

October 28th

CZECH REPUBLIC

Czechoslovakia Independence Day



On October 28, 1918 the first independent Czechoslovak state was founded from territories that were previously part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. President Tomáš G. Masaryk became the leader of a state that was based on President Woodrow Wilson's 14 points, especially the principle of self-determination. Czechoslovakia became one of Europe's first successful multi-party parliamentary democracies, and it was stable enough to withstand the international depression of the 1930s. The First Republic only lasted two decades until Nazi Germany occupied the Czech Lands in 1938/9.

Although Czechoslovakia no longer exists today, Czechs continue to view October 28 as the day of their national founding

GREECE

National Anniversary

It is the day of the National Anniversary of Greek Independence. The day is characterised by military parades and folk dances. The day is also called "Ohi Day" in honour of General Metaxas's famous "Oxi!" (no!) as a refusal to Mussolini's ultimatum on October 28, 1940.

This ultimatum, which was presented to Metaxas by the Italian ambassador in Greece, Emanuele Grazzi, on October 28, 1940, at dawn (04:00 AM), after a party in the German embassy in Athens, demanded that Greece allow Axis forces to enter Greek territory and occupy certain unspecified "strategic locations" or otherwise face war. It was allegedly answered with a single word: *όχι* or no. Most scholars dismiss the use of the word 'Okhi' as an urban legend, claiming that the actual reply was the French phrase "Alors, c'est la guerre" ("Then it is war"). In response to Metaxas's refusal, Italian troops stationed in Albania, then an Italian protectorate, attacked the Greek border at 05:30 AM. Metaxas's reply marked the beginning of Greece's participation in World War II. On the morning of October 28th the Greek population took to the streets, irrespective of political affiliation, shouting 'okhi'. From 1942, it was celebrated as Okhi Day.

