

Of course that criticism should not give any information to the enemy. But too many people desire to suppress criticism simply because they think that it will give some comfort to the enemy to know that there is such criticism. If that comfort makes the enemy feel better for a few moments, they are welcome to it as far as I'm concerned, because the maintenance of the right of criticism in the long run will do the country maintaining it a great deal more good than it will do the enemy, and will prevent mistakes which might otherwise occur.

I fervently hope for a short military engagement, minimal civilian casualties, and the safe return of American men and women in uniform. Over the past several months, I have heard from thousands of people from throughout my district concerning the situation in Iraq. Nearly everyone expressed their concerns about the uncertainties of a pre-emptive war with Iraq. It is my belief that, before young American men and women are sent to fight in any war, we should work with the international community to exhaust every alternative short of war. Now that war has begun, all Americans—those who favored military action and those who favored alternative approaches—think of our troops and wish for their quick victory and safe return.

Our work as citizens and policy makers does not stop with this expression of our support for the troops. The start of war does not end the debate and it does not end the dissent. It is imperative that the President and our nation not only honor our commitment to rebuild Iraq following the war, but also rebuild our relations with the nations of this world so that we might once again work closely together to avoid war and maintain peace in solving global challenges.

### GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

SPEECH OF

#### HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 25, 2003*

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 182nd anniversary of Greek independence. Greece is a nation with a great democratic tradition. Athens and the United States share the same values of freedom and democracy. We are both part of what the distinguished scholar Karl Deutsch aptly labeled a "pluralistic security community," a community based on shared values and common interests. Indeed, despite all the current differences, the Euro-Atlantic Alliance, in which our nations are firmly embedded, remains the cornerstone of the zone of the democratic peace.

Maintaining and extending the zone of peace is the most important task for democracies. Greece and the United States have been united in this endeavor for decades. We were allies in the fight against Naziism during World War II, we were allies in the victorious fight against Soviet Communism. After the end of the Cold War, we have also been allies in confronting new threats to world peace. When the powder keg on the Balkans exploded, for example, the Greek and the U.S. governments worked together by promoting peace and supporting humanitarian aid. Particularly with respect to Kosovo, the Greek government's help was essential.

We are also allies in the war against terror, the greatest threat to global peace. Following the September 11 attacks, Greece immediately assured us of its support, and Greek aircrews secured our skies with NATO AWACS. Greece also joined the International Assistance Force in Afghanistan by dispatching a frigate with a crew of over 200. Athens further successfully fought terrorism on its own soil by arresting members of the November 17 group. The arrest and trial of these terrorists has created a sense of security not only among Greek society but—when we look to the Olympic Games in Athens in 2004—among the wider international community that threats of this kind can be mastered.

We are also allies in the goal of helping achieve a just a permanent solution to the Cypriot conflict. I applaud the work of the Greek government in working with their colleagues in the Republic of Cyprus along with the leaders of Turkey to promote a peaceful settlement of the situation in Cyprus and reunification of the island. I regret that the negotiations failed but I hope that a solution can be achieved in the near future.

Finally, let me conclude by stressing that good U.S.-Greek relations are not merely achieved at governmental and official levels. Instead, the Greek Americans in our country enrich our lives and provide for a better cultural understanding. The area of Queens in New York City, parts of which I represent, is home to the largest Greek population outside of Greece. These people are well integrated in our society. As their interactions form the basis for a healthy relationship at all levels, I am optimistic that the U.S.-Greek relationship will remain marked by friendship and trust.

### IN MEMORY OF MAJOR GREGORY STONE

#### HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 26, 2003*

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express the deep sorrow I share with every Idahoan at the loss of Maj. Gregory Stone. Maj. Stone died early Tuesday at an Army field hospital in Kuwait, the second man to die from wounds suffered in a grenade attack last Saturday on soldiers at Camp Pennsylvania. Maj. Stone was the Air Liaison Officer there with the Army's 101st Airborne Division.

He was a highly trained military officer with 20 years of distinguished Air Force and Idaho Air National Guard service. Maj. Stone died in a theater of war on the other side of the world, fighting to free a foreign people from tyranny and his own countrymen from fear. In that, he was true to America's most cherished values and traditions. The example of his citizenship and dedication to duty, and how we all seek to emulate it, will be his enduring legacy.

Yet it was as a son and father of two young boys living in Boise that Gregory Stone will be best and most dearly remembered. The sadness felt by the people of a proud and grateful state pales by comparison with his family's grief at his passing. I can only offer them my humble condolences, and the hope that a sure knowledge of Gregory's self-sacrifice and heroism will provide some succor in the difficult days to come.

Maj. Stone embodied the best of America. I am proud to represent the family of such a man. They have my personal thanks, and a promise to preserve those virtues for which their loved one gave the last full measure of devotion.

### SHOCK AND AWE

#### HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 26, 2003*

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in "shock and awe." I am in shock and awe of the courage and bravery that our military women and men have shown overseas in the fight to liberate Iraq. They fight our fight, and they do it without question because their Commander-in-Chief asked them to.

I rise today also in "shock and awe" of the actions this past Thursday on the House floor. Late in the night, the budget resolution passed by the skin of its teeth, but those teeth still cut deep. They cut deep to the tune of \$14.6 billion in unspecified cuts to mandatory veterans' benefits programs with \$463 million of that coming in the next year. Ninety percent of those cuts come from cash payments to service-disabled veterans, low income wartime veterans and their survivors. Montgomery G.I. Bill education benefits, vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs for service-disabled veterans, and subsidies for VA home loans also face cuts at the very time when troops fight through sandstorms and fierce enemy resistance. While at war, their benefits are stripped down to avoid "waste, fraud and abuse." Do government programs helping low-income veterans or service-disabled veterans fall under "waste, fraud and abuse?" According to the Republican Leadership in the House, they do.

Along with mandatory spending, VA discretionary spending takes a tremendous cut as well: \$14.2 billion over the next ten years, and 96 percent of discretionary spending is veterans' health care. Priority 8 veterans have already been declared ineligible, and co-payments will increase for pharmaceutical drugs and primary care. In reducing discretionary spending, the Republican budget prevents more veterans from receiving health care and makes room for its tax cuts benefiting the wealthiest Americans, Americans who probably don't have children in fatigues. During wartime, this is shameful and disrespectful to the military women and men who make secure the very freedom that we enjoy.

The "shock and awe" campaign apparently is not limited to military conflict in Iraq. It has engaged the budgetary process and threatens the ability of the U.S. government to care for its own. If we all support our troops and wish the swift return home of American daughters and sons, how can we find it in ourselves to cut funding to programs that extend a hand to the soldiers that said, "No, you stay here. I'll go?" There is no justice in it, and no pair of night-vision goggles will see justice in the budget passed last Thursday night.