

he used his sword to draw a line across the courtyard.

"I now want every man who is determined to stay here and die with me to come across this line. Who shall be the first?"

And one by one, the men who died at the Alamo all came across.

Now, some people will tell you that Travis' last speech was fiction. They'll say it's melodramatic and too full of grand gestures. They'll say it's wishful thinking on the part of dreamers and romantics. But I believe that Travis did draw that line in the sand.

If you read his letters and consider the convictions of those men holed up with him in the Alamo, I believe you'll come to the same conclusion. Travis knew exactly what he was doing and his men knew their precise and painful destiny. And they stepped across that line in the sand and stayed just the same. Because independence is worth it.

And that's why men rode off from their families to join a motley band of committed patriots, who without training, without supplies, and without much hope for success gambled everything on God and Texas.

And they won even as they spent their lives so dearly on the walls of the Alamo.

And the debate goes on today. Some men don't believe that any principle or conviction is worth the political capital to draw a line in the sand. But other men still do. And it's with those like-minded men and women that I'll throw in my lot.

Some things are still worth fighting for, and we'd better never forget it. Because if enough of us ever do forget, we'll have squandered our birthright to freedom and we'll be the unworthy beneficiaries of those proud Americans who came before us.

The Alamo's defenders, like our Founding Fathers before them, gave everything to put unstoppable events in motion. Their deaths were the birth pains of greatness.

"Victory or Death," became Victory in Death. And that victory was the offspring of the courage needed to make the simple yet difficult choices that so often determine history. May we never forget that freedom demands sacrifice. God bless the men who died at the Alamo. And God bless America.

CITIZENS FROM THE 9TH DISTRICT OF TEXAS

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor local citizens from the 9th District of Texas who were chosen during Black History Month for their work. While the dedication of African-American leaders is well-known throughout the United States, local citizens, right here in the Southeast Gulf Coast region, are just as important to ensuring equal rights for all Texans. Last month I asked members of the communities in the 9th District to nominate individuals for my "Unsung Heroes" award that gives special recognition to those unsung heroes, willing workers, and individuals who are so much a part of our nation's rich history.

Recipients were chosen because they embodied a giving and sharing spirit, and had made a contribution to our nation.

These individuals have not only talked the talk, but they have walked the walk. They have worked long and hard for equal rights in their churches, schools, and in their communities. While their efforts may not make the headlines every day, their pioneering struggle for equality and justice is nevertheless vital to our entire region. This region of Southeast Texas is not successful in spite of our diversity; we are successful because of it.

Please join me in recognizing and congratulating these community leaders for their support of bringing Justice and equality to Southeast Texas. It is leaders like, these men and women that continue to be a source of pride not only during Black History Month, but all year long. The winners of this year's "Unsung Heroes" award are:

Mrs. Myrtle Giles Davis, Mrs. Mattie Dansby Ford, Mr. William Andrew Harris, Mr. V. H. Haynes, Mr. Tony Johnson, and Mrs. Annie Mae Shanklin.

Mr. Speaker, the recipients of the "Unsung Heroes" award are dedicated and hardworking individuals who have done so much for their neighbors and for this nation as a whole. Today, I stand to recognize their spirit and to say that I am honored to be their Representative.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I accidentally failed to record my vote on roll call #27, to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 727, legislation to amend the Consumer Product Safety Act to provide that low-speed electric bicycles are consumer products subject to the CPSC. As I indicated in the statement I had placed in the RECORD as a part of the debate on this measure, I support H.R. 727 and intended to vote in favor of it.

A TRIBUTE TO HOSEA WILLIAMS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in praising the work and life of Hosea Williams as a civil rights leader. For the past 40 years, he has worked with civil rights issues, helping to make a change for black people in America.

Mr. Williams came from a difficult past. At age 13 he was forced to leave his community to escape a lynching mob that wanted to punish him for socializing with a white girl. When the United States entered World War II, he enlisted in the army and became a staff sergeant in an all-black unit of Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army, working as a weapons carrier. He suffered an injury during an attack and had to spend a year in a British hospital.

Mr. Williams returned to the United States where he finished high school at 23. He proceeded to earn his bachelor's degree from Morris Brown College in Georgia, with a major in Chemistry; and then received his master's degree from Atlanta University. He then became the first black research chemist hired by the federal government below the Mason-Dixon line.

Dissatisfied with the discrimination faced by black people in his community Mr. Williams began giving speeches in a downtown park on his lunch break. He was eventually arrested and jailed. When he was released he took a year leave from the United States Department of Agriculture to do civil rights work and never went back.

The latter portion of Mr. Williams's life was spent fighting for civil rights. He worked as a field general for the Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in the civil rights battles of the 1960's. Before joining with Dr. King he worked with National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and helped to run the Southern Christian Leadership Council's actions in St. Augustine.

Mr. Williams made sure not only to work with the issues abroad but also to work with his community. Serving on the Atlanta City Council and later as the DeKalb County commissioner he worked to improve the conditions at companies and help the poor.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the late Hosea Williams for his hard work and dedication on behalf of the poor and disadvantaged and for his extraordinary contributions to civil rights.

SENIOR CITIZEN PROPERTY TAX VOUCHERS

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced legislation, along with six of my colleagues from Massachusetts, to alter the federal tax treatment of real property tax reduction vouchers received by senior citizens for volunteer work.

Approximately 42 towns in Massachusetts have implemented a program to ease the problem senior citizens, who live on fixed incomes, face due to rising property taxes. These towns have allowed senior citizens to perform volunteer work for their town in exchange for a voucher that reduces their property tax by up to \$500.

Specifically, my legislation would exclude from gross income vouchers issued by a government unit to offset real property taxes, and received by senior citizens, in exchange for volunteer work. The legislation also exempts these vouchers from employment taxes, and senior citizens who are at least 65 are eligible.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation enhances an important and creative program being implemented in many towns in Massachusetts. We devote a lot of effort around here to help make sure retirement does not sink senior citizens deep into poverty, and that they have basic health services. This very modest proposal