

world, but one that we would have to fight for.

Like the American patriots driven to revolution by heavy-handed British intervention, Texas declared its independence after many years of living peacefully as part of the Mexican federal republic because Mexico became dominated by military dictatorships.

The seeds of Texas independence were sown in 1824, when a military dictatorship abolished the Mexican constitution.

In the words of the Texas declaration of independence, the Texas people's government have been forcibly changed without their consent from a restricted federative republic composed of sovereign states to a consolidated central military despotism.

The Texas Declaration of Independence also based the justification for revolution on the grounds that the government of Mexico had ceased to protect the lives and liberty and property of the people.

The military dictatorships that had unfortunately captured the Mexican government also did not provide for trial by jury, freedom of religion or public education.

Failure to provide these essential services violates the sacred contract between government and the people.

It is important to remember that the struggle for Texas independence was a political struggle, not an ethnic conflict. In fact, many Texas Hispanics consider themselves Tejanos and not Mexicanos.

Tejanos lived in Texas long before Mexico existed and they moved there for the same reasons Anglos later moved there, freedom to run their own affairs and a wild but productive landscape.

So we are inspired by so many Tejanos that joined the fight for independence when the Mexican government became an exploitive military regime, including Captain Juan Sequin, Lorenzo de Zavala, a future republic of Texas vice president.

When Texans and Tejanos protested the undemocratic changes to Mexico's government, they were thrown in jail and the Mexican Army marched to war on Texas to enforce the decrees of the military dictatorship at the point of a bayonet.

While future President Sam Houston and other delegates signed the Texas Declaration of Independence, Santa Anna's army was besieging the Texans and Tejanos at the Alamo in San Antonio.

The Alamo fell on the morning of March 6, 1836 when Lt. Colonel William Barrett Travis, Tennesseean congressman David Crockett and approximately 200 other Texan and Tejano defenders were killed in action a heroic sacrifice for Texan freedom. On March 27, this same Army massacred over 300 unarmed Texans at Goliad.

Fortunately, Texans and Tejanos achieved their independence several weeks later on April 21, 1836 when ap-

proximately 900 Texans and Tejanos of the Texas Army overpowered a much larger Mexican army in the surprise attack at the Battle of San Jacinto.

Texas Independence Day is important to all Americans because it is the event that show the brotherhood of freedom can be stronger than the brotherhood of ethnicity or nationality, as Tejanos proved at Gonzalez, Bexar, Goliad and the Alamo and along the banks of the San Jacinto River and the government of the republic of Texas.

People sometimes wonder what makes Texas and Texans so different and I believe part of that answer is the passion for freedom that gave us the first Texas Independence Day is still alive today. Something about being raised in Texas or even living there for an extended period of time makes Texans less willing to put up with the infringement on our rights, more willing to fight for them. I believe part of that passion comes from knowing Texas history.

Today we give thanks to the many Texans of all backgrounds that sacrificed for the Texas freedom we enjoy. God bless Texas and God bless America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, 12 years ago I came to this house in January 1993 and during that year this Congress debated whether or not to pass the North American Free Trade Agreement. The promises made during NAFTA in 1993 from its supporters were it would create jobs in the U.S., it would raise living standards in Mexico by raising wages, it would encourage and enable Mexicans to buy more American products. It would increase our balance of trade with Canada and Mexico, positively. Those were the promises made by NAFTA.

We have heard those same promises when we passed the PNTR with China. We have heard those same promises on trade agreement after trade agreement. But look what has happened to our trade deficit in that period. Starting in 1992, the year I first ran for Congress our trade deficit was \$38 billion. You can see it passes \$100 billion in the early 1990s. Almost \$200 billion in the mid 1990s. President Bush took office. Goes up to 400 billion, 450 billion, 500 billion. This year our trade deficit was \$617 billion. That means that we are buying \$617 billion more in products

than we are selling. So, what is the President's response? The President's response is the Central American Free Trade Agreement. More of the same, followed he hopes by something called free trade area of the Americas. CAFTA and FTAA will double the population of NAFTA, Mexico, the U.S. and Canada and quadruple the number of low income workers.

