

Minister Tsipras referred to Minister of Finance Wolfgang Schäuble of Germany; and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey. A reporter referred to Matt Lauer, coanchor,

NBC's "Today" program. Prime Minister Tsipras and the moderator spoke in Greek, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Prokopios Pavlopoulos of Greece in Athens November 15, 2016

President Paplopoulos. Mr. President, I welcome you to Athens and to the Presidency of the Republic, as the President of the United States of America, who has constantly and consistently served with respect for man, for the consolidation of peace and the defense of democracy, and of its twin brother, the social rule of law, by holding in check the extreme inequalities which directly threaten social cohesion. We fully share those ideals.

Let me be even more specific. In this deep and prolonged economic and social crisis, which is plaguing our country and our people, for which we are far from being the only ones to blame, I would like to point out the following three things.

First, we deeply believe in representative democracy and in every one of its institutional dimensions. We are especially inspired by your emblematic constitutional tradition of checks and balances. It is these that shield popular sovereignty and parliamentary rule, as well as the independence of justice from many arbitrary interference by the executive or, even more, by the various instruments of globalization which lack any democratic legitimacy.

Second, we continue our unwavering course within the European Union, and its hard core, the euro zone, despite the huge economic and social burden of a mostly wrong and dead end austerity policy. And in respect of this, Mr. President, I'm very happy to hear—I was very happy to hear you point this out, and I hope that your words will urge our European partners to move in the right direction.

Alongside our partners, with which we share the true and selfless European path, we fight to restore the values and principles which were the foundations of European integration,

mainly the respect of—for man and for social justice. These are the principles which will keep the nightmare of fascism and Nazism left behind by World War II forever in the dismal past. We never forget the decisive contribution of the United States of America in that war so that Europe could hold back the fate of what Mark Mazower called the "Dark Continent." We will always remember Omaha Beach in Normandy.

Third, Mr. President, we are responding with uncompromising dignity to the huge refugee crisis, which you have called of epic dimension, which is mainly the result of the war in Syria. We expect solidarity by our European partners, and we expect that they will open up their minds and listen to your opinion. In this, we are inspired by the ancient Greek institution of the supplement. At the same time, we are doing our part in the fight against the barbarism of jihadism, which is committing crimes against humanity.

But, Mr. President, in order to defend refugees and to stop terrorism, the war in Syria and in the wider region must end. This is the common objective, and this requires harmonious cooperation of the U.S., the EU, and Russia. And we're happy that you were able to fully understand this truth and have turned it into action with your wise and also visionary policy, and therefore, we start seeing the first results. Maybe late, but it is never too late.

Mr. President, we urge you from here, from Athens, with its eternal symbol of Parthenon—the Parthenon of democracy and civilization—to continue to serve the same ideals after the end of your term. Your appeal will continue into the future. In this future and very promising journey, we would like you to take Greece

along. And at this point, I'd like to remember the words of the poet Odysseas Elytis: Please do not forget our country.

I will, therefore, conclude by—my address by reminding you of what André Malraux said in his memorable speech at the inauguration of the illumination of the Acropolis on 29th of—March 29, 1958: “A secret Greece resides in the heart of all men of the West.” It is this secret Greece that the Greek people offer you as a gift during this visit, precisely because we deem it worthy of the U.S. President, Barack Obama.

Mr. President, on behalf of the Greek people, I wish you personal health and success. And I ask you to convey the Greek people's sincere warm wishes for growth and prosperity to our committed and great friends, the American people.

Once again, welcome, Mr. President.

President Obama. Kalispera. [Laughter] Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: Once again, it is a great honor to be in Greece. And on behalf of myself and my delegation, on behalf of the American people, thank you for the warmth that you've shown us on this visit.

Of course, your hospitality comes as no surprise. As Pericles said in his famous oration many centuries ago: “In nobility of spirit, we differ from most others in the way we conduct ourselves towards other people. We make friendships not by receiving kindness from others, but by conferring it on others.” And we certainly have felt the kindness of the Greek people conferred on us today.

I'll have more to say in my speech tomorrow about the ties of history and heritage that bind our peoples together. Of course, that does include our love of the Olympics. Greeks rightly take pride as the founder of the Games and in Leonidas of Rhodes who, for 2,000 years, held the record for winning 12 individual gold medals, the most of any athlete. And we Americans take pride in Michael Phelps, who set the new record this summer.

