

improved the training of soldiers, campaigned for better equipment and upgraded the facilities and quality of life for soldiers and their families on Fort Gordon. She also claims that besides her demanding military life, she credits her successes to two wonderful people in her life—her husband Ron and her daughter Jennifer.

Throughout her military career General Hicks has always taken the initiative, faced the challenges and resolved problems. Her leadership style has always impressed her superiors. She has always dealt with people—young soldiers, senior military leaders and civilians with equity, candidness and resolve. She is highly respected by the soldiers of her command, people of the Central Savannah Regional Area and the citizens of Georgia.

I feel that it is most appropriate to recognize this outstanding American for her 30 years of dedicated and honorable service to this Nation as a military leader. I ask that all of my colleagues join me in thanking and commending Major General Hicks, her husband Ron and their daughter Jennifer on the completion of a distinguished military career. We also wish her and her family the best in their well deserved retirement and a happy and prosperous future.●

#### HONORING HAZEL HANON

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to honor Mrs. Hazel Hanon and the incredible work that she has done over these past 60 years with the Marshall Post No. 3507 Ladies Auxiliary of Britton, SD.

Hazel gained membership to the auxiliary sponsorship of both her husband, Leon, who served in the U.S. Navy during WWII, and her brother, Dempsey, also a WWII veteran and member of the U.S. Air Force. As one of the auxiliary's charter members, save for a short hiatus in her membership, Hazel has been with Marshall Post No. 3507 since its founding in 1945. Despite the auxiliary's declining membership over the past few years, it is clear the organization and Hazel are still wholeheartedly committed to supporting America's brave war heroes.

Over the years the auxiliary has hosted Post Suppers, served banquets, sold poppies, organized bake sales, compiled and sold cookbooks, and even run an annual Turkey Raffle during Thanksgiving, all to raise money for our Nation's veterans. Proceeds from these events are then donated to VA Hospitals or used to buy supplies so the women can bake cookies and cakes and then personally deliver the goodies to veterans in hospitals throughout South Dakota.

Since the post's founding, Hazel has been extremely giving of her time, and her generosity will forever be appreciated. I am pleased that her dedication and patriotism are being publicly recognized, and I am certain that Ha-

zel's achievements and commitment to the auxiliary will serve as inspiration to future generations of passionate and patriotic South Dakotans.

Mr. President, Hazel Hanon is a remarkable person who richly deserves this distinguished recognition. I strongly commend her years of work and dedication, and it is with great honor that I share her impressive accomplishments with my colleagues.●

#### HONORING GRACE SIERS

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I rise today to publicly commend Grace Siers, charter member of Marshall Post No. 3507 Ladies Auxiliary in Britton, SD, for her many years of devoted service to our Nation's veterans.

Sixty years ago, in 1945, Grace joined the VFW Ladies Auxiliary, and has been an irreplaceable asset to the organization ever since. Grace is part of a long line of military patriots, as she joined the auxiliary under the sponsorship of her husband, William Siers, who served in WWI, as well as her three brothers, Vance, John, and Clarence Hunscher, all veterans of WWII. Not surprisingly, the tradition of serving our country continues with Grace's five sons, Le Roy, Donald, Virgil, Gary, and Robert, and even her grandson and granddaughter, all of whom served in the military. Regrettably, her son, Robert, died while fighting in Vietnam.

Although decades have passed and auxiliary members are no longer as active as they once were, Grace's hard work and dedication over the years enabled the auxiliary to raise thousands of dollars, bring smiles to the faces of countless injured and recovering veterans, and educate innumerable South Dakotans about the importance of supporting America's brave veterans.

In early years, Grace recalls hosting Post Suppers, serving banquets, selling poppies, organizing bake sales, compiling and selling cookbooks, and even manning the post during the annual Turkey Raffle on Thanksgiving, all to raise money for the auxiliary. In turn, the funds were donated to VA hospitals and used to buy supplies so the women could bake cookies and cakes and then personally deliver the goodies to veterans in hospitals throughout South Dakota.

Grace's tremendous contributions to the Britton community set her apart from other outstanding citizens. Her extraordinary service and commitment to Marshall Post No. 3507 Ladies Auxiliary is to be commended. Through Grace's remarkable community involvement and dedication to America's veterans, the lives of countless South Dakotans have been enormously enhanced. Her wonderful example serves as a model for other hardworking and dedicated individuals throughout South Dakota to emulate.

Grace Siers is an extraordinary woman who richly deserves this distinguished recognition. I strongly com-

mend her years of hard work and dedication, and I am very pleased that her substantial efforts are being publicly honored and celebrated. It is with great pleasure that I share her impressive accomplishments with my colleagues.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### LEGISLATION AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS TO IMPLEMENT THE UNITED STATES-DOMINICAN REPUBLIC-CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—PM 14

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I am pleased to transmit legislation and supporting documents to implement the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (the "Agreement"). The Agreement represents an historic development in our relations with Central America and the Dominican Republic and reflects the commitment of the United States to supporting democracy, regional integration, and economic growth and opportunity in a region that has transitioned to peaceful, democratic societies.

