

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 cavalry 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.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

With the news yesterday of the terrible explosion in West, Texas, our thoughts, hearts, prayers go out to those people so terribly harmed and adversely affected and to the loss of lives, just as we continue to remember those who have lost family, friends, loved ones, limbs in Boston.

West, Texas, is often known for their West Fest in the fall of the year. They always advertise as having the best kolaches anywhere in the world. It's just a beautiful little town, a wonderful little town, but it is rocked and needs our prayers. That is, in fact, what the mayor of West, Tommy Muska, said:

We need your prayers. There's a lot of people that got hurt. There's a lot of people, I'm sure, who will not be here tomorrow.

They're still trying to dig out from under that devastating explosion that occurred there at the fertilizer plant, so we will continue to remember those people.

It is also interesting and worthy of note that, in the news, we now find that we have confessions in the murders of the Assistant District Attorney in the neighboring county of where I live, over in Kaufman. The Assistant District Attorney, Mark Hasse, and the District Attorney, Mike McLelland, and his wife were killed back on March 30 of this year—the DA was. Mark was killed back on January 31.

That was so tragic, and any of us who have ever been prosecutors or judges as I have—and my friend TED POE has been a judge—you suffer the death threats and the slings and arrows that come at you; and I think, in a way, it was preparation for slings and arrows verbally that would come in Congress. These were real bullets that were used to kill a prosecutor, an Assistant DA and a District Attorney, and anytime law enforcement is threatened in such a way, it's a threat to the rule of law; it's a threat to the country.

Sadly, after those two heinous murders in Kaufman, the Southern Poverty Law Center came out—for which this administration has helped achieve a very special place, unfortunately, of credibility when they do not deserve credibility because of the pain and suffering that the institution has caused—and there were articles written. Here is one from ABC with the headline “Aryan Brotherhood of Texas Among Groups Eyed in Prosecutors’ Murders.”

The article from April 2 says:

The Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, a white supremacist prison gang, has become one of the top focuses of authorities investigating the murders of two Texas prosecutors, sources told ABC News.

Prosecutors from Kaufman County, Texas, had helped imprison dozens of Aryan Brotherhood of Texas members late last year, the sources said.

In recent weeks, Kaufman County District Attorney Mike McLelland and his top assistant, Mark Hasse, were murdered in shootings that have left investigators hunting for clues.

Cops are poring over hundreds of old cases that Hasse and McLelland prosecuted and following clues that involve not just the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, but Mexican drug cartels, local drug traffickers and other violent individuals; but they are aggressively pursuing a possible Aryan Brotherhood link, sources said.

It was nice of ABC to give so much weight and credibility to their sources that obviously did not have any clue whatsoever of what they were talking about because, just as was reported by people back at the time, they were concerned about the former justice of the peace's possible involvement.

In the same way, the Southern Poverty Law Center began its bigoted approach toward a group like Family Research Council and all those who happen to hold religious beliefs affirmed in the Bible, constantly referred to in this Chamber and in the Chamber down the Hall, where nondenominational Christian worship services were held through most of the 1800s and where President Thomas Jefