

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, February 18, 2011, during consideration of H.R. 1, the Full Year Continuing Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2011, I recorded an erroneous vote on amendment number 569, offered by Mr. ISSA of California. I intended to vote "no" on rollcall vote number 133.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. CAROLE
KENDRICK SPIVEY THOMAS

HON. PAUL C. BROWN

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a powerful and effective teacher, Mrs. Carole Kendrick Spivey Thomas, of Eatonton, Georgia.

Mrs. Thomas, married to David H. Thomas and a mother of four, graduated from Mercer University with a degree in English. After graduation, she began a teaching career at her alma mater, Putnam County High School. In 1971 she moved to Gateway Schools, where she has continued as an excellent educator for the past 40 years. She earned a Specialist Degree and life teaching certificate in Library Education from the University of Georgia and has also served as the school librarian.

Since 1985, Mrs. Thomas has led the middle school trip to Washington, D.C., giving students the opportunity to explore the sights of our Nation's capital and learn about the representative democracy in the United States. She has made the trip a memorable experience for the students, providing them the opportunity to see firsthand the landmarks and places they previously had only read about in books.

In Mrs. Thomas' teaching career, more than half a century teaching career, she has consistently shown her students how much she cares about their education and self-improvement. Whether she is analyzing literature, reviewing projects for her students, or organizing literary competitions, Mrs. Thomas' dedication to her students and enthusiasm for her work are evident and to be highly commended.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Carole Thomas' service and dedication to the students of my district and congratulate her on celebrating over 50 years of teaching excellence.

CELEBRATING TEXAS'
INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. JOE BARTON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of Texas' Independence Day which occurred 175 years ago and to commemorate the occasion I would like to

share with the House, the Texas Declaration of Independence signed on this day in the year 1836.

The Unanimous Declaration of Independence made by the Delegates of the People of Texas in General Convention at the town of Washington on the 2nd day of March 1836

When a government has ceased to protect the lives, liberty and property of the people, from whom its legitimate powers are derived, and for the advancement of whose happiness it was instituted, and so far from being a guarantee for the enjoyment of those inestimable and inalienable rights, becomes an instrument in the hands of evil rulers for their oppression.

When the Federal Republican Constitution of their country, which they have sworn to support, no longer has a substantial existence, and the whole nature of their government has been forcibly changed, without their consent, from a restricted federative republic, composed of sovereign states, to a consolidated central military despotism, in which every interest is disregarded but that of the army and the priesthood, both the eternal enemies of civil liberty, the everready minions of power, and the usual instruments of tyrants.

When, long after the spirit of the constitution has departed, moderation is at length so far lost by those in power, that even the semblance of freedom is removed, and the forms themselves of the constitution discontinued, and so far from their petitions and remonstrances being regarded, the agents who bear them are thrown into dungeons, and mercenary armies sent forth to force a new government upon them at the point of the bayonet.

When, in consequence of such acts of malfeasance and abdication on the part of the government, anarchy prevails, and civil society is dissolved into its original elements. In such a crisis, the first law of nature, the right of self-preservation, the inherent and inalienable rights of the people to appeal to first principles, and take their political affairs into their own hands in extreme cases, enjoins it as a right towards themselves, and a sacred obligation to their posterity, to abolish such government, and create another in its stead, calculated to rescue them from impending dangers, and to secure their future welfare and happiness.

Nations, as well as individuals, are amenable for their acts to the public opinion of mankind. A statement of a part of our grievances is therefore submitted to an impartial world, in justification of the hazardous but unavoidable step now taken, of severing our political connection with the Mexican people, and assuming an independent attitude among the nations of the earth.

The Mexican government, by its colonization laws, invited and induced the Anglo-American population of Texas to colonize its wilderness under the pledged faith of a written constitution, that they should continue to enjoy that constitutional liberty and republican government to which they had been habituated in the land of their birth, the United States of America.

In this expectation they have been cruelly disappointed, inasmuch as the Mexican nation has acquiesced in the late changes made in the government by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, who having overturned the constitution of his country, now offers us the cruel alternative, either to abandon our homes, acquired by so many privations, or submit to the most intolerable of all tyranny, the combined despotism of the sword and the priesthood.

It has sacrificed our welfare to the state of Coahuila, by which our interests have been continually depressed through a jealous and

partial course of legislation, carried on at a far distant seat of government, by a hostile majority, in an unknown tongue, and this too, notwithstanding we have petitioned in the humblest terms for the establishment of a separate state government, and have, in accordance with the provisions of the national constitution, presented to the general Congress a republican constitution, which was, without just cause, contemptuously rejected.

