

a man. The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion; otherwise, the fort will be put to the sword. I've answered that demand with a cannon shot, and the flag still waves proudly over the wall. I shall never surrender or retreat. I call upon you in the name of liberty and patriotism and everything dear to our character to come to my aid with all dispatch. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to 3,000 or 4,000 in a few days. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself for as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due his honor and that of his country.

Victory or death. William Barret Travis, Commander of the Alamo.

A few days later, on March 6, 1836, after three assaults by Santa Anna's army, the walls were breached and every volunteer was put to the sword.

William Barret Travis in his last letter after this one said that victory will cost Santa Anna more than defeat. He was right. The losses were unbelievable against the Mexican Army, but still they were able to take the Alamo.

Meanwhile, at a place called Washington-on-the-Brazos, a group of volunteers were writing a declaration of independence and then a constitution. And on March 2, four days before the Alamo fell, under the leadership of Sam Houston and others, Texas declared independence from Mexico. The Alamo wall was breached, Santa Anna's army is moving through Texas, and Sam Houston is trying to form another army.

Remember, Santa Anna's army was no slouch. They were a professional bunch. They had defeated all of those other folks in Mexico that had sought independence and revolted against the dictatorship. They were well trained and had yet to lose a battle. In history, this is called a "runaway scrape." For Texans who live between San Antonio and Louisiana, move toward the United States, the runaway scrape.

Sam Houston is trying to find an army and design an army. Meanwhile, Santa Anna is feeling undefeatable. So he approaches the area of what is now called "the plains of San Jacinto." That's outside of Houston, on the eastern side of Houston, where the Buffalo River meets Harrisburg. And on a peninsula there in a marsh, Sam Houston had decided he was going to fight.

Yet to have fought a battle, the Mexican Army yet to be defeated, General Sam, as we call him, had an army of about 900 that he had assembled. Once again, volunteers, once again people from all over the United States, and once again Tejanos, Texans of Spanish descent, had assembled together to do battle really on April 22, 1836; however, Sam Houston assembled a war council. His commander said, "We're not waiting until tomorrow."

Battles usually take place in the morning when the sun comes up, but on an afternoon in the heat of the day, Sam Houston decided he was going to attack the Mexican forces of Santa Anna. Tradition primarily says that Sam Houston was busy and occupied by the Yellow Rose of Texas, Emily Mor-

gan, who was of mixed race and was keeping Santa Anna occupied in an encounter and kept him from noticing the Texas Army being assembled.

That's legend, tradition, maybe based on a little historical fact. But we honor Emily Morgan in our history, and we've named a building for her because of what she accomplished in the Texas Revolution, the first Yellow Rose of Texas.

The Texans assembled on the high plains, and they marched in broad daylight. There were so few of them they had to make one column. They were led also by Captain Juan Seguin. Juan Seguin was a Tejano. He had a calvary regiment. It wasn't really a regiment. It was just a handful of Tejanos. And to make sure that Captain Seguin and his Tejanos weren't mistaken for Santa Anna's army, Sam Houston had Juan Seguin put playing cards in their hat bands so they would be recognized as loyalists to Texas and not to Santa Anna. In those days I understand the playing card was not small like we have today, but they were rather large playing cards.

And they stuck those in their hats, the headbands of their sombreros. The fight was on. The Texans come down the hill, catching the enemy by surprise. It was an overwhelming defeat to Santa Anna's army, his first defeat. In 18 minutes, half of the Mexican Army was killed and the other half was captured. There were more captured than in the Texas Army. There were about 900 Texans, about 1,800 Mexicans thereabouts; and they were captured.

Santa Anna got away. He's later found to have changed his presidential commander-in-chief dictator outfit into a private. When he's captured, he looks like a private. He's brought into the campgrounds. His troops saw who he was, and they stood up and saluted him; and Sam Houston had captured the president and commander and dictator of the enemy, Santa Anna.

Texas declared its independence on March 2, 1836. It was realized on April 21, 1836. Texas claimed land—here's a map of what Texas looked like and claimed to be Texas in 1836 after the Battle of San Jacinto, all of what now is Texas. But there's more land. Part of New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Kansas, and part of Wyoming was claimed by Texas. In fact, Texas ceded this land to the United States after Texas became part of the United States because Texas was a country for 9 years. Sam Houston was its President. It had its own army. It had to fight off the Mexican Army again to invaders, and it remained a Republic for 9 years.

Then Texas decided to join the Union. It wasn't easy. It was not something that was popular to put Texas in the United States. In fact, it could not get in by a treaty. It takes two-thirds of a vote by the Senate for a treaty to be signed. So it was a joint resolution. Texas got into the United States by two votes when a Senator, as I understand it, from Louisiana changed his

vote and voted for the admission of Texas.

Those of us from Texas, because of our history, because of the people who are there of all races, have a unique spirit, in my opinion. It is the spirit of freedom, but that's the spirit of America. You know, our history is not really based on what happened in the 13 colonies. Our history is based independent of that, but it's the same. It's a spirit of liberty and freedom from oppression, whether it's King George, III, or whether it's a dictator named Santa Anna.

On April 21, we celebrate San Jacinto Day. On Saturday there will be a reenactment of the Battle of San Jacinto. We have a monument called the San Jacinto Monument there on the marshes of San Jacinto. It looks very similar to the Washington Monument, except, of course, it's taller than the Washington Monument. The star on top of the monument makes it taller than the Washington Monument. And as a side note, the Texas State Capitol is taller than this Capitol right here by some 15 feet.

□ 1430

The point is, Mr. Speaker, that history is important. Our history is important. People who lived before us who fought for liberty—who volunteered to fight oppression even though the odds were overwhelming that many gave up their lives for that—they are as important and they are as much a part of our tradition as the young men and women we have now fighting for America's interests all over the world; and they, like those volunteers in the Texas War of Independence, are volunteers, raising their hands to stand between us and tyranny.

So we honor those folks who fought and made Texas a country for 9 years. We are proud of that, and it is important that all of us come to remember our history.

And that's just the way it is.

I yield back the balance of my time.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS TO COMMISSION TO ELIMINATE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT FATALITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 3 of the Protect Our Kids Act of 2012 (Pub. L. 112-275), and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, of the following individuals on the part of the House to the Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities:

Ms. Susan Dreyfus, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Ms. Cassie Statuto Bevan, Derwood, Maryland

CURRENT EVENTS IN REVIEW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.