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They say that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and over again and expecting a different result. We are hearing the same promises about CAFTA, that it will raise living standards and raise wages in Central America, that it will create jobs in the United States, that we will export more and more to Central America, that it will reduce our trade deficit. It is the same old song.

It was the same song for NAFTA. It is the same song for NAFTA's dysfunctional cousin CAFTA, the Central American Free Trade Agreement. This President is going to come to Congress and again ask us to pass another free trade agreement that hemorrhages American jobs that costs us, especially manufacturing jobs.

My State under President Bush has lost hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs; this country has lost around 2 million manufacturing jobs in the 4 years that George Bush has been President; yet he continues to do the same thing, tax cuts for the wealthiest people in our country, trade agreements that hemorrhage jobs overseas.

Mr. Speaker, just look at the facts. Look at what has happened with our trade deficit. Again, it was \$38 billion the year I ran for Congress in 1992. Today it is almost 20 times higher, \$617 billion trade deficit. We had a trade surplus with Mexico in 1992. Today we have a \$40 billion trade deficit with Mexico.

Again, Mr. Speaker, the President looks at these numbers and he says, let us do more of the same. Clearly our trade policy is not working. Clearly the President is taking the country in the wrong direction on trade. Every trade agreement this Congress has passed from President Bush has been signed by the President and then passed without Congress by about 60 days.

President Bush signed the Central American Free Trade Agreement on May 28. He has yet to try to push it through Congress because he knows the American people oppose the Central American Free Trade Agreement, and he knows the United States Congress opposes this Central American Free Trade Agreement.

Fully 90 percent of Democrats in the House of Representatives plan to vote against CAFTA because Democrats understand, and I hope enough of my Republican colleagues come along, understand that the Central American Free Trade Agreement is bad for our community. It is bad for our families. It is bad for our workers. It simply does not

work for our country. It betrays American values of hard work, of being rewarded for hard work. It hurts the poor in both countries. It hurts working people in both countries. It clearly does not promote the right set of moral values for our Nation.

I ask my colleagues to oppose the Central American Free Trade Agreement. It is clear these trade agreements are not working for our country.

MARK ALAN WILSON, HERO OF SMITH COUNTY, TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, February 24, 2005, in the city of Tyler, Texas, gun fire erupted outside the Smith County courthouse. An estranged and enraged ex-husband, irate over a domestic hearing, lay in wait outside the courthouse for his ex-wife and one of his sons who was 23. The courthouse was well secured inside while also having a metal detector inside its entrance. Such security measures probably prevented the soon-to-be murderer from carrying his rifle inside the courthouse and shooting not only his ex-wife and son, but also the many witnesses, jurors, parties and personnel who would have been inside, as had occurred in another courthouse some years ago and miles away.

As the ex-wife left the courthouse, the murderer opened fire hitting her and also her own son. Mark Wilson, a nearby Good Samaritan and hero, immediately without hesitation and without thought for his own safety went into action. He pulled his concealed weapon that he was lawfully carrying and accurately shot the murderer more than once. He could tell he was hitting the murderer, but what he did not know was that that murderer was wearing extensive body armor. That fact allowed the murderer to turn and fire fatal shots at our selfless hero Mark Wilson.

In the process of Mark's firing such accurate shots, he not only hurt the murderer, he also distracted him from the many innocent bystanders in the area.

When hearing the shots being fired outside the courthouse, two deputies and a Tyler police detective responded by running to the source. Parenthetically, the Army teaches us that the only way to have a chance of surviving an ambush is to turn and run into the source of the ambush. As a trainee, sometimes we wondered if we would actually have the courage to do that when there were real bullets flying.

We do not have to wonder about what Mark and our courageous law enforcement officers at the Smith County courthouse would do when faced with a life-threatening attack. They respond and they respond with courage and clear thinking for the safety of others.

Mark Wilson's heroic actions disrupted the murderer's pattern and provided time for the protective law enforcement officers to respond. As Deputy Sherman Dollison attempted to intervene, he was also hit by the murderer and left for dead and he remains in critical condition at a local hospital.

Smith County and other friends thought mighty highly of Deputy Marlin Suel and Tyler police detective Clay Perrett. They are personal friends and they were both wounded in the ensuing exchange that sent the murderer into his car and fleeing the scene. He was chased by extremely responsive law enforcement as he continued to shoot during the chase. However, the murderer was killed before he could yet kill again.

There was an evil act of anger last Thursday, but there were heroes watching out, ready to act for the salvation of others. It is quite possible that Mark's actions prevented those in the area from becoming a trail of lifeless bodies in addition to saving the life of the murderer's own downed son.

According to the investigation, the rifle the murderer used was not automatic so he had to consciously pull the trigger over and over again to inflict the death and violence that he did.

Mark Wilson himself was able to apply for and receive his concealed handgun permit because the law allowing such was passed in Texas after a callous killer went into a cafeteria years ago and began firing randomly, hitting so many. Back at that time no civilians were there who were legally allowed to have a gun so the killer caused prolonged devastation. To receive a permit for carrying a concealed weapon in Texas, a person has to prove himself consummately law abiding. That described Mark. He was trained and he trained others in self-defensive weaponry. He was 52 years old. He had been a patriot who served all of us in the United States Navy. He was a community volunteer. He loved life to the maximum which included a deep abiding appreciation for Monty Python, all while he worked to make others' lives better in the process.

Yes, he knew how to make friends laugh. He had overcome tough times. He had been entrepreneurial, and he had worked to create good times for himself and others. He had many friends because of his community involvement and his very can-do attitude.

As a tribute to Mark and his courageous heroism, hundreds of people filled the downtown square in Smith County to commemorate his life, his times, and his goodness on Sunday, February 27.

As a member of the United States Navy, he had sworn to defend the Nation against all enemies foreign and domestic. Last Thursday he gave his life while once again defending against an enemy, this time domestic.

For many of us reflecting on Mark's death the words of Jesus of Nazareth

capture Mark's spirit: "Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friend."

Those words came from someone who knew and Mark Wilson's love is what was praised. He stepped up that love a notch by going and laying down his life for people he did not even know. This country, this institution need a memorializing of such a courageous hero as Mark Wilson. His loving parents and dear friends deserve to hear his praises sung once more for the record, and may the retelling of Mark's bravery bring them comfort, bring them hope, and to the hopeless who think there is no one out there who cares. Mark cared and I would be willing to bet his caring will be perpetuated into posterity for others that he has touched.

PROTECT SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am here because the President has challenged this body and the other to deal with the problem of Social Security. And while the President no longer considers it a crisis, obviously when it reaches the point that you are spending more money than you are taking in, you do have a problem and you do have a challenge and we do have a responsibility.

So I think the President has changed the crisis which would occur according to the Congressional Budget Office out to 2052 and even then it remains a challenge and not really a crisis.

But we do not have a bill so we do not know specifically what the President would want to do. We do know that these types of problems you either have to cut the benefits, extend the age or raise the taxes; but the President has taken all of these things off the table and said we should deal with the question of privatization. I guess the more people in the district that looked at privatization and the more economists that studied it have caused the President to admit that privatization and private accounts and personal accounts has little or nothing to do with the question of solvency, which is basically what we are talking about.

We Democrats know how good this program has been for America. We know that it has been an insurance policy that most working people cannot afford. We know that in addition to the benefits that you get when you retire that we have survivor benefits, we have disability benefits, and we are prepared to take a look at anything as long as these benefits are not cut.

Now, the President would have us to believe that if you are over 55 your benefits would not be cut. To me, a guy from Harlem, it means that if you are under 55 you can depend on your benefits being cut. But still since we do not have a bill we really do not know exactly what we are fighting, but we do know what we want to protect.