Besides that friendly competition, we are deeply grateful for our alliance with the Greek

people. I think that we have inspired each other to reach for independence, stood in solidarity during war and peace, in good times and in bad, including these very difficult years for the Greek people. And tonight I want you to know that as you work to move your country forward, you will always have the support and friendship of the United States.

I want to close with a moment from our shared history. In 1821, as Greece began its fight for independence, a Greek patriot wrote a letter to the American Government appealing for assistance. “Although a broad sea separates us,” he wrote, “your virtues, Americans, are close to ours.” And he added, “We consider you as friends, copatriots and brothers.”

So—

[At this point, the interpreter began translating President Obama's remarks. President Obama then spoke briefly as follows.]

Please.

[The interpreter continued. President Obama then resumed his remarks as follows.]

So, in appreciation for our friendship and your hospitality, if I might propose a toast: To the virtues and values that unite us across a broad sea. May Greeks and Americans always be there for each other: as friends, as copatriots, and brothers and sisters. *Stin ygeia sas. [Laughter]* Cheers.

[President Obama offered a toast.]

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:37 p.m. in the ballroom at the Presidential Mansion. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras of Greece; and Michael F. Phelps II, swimmer, 2016 U.S. Olympic Team. President Pavlopoulos referred to Mark A. Mazower, Ira D. Wallach Professor of History, Columbia University. President Pavlopoulos spoke in Greek, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks in Athens, Greece
November 16, 2016

The President. Hey! Thank you very much. Thank you. Please, please have a seat. Thank you.

Audience member. Chicago!

The President. Chicago, yes. [Laughter]

Hello, Greece! Thank you. *Yia sas! Kalisp-era!* [Laughter] To the Government and the people of Greece—including Prime Minister Tsipras, who I thank for his partnership and for being here—along with so many young people, the future of Greece: I want to thank you for your warm and generous welcome.

As many of you know, this is my final trip overseas as President of the United States, and I was determined on my last trip to come to Greece partly because I've heard about the legendary hospitality of the Greek people, your *philoxenia*. [Laughter] Partly because I had to see the Acropolis and the Parthenon. But also because I came here with gratitude for all that Greece—"this small, great world"—has given to humanity through the ages.

Our hearts have been moved by the tragedies of Aeschylus and Euripides. Our minds have been opened by the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides. Our understanding of the world and our place in it has been expanded by Socrates and Aristotle.

In the United States, we're especially grateful for the friendship of so many proud Greek Americans. In my hometown of Chicago, you can find them in Greektown—[laughter]—with their foustanelas. [Laughter] And together, we've celebrated Greek Independence Day at the White House. We've had some spanakopita and some ouzo. [Laughter] Greek Americans have worn the uniform to keep our country free. Greek Americans have marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to make us more just. Greek or American, we're all cheering for Giannis Antetokounmpo, who is—[laughter]—who seems to be getting better each year. [Laughter] And if anyone seeks an example of our shared spirit, our resilience, they need look no further than New York City, near Ground

Zero, where the Greek Orthodox church of St. Nicholas, once in ruins, is now rising again.

Most of all, we're indebted to Greece for the most precious of gifts: the truth—the understanding—that as individuals of free will, we have the right and the capacity to govern ourselves. For it was here, 25 centuries ago, in the rocky hills of this city, that a new idea emerged: *demokratia*. *Kratos*—[applause].

Kratos—the power, the right to rule—comes from *demos*, the people. The notion that we are citizens: not servants, but stewards of our society. The concept of citizenship: that we have both rights and responsibilities. The belief in equality before the law, not just for a few, but for the many; not just for the majority, but also the minority. These are all concepts that grew out of this rocky soil.

Of course, the earliest forms of democracy here in Athens were far from perfect, just as the early forms of democracy in the United States were far from perfect. The rights of ancient Athens were not extended to women or to slaves. But Pericles explained, "Our constitution . . . favors the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy."

Athenians also knew that, however noble, ideas alone were not enough. To have meaning, principles must be enshrined in laws and protected by institutions, and advanced through civic participation. And so they gathered in a great assembly to debate and decide affairs of state, each citizen with the right to speak, casting their vote with a show of hands or choosing a pebble: white for yes, black for no. Laws were etched in stone for all to see and abide by. Courts with citizen jurors upheld that rule of law.

Politicians weren't always happy because sometimes the stones could be used to ostracize—[laughter]—banish those who did not behave themselves.

But across the millennia that followed, different views of power and governance have often prevailed. Throughout human history, there have been those who argue that people