

Vol. 145 Washington, D.C. - Wednesday, September 8, 1999 No. 115

Congressional Record
House of Representatives
CELEBRATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE ARRIVAL OF MENNONITES IN AMERICA

<p>HON. JERRY MORAN OF KANSAS HON. JOHN R. THUNE OF SOUTH DAKOTA Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with the gentleman from South Dakota, Mr. Thune, to commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the arrival of the Mennonites in the United States. To do so, I would like to read from a poem written by my constituent, Mrs. Gladys Graber Goerhag of Hutchinson, Kansas:</p>	<p>"A HYMN OF HERITAGE" Sing a song of deep gratitude To our God, Who by His grace, Led a people through centuries To this special time and place. Glad hosannas to you belong, Joy of the Lord, our strength and song. Tell the prairies' welcoming call Soil rich to the farmer's hand, Grasses and sky and spacious fields Beckoned families to the land, Promised them freedom to pursue The peaceful life which once theyknew. Simple homes built on the broad plain, Church and school as their domain, Mennonites soon felt richly blest, Stretching borders east to west, Children and children's children grown Claimed the new land as their own. One-room schoolhouse and ABC's Played a part in wisdom's call. Stumbling now with a language strange, Students soon embraced it all. Learning continued through the years Pointing the way to new careers. Caring families eased the way Through the stresses of each day Dust and storm, depression and fears, Conscience and war, conflicts and tears, As generations moved along, Anchored safe in families strong. Sing a song of our heritage, Home and church and values tree, Faith enduring, foundation firm, Building blocks on which we grew. God of the ages, help us, pray, Increase the good gifts of today.</p>	<p>The accomplishments of the Mennonite community, in Kansas and South Dakota and in America are many. What continues to endure is the strength of their communities and of the values that they share. In a world that is rapidly changing, where information is shared around the globe instantly, and where too often, faith is an antiquated notion, the Mennonite community has retained its belief in service to the global community, peaceful resolution to conflict, and faith in God. From Moundridge, Kansas to Freeman, South Dakota, Mennonites have gone above and beyond the call of duty to serve people in need. Today, farmers are still growing the Turkey Red Winter Wheat that the Mennonites brought with them 125 years ago. Midwestern states like Kansas and South Dakota make up the "Bread Basket of the World" and our farmers produce more wheat than any other states. The gentleman from South</p>
---	--	--

