

What American, Texan or otherwise, can fail to be stirred by Col. Travis' resolve? In fact, Colonel Travis' dire prediction came true—4,000 to 5,000 Mexican troops laid siege to the Alamo. In the battle that followed, 184 brave men died in a heroic but vain attempt to fend off Santa Anna's overwhelming army. But the Alamo, as we all in Texas know, was crucial to Texas' independence. Because those heroes at the Alamo held out for so long, Santa Anna's forces were battered and diminished.

Gen. Sam Houston gained the time he needed to devise a strategy to defeat Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto, just a month or so later, on April 21, 1836. The Lone Star was visible on the horizon at last.

Each year, on March 2, there is a ceremony at Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park where there is a replica of the modest cabin where the 54 patriots pledged their lives, honor, and treasure for freedom.

On this day, I read Colonel Travis' letter to my colleagues in the Senate, a tradition started by my friend, the late Senator John Tower. This is a reminder to them and to all of us of the pride Texans share in our history and in being the only State that came into the Union as a republic.

Mr. President, I am pleased to continue the tradition that was started by Senator Tower, because we do have a unique heritage in Texas where we fought for our freedom. Having grown up in the family and hearing the stories of my great great grandfather, it was something that was ingrained in us—fighting for your freedom was something you did.

I think it is very important that we remember the people who sacrificed, the 184 men who died at the Alamo, the men who died at Goliad later that same month. Their deaths gave birth to Texas Independence and we became a nation, a status we enjoyed for 10 years before we entered the Union as a State.

I might add, we entered the Union by a margin of one vote, both in the House and in the Senate. In fact, we originally were going to come into the Union through a treaty, but the two-thirds vote could not be received and, therefore, President Tyler said, "No, then we will pass a law to invite Texas to become a part of our Union," and the law passed by one vote in the House and one vote in the Senate.

I am very pleased to, once again, commemorate our great heritage and history.●

#### U.S. ASSISTANCE TO MOZAMBIQUE

● Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Administration's decision to send urgently needed assistance to southern Africa, where heavy rains have caused devastating floods, particularly in the Republic of Mozambique.

Last night President Clinton approved the deployment of a Joint Task Force to the region, including C-130 aircraft to deliver desperately needed supplies, and six heavy lift helicopters to pluck survivors from the trees and rooftops where they cling to life. This assistance will supplement the efforts already underway, under the auspices of the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Department of Defense.

Mr. President, this assistance comes not a moment too soon. Meteorologists believe that even more rain is likely to fall on the region in the very near future. The resources the world has already provided are stretched nearly to the breaking point, as the need to deliver food and other supplies to survivors competes with the need to rescue those precariously hanging on above the floodwaters, waiting to be evacuated to dry land. The Mozambican families who survived the threat of rising waters are now at risk again, as water-borne diseases like cholera, malaria, and meningitis surge in the flood's aftermath.

These floods are particularly tragic because the country most seriously affected by them, Mozambique, has made significant strides toward recovery from its long and brutal civil war. Though the country is still affected by extreme poverty, in recent years Mozambique has enjoyed exceptional rates of economic growth, and while more needs to be done, the country has improved its record with regard to basic human rights. Mr. President, the people of Mozambique have been fighting for a better future. This kind of disaster comes at a terrible time, but our intercession may help the people of Mozambique to hold to the opportunities that lay before them before the waters rose.

The American government and the American people have reached out beyond our borders time and again to aid communities in crisis—from the earthquake victims in Turkey and Taiwan to the mudslide survivors in Venezuela. We stand united in a basic expression of human compassion again today. I applaud the Administration's action; I believe it is an entirely appropriate use of our country's resources, and I wish the people of southern Africa the very best as they work to recover from these devastating floods.●

#### PRICE-ANDERSON AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2000

● Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am pleased to cosponsor the Price-Anderson Amendments Act of 2000 with my colleague and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Senator BINGAMAN.

For over 40 years the Price-Anderson Act has provided a comprehensive sys-

tem of liability coverage for nuclear incidents and has been extended three times since 1957, most recently in 1988. The act's authority to extend new coverage will expire on August 1, 2002, and I believe that it is important that we extend the authorities well in advance of that date.

When we reauthorized the law in 1988, we asked both the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to review the Act and submit reports assessing its value and the need for further extension as well as making recommendations for any necessary changes. Both agencies recommended that the Act be extended with only minor changes. This legislation makes those relatively minor modifications and extends the authorization for an additional ten years.

Mr. President, the Price-Anderson Act is an important aspect of the development of nuclear energy in the United States. If we are going to meet any of the emission goals set forth for our domestic electricity production, then nuclear power necessarily must remain a vital component of any energy policy. The Price-Anderson Act is essential to allow contractors and suppliers to prudently take the financial risks associated with nuclear activities for the Department of Energy as well as those undertaken by commercial nuclear facilities licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The Price-Anderson Act provides important protections to the public in the unlikely case of a nuclear incident. This legislation will extend those protections as well as making other necessary amendments to the Act.

I fully support this legislation and I hope that we can have it enacted expeditiously.●

#### READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY

● Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is especially appropriate that the Senate is debating education reform today, because today is Read Across America Day. The National Education Association deserves great credit for bringing together the nation's leading education, literacy, and community organizations to help children in communities across the Nation experience the joy of reading.

Reading is the foundation of learning and the golden door to opportunity. But too many children fail to read at an acceptable level. For students who don't learn to read well in the early years of elementary school, it is virtually impossible to keep up in the later years. That's why literacy programs are so important. They give young children practical opportunities to learn to read and practice reading. We also need to do all we can to encourage children and parents to read together. That's why Read Across America Day is so important.