, Talbott Farms.

Elvis Guin, Retired Engineer, representing Palisades Lions Club.

Don Taylor, former Aspinall student, Retired Military.

Mike McEvoy, President, Palisades National Bank.

Mary White, sister of Mr. Aspinall.