In negotiating this Agreement, my Administration was guided by the objectives set out in the Trade Act of 2002. Central America and the Dominican Republic constitute our second largest export market in Latin America and our tenth largest export market in the world. The Agreement will create significant new opportunities for American workers, farmers, ranchers, and businesses by opening new markets and eliminating barriers. United States agricultural exports will obtain better access to the millions of consumers in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Under the Agreement, tariffs on approximately 80 percent of U.S. exports will be eliminated immediately. The Agreement will help to level the playing field because about 80 percent of Central America's imports already enjoy duty-free access to our market. By providing for the effective enforcement of labor and environmental laws,

combined with strong remedies for noncompliance, the Agreement will contribute to improved worker rights and high levels of environmental protection in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

By supporting this Agreement, the United States can stand with those in the region who stand for democracy and freedom, who are fighting corruption and crime, and who support the rule of law. A stable, democratic, and growing Central America and Dominican Republic strengthens the United States economically and provides greater security for our citizens.

The Agreement is in our national interest, and I urge the Congress to approve it expeditiously.

GEORGE W. BUSH,  
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 23, 2005.

**REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE EXTREMIST VIOLENCE IN MACEDONIA AND THE WESTERN BALKANS REGION—PM 15**

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the Western Balkans emergency is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2005. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on June 25, 2004, 69 FR 36005.

The crisis constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting (i) extremist violence in the Republic of Macedonia, and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on June 26, 2001, has not been resolved. Subsequent to the declaration of the national emergency, I amended Executive Order 13219 in Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003, to address acts obstructing implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001 in the Republic of Macedonia, which have also become a concern. The acts of extremist violence and obstructionist activity outlined in Executive Order 13219, as amended, are

hostile to U.S. interests and pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the Western Balkans and maintain in force the comprehensive sanctions to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH,  
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 23, 2005.

**EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS**

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2706. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Letter Report: Sole Source Agreements Issued by the Executive Office of the Mayor and Office of the City Administrator Failed to Comply with Procurement Law and Regulations"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2707. A communication from the Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's calendar year 2004 report on category rating; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2708. A communication from the Chief Executive Officer, Corporation for National and Community Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Inspector General's Semi-Annual Report and the Corporation's Report on Final Action; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2709. A communication from the Administrator, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2710. A communication from the Attorney General of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Inspector General's Semiannual Report for the period of October 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2711. A communication from the Chairman and the General Counsel, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period of October 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2712. A communication from the Acting Director, Division for Strategic Human Resources Policy, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Retirement Coverage of Air Traffic Controllers" (RIN3206-AK73) received on June 16, 2005; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2713. A communication from the Acting Director, Division for Strategic Human Resources Policy, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Regulations" (RIN3206-AJ71) received on June 16, 2005; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2714. A communication from the Acting Director, Employee and Family Support Policy, Office of Personnel Management, trans-

mitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Employees Health Benefits Program Revision of Contract Cost Principles and Procedures, and Miscellaneous Changes" (RIN3206-AJ10) received on June 16, 2005; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2715. A communication from the Acting Director, Employee and Family Support Policy, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Employees Health Benefits Acquisition Regulation: Large Provider Agreements, Subcontracts, and Miscellaneous Changes" (RIN3206-AJ20) received on June 16, 2005; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2716. A communication from the Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a Presidential appointment reduction plan; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2717. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of the Chief Acquisition Officers, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-04" (FAC 2005-04), Interim Rule (Item IV-FAR Case 2004-35), and nine Federal Acquisition Regulations: ((RIN9000-AK04, RIN9000-AK03, RIN9000-AJ97, RIN9000-AK17, RIN9000-AK02, RIN9000-AJ79, RIN9000-AJ67, RIN9000-AJ93)(48 CFR Chapter 1)) received on June 16, 2005; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2718. A communication from the Secretary of Labor, transmitting, the report of a draft bill entitled "Unemployment Compensation Program Integrity Act of 2005" received on June 14, 2005; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2719. A communication from the Secretary of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Labor's annual report on the fiscal year 2002 operations of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2720. A communication from the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the actuarial status of the railroad retirement system, including any recommendations for financing changes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2721. A communication from the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's 2005 annual report on the financial status of the railroad unemployment insurance system; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2722. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of Presidential Determination 2005-24 relative to the suspension of limitations under the Jerusalem Embassy Act; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2723. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles that are firearms controlled under category I of the United States Munitions List sold commercially under a contract in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more with Ghana; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2724. A communication from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Qualification of