It incarcerated in a dungeon, for a long time, one of our citizens, for no other cause but a zealous endeavor to procure the acceptance of our constitution, and the establishment of a state government.

It has failed and refused to secure, on a firm basis, the right of trial by jury, that palladium of civil liberty, and only safe guarantee for the life, liberty, and property of the citizen.

It has failed to establish any public system of education, although possessed of almost boundless resources, (the public domain,) and although it is an axiom in political science, that unless a people are educated and enlightened, it is idle to expect the continuance of civil liberty, or the capacity for self government.

It has suffered the military commandants, stationed among us, to exercise arbitrary acts of oppression and tyranny, thus trampling upon the most sacred rights of the citizens, and rendering the military superior to the civil power.

It has dissolved, by force of arms, the state Congress of Coahuila and Texas, and obliged our representatives to fly for their lives from the seat of government, thus depriving us of the fundamental political right of representation.

It has demanded the surrender of a number of our citizens, and ordered military detachments to seize and carry them into the Interior for trial, in contempt of the civil authorities, and in defiance of the laws and the constitution.

It has made piratical attacks upon our commerce, by commissioning foreign desperadoes, and authorizing them to seize our vessels, and convey the property of our citizens to far distant ports for confiscation.

It denies us the right of worshipping the Almighty according to the dictates of our own conscience, by the support of a national religion, calculated to promote the temporal interest of its human functionaries, rather than the glory of the true and living God.

It has demanded us to deliver up our arms, which are essential to our defence, the rightful property of freemen, and formidable only to tyrannical governments.

It has invaded our country both by sea and by land, with intent to lay waste our territory, and drive us from our homes; and has now a large mercenary army advancing, to carry on against us a war of extermination.

It has, through its emissaries, incited the merciless savage, with the tomahawk and scalping knife, to massacre the inhabitants of our defenseless frontiers.

It hath been, during the whole time of our connection with it, the contemptible sport and victim of successive military revolutions, and hath continually exhibited every characteristic of a weak, corrupt, and tyrannical government.

These, and other grievances, were patiently borne by the people of Texas, until they reached that point at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue. We then took up arms in defence of the national constitution. We appealed to our Mexican brethren for assistance. Our appeal has been made in vain. Though months have elapsed, no sympathetic response has yet been heard from the Interior. We are, therefore, forced to the melancholy conclusion, that the Mexican

people have acquiesced in the destruction of their liberty, and the substitution thereof of a military government; that they are unfit to be free, and incapable of self government.

The necessity of self-preservation, therefore, now decrees our eternal political separation.

We, therefore, the delegates with plenary powers of the people of Texas, in solemn convention assembled, appealing to a candid world for the necessities of our condition, do hereby resolve and declare, that our political connection with the Mexican nation has forever ended, and that the people of Texas do now constitute a free, Sovereign, and independent republic, and are fully invested with all the rights and attributes which properly belong to independent nations; and, conscious of the rectitude of our intentions, we fearlessly and confidently commit the issue to the decision of the Supreme arbiter of the destinies of nations.

Signed,

Richard Ellis, President of the Convention and Delegate from Red River.

Charles B. Stewart, Tho. Barnett, James Collinsworth, Edwin Waller, Asa Brigham, John S. D. Byrom, Francis Ruis, J. Antonio Navarro, Jesse B. Badgett, Wm D. Lacy, William Menifee, Jn. Fisher, Matthew Caldwell, William Motley, Lorenzo de Zavala, Stephen H. Everett, George W. Smyth, Elijah Stapp, Claiborne West, Wm. B. Scates, M. B. Menard, A. B. Hardin, J. W. Burton, Thos. J. Gazley, R. M. Coleman, Sterling C. Robertson, Geo. C. Childress, Bailey Hardeman, Rob. Potter, Thomas Jefferson Rusk, Chas. S. Taylor, John S. Roberts, Robert Hamilton, Collin McKinney, Albert H. Latimer, James Power, Sam Houston, David Thomas, Edwd. Conrad, Martin Parmer, Edwin O. Legrand, Stephen W. Blount, Jms. Gaines, Wm. Clark, Jr., Sydney O. Pennington, Wm. Carrol Crawford, Jno. Turner, Benj. Briggs Goodrich, G. W. Barnett, James G. Swisher, Jesse Grimes, S. Rhoads Fisher, John W. Moore, John W. Bower, Saml. A. Maverick (from Bejar), Sam P. Carson, A. Briscoe, J. B. Woods, H. S. Kimble, Secretary.

HONORING THE LIVES OF VETERANS KERRY DUDKEWIC, ARNOLD BOCKSEL, AND SEAMUS BYRNE

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the lives of three veterans who passed away this past weekend.

