

COMMEMORATING GREEK
INDEPENDENCE DAY

• Mr. BRADLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate Greek Independence Day—a national day of celebration of Greek and American democracy. Yesterday marked the 175th anniversary of the beginning of the revolution which freed the Greek people from the Ottoman Empire.

A historic bond exists between Greece and America, forged by our shared democratic heritage. America is truly indebted to the ancient Greeks for giving the world the first example of direct democracy. The philosophical and democratic influences of the ancient Greeks provides the inspiration for our democratic Government to flourish. It is therefore fitting that Members of this Chamber join in paying tribute to the long struggle for freedom that Greece endured.

On March 25, 1821, when Germanos, the archbishop of Patros, proclaimed Greek independence, another link between Greece and the United States was forged. The American revolution served as a model for the Greek struggle for freedom and when the Declaration of Independence, translated into Greek, served as the declaration of the end of the Greek struggle, a circle was completed.

The interconnection between Greek and American democracies lies not only in the philosophical underpinnings of our Government, but in many areas of American life. Percy Bysshe Shelley once said, "We are all Greeks! Our laws, our literature, our religion, our art, have their roots in Greece." The tremendous influence that Greece has had on American life continues today through the activities of the vibrant Greek community in America. In every field—politics, entertainment, business and education—Greek-Americans continue to contribute to American life.

In particular, I wish to pay tribute to the Greek-American community in New Jersey. Groups that are leaders in the New Jersey Greek Community include: the Greek American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, the Greek American Voters League of New Jersey, the Hellenic American Bar Association of New Jersey, the Pan Gregorian Enterprises & Foundation, P.G.E.I. of America Charitables Foundation, Inc., the Council Generals of Greek Cypriot, the Order of AHEPA and the Joint Public Policy Committee of Hellenic American Women. On behalf of these organizations, the Greek community in New Jersey and all Americans of Greek descent, I am honored to pay tribute, on behalf of the Nation, to the Greek community during the celebration of their independence day.●

CONGRATULATING THE LONDON-
DERRY HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING
BAND FOR BEING SELECTED TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE ROSE PA-
RADE

• Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the students of the Londonderry High School Marching Band and Colorguard who will be representing the State of New Hampshire in the 1997 Rose Parade next January. All the band members including Andrew Soucy, the band's director, deserve special commendation for their hard work and achievement.

Being selected for the Tournament of Roses Parade is quite an honor for a high school band. The Lancer Marching Band has a proud tradition of representing the Granite State in parades across the country. They have also performed in Washington, DC, for the St. Patrick's Day Parade, at Foxboro Stadium for the New England Patriots football team, and this will be the second time the Londonderry Lancers will appear in the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade. The Lancers should be very proud of their efforts because only the very best bands in the country are asked to participate in this nationally recognized New Years Day parade.

The young men and women of the Lancer Band and Colorguard demonstrate the hard work and dedication that is characteristic of the Granite State students. As special participants in the Tournament of Roses Parade, these students have proven that determination and teamwork are the hallmark of success both as musicians and students. We are honored to have the Lancer Band and Colorguard representing New Hampshire with their outstanding musical performances.

Mr. President, I want to express my thanks to both the students and faculty at Londonderry High School for their commitment to excellence. Congratulations again on such a magnificent accomplishment.●

SHERMAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, A
1996 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON
SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

• Mr. ROCKEFELLER Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity to recognize Sherman Junior High School of Seth, WV. This institution was recently selected as a 1996 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education. It was 1 of 6 secondary schools in my State to garner this prestigious award, and 1 of only 216 public schools from throughout the United States to get this recognition.

Sherman Junior High School's motto is "We believe, we achieve, we succeed." It is thoughtful, provocative and obviously works. For if believing in yourself defines your ability to succeed, let me share with everyone a little taste of the tremendous feats this school has accomplished.

Sherman Junior High School is nestled in a remote southern portion of

my State in Boone County, a rural Appalachian county in our legendary coal fields. The geography of this region is challenging. The coal industry dominates the local economy and has a history of sporadic employment which affects the families and the community greatly, including school enrollment and student attendance.

There are more than 200 students enrolled in Sherman Junior High School and most of them have to be bused over narrow, rough roads within a 20-mile radius of the school. Many ride these buses for almost an hour each way, and more than half of the students qualify for free or reduced lunches. Because these students live in a rural, isolated area, the school is their primary center for most activities ranging from cultural events to sports which are crucial activities to help young people make the transition into adulthood.

Under the leadership and support of Principal John Hudson, the creative staff of Sherman Junior High shared their facilities with the local high school, but maintained their autonomy with a separate administration and faculty. This gives the students a sense of community, while also having access to more facilities and high school programs for students ready to accept more challenging programs. For example, many junior high students have an opportunity to learn basic computer and word processing skills. They can also take advanced academic classes, like a foreign language. Having enhanced opportunities obviously makes a difference in the lives of these young people, because almost 70 percent of the students of Sherman Junior High School score above the 50 percentile on their annual CTBS tests.

This is a time when public education faces many challenges—dwindling resources, intense public debates over the proper role of public education, and integrating new technologies into schoolrooms and teaching. Sherman Junior High is a school that is facing such challenges. The enthusiastic and caring teachers and administrators are committed to providing our students with the quality education. As a National Blue Ribbon School, Sherman Junior High is a role model on how teachers, administrators, parents, and students can come together and create an educational environment that helps young people excel. Every member of Sherman Junior High School should be proud of the accomplishments achieved. It is my pleasure to publicly congratulate this school for its community spirit and academic success. I know this school will keep up the good work, and continue to represent West Virginia proudly.●

MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I come to this debate on the minimum wage from a different perspective than some of my colleagues here today. In January of this year, my State of Delaware decided to raise the minimum wage, after