Mr. Kerry Dudkewic of Smithtown, NY, was 62 years old and a Vietnam veteran and lost his battle with cancer on Friday, February 25, 2011. This past January he was finally given confirmation from the VA that his many ailments were indeed connected to his service and were caused by exposure to Agent Orange. Kerry knew he was very sick and wanted his wife to obtain survivor benefits upon his death. Kerry's commitment to serving others was exhibited throughout his life and I am so grateful I was able to help him in return before his passing.

Mr. Arnold A. Bocksel of Syosset, NY, was a 97-year-old WWII veteran and passed away on Sunday, February 27, 2011, of natural causes. Arnold survived the Bataan Death March and three and a half years in a Japanese prison camp. Arnold was awarded sev-

eral medals, including the Bronze Star and the Prisoner of War Medal. Arnold suffered from service-related injuries and in 2010 he was awarded a check from the VA to make his home handicapped-accessible. Arnold was truly a hero and I was so proud to help get him the support he earned and deserved.

Finally, Mr. Seamus Byrne of Smithtown, NY, was tragically struck by a car and killed on Sunday, February 27, 2011, while walking home with his wife Michelle after celebrating his 33rd birthday with friends. Seamus served with the New York Army National Guard Fighting 69th Infantry Regiment and was awarded a Purple Heart for injuries sustained while serving in Afghanistan. I am so saddened by this, knowing Seamus was finally getting his life back in order after his injuries and knowing his family was finally getting their husband and dad back to normal. Seamus is survived by his 10-year-old son Seamus, his 3-year-old daughter Ashley, and his wife, who is a nurse and tried to save him after he was struck.

Again, I am honored to have had these great men in our community and am grateful for the service they provided to our nation.

HONORING THE STATE OF TEXAS

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the State of Texas on the 175th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Texas.

Texas Independence Day commemorates the adoption of the Texas Declaration of Independence from Mexico on March 2, 1836. Sixty delegates from across Texas signed the declaration. Its language in many ways parallels our nation's 1776 Declaration of Independence.

Only six days before the signing of Texas' declaration, 150 patriots under the command of Colonel William Barret Travis made their last stand against Santa Anna's Mexican army at the Alamo. Though vastly outnumbered, the Alamo patriots were committed to the cause of liberty for Texas. On February 24th, Colonel Travis dispatched arguably the most historic letter in Texas history, calling for reinforcements. "I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism, and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid with all dispatch," pleaded Travis.

The strength of character and commitment to freedom displayed by Colonel Travis and his men has endured in the hearts of every Texan throughout our 175 years as a Republic. It is this spirit that makes Texas great, and has allowed us to weather challenging times. More than ever, I think we could use a lot more of that undeniable Texas spirit and determination in Washington.

It is with great pleasure I take the time to recognize the great State of Texas on this monumental occasion.

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY—175 YEARS AGO

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the unique history of the great state of Texas.

Today, March 2, marks Texas Independence Day.

On this day, 175 years ago, Texas declared its independence from Mexico and its dictator, Santa Anna, the 19th century Muammar Gadhafi.

In 1836, in the small farm village of Washington-on-the-Brazos, 54 Texans, as they called themselves in those days, gathered to do something bold and courageous: Sign the Texas Declaration of Independence and once and for all "declare that the people of Texas do now constitute a free, sovereign, and independent republic."

As these determined delegates met to declare independence, Santa Anna and 6,000 enemy troops were marching on an old beat-up Spanish mission that we now call the Alamo, where Texas defenders stood defiant, stood determined.

They were led by a 27-year-old lawyer by the name of William Barrett Travis.

The Alamo and its 186 Texans were all that stood between the invaders and the people of Texas.

And behind the cold, dark, damp walls of that Alamo, Commander William Barrett Travis sent the following letter to Texas requesting aid.

Here is what this appeal said in part: "To all the people of Texas and Americans throughout the world, I am besieged by a thousand or more of the enemy under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannon fire for over 24 hours, but I have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion; otherwise the fort will be put to the sword. I have 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 our aid with all dispatch. 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 Barrett Travis, Colonel, Texas Army.

After 13 days of glory at the Alamo, Commander Travis and his men sacrificed their lives on the altar of freedom March 6, 1836.

However, those lives would not be lost in vain. Their determination did pay off, and because heroes like Travis, Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie held out so long, Santa Anna's forces took such great losses they became battered and demoralized.

As Travis said, "Victory will cost them more dearly than defeat."

The Alamo defenders were from every State and 13 foreign countries.

They were black, brown, and white. Their ages were 16 through 67, and they were all volunteers.

They were mavericks, revolutionaries, farmers, shopkeepers, and freedom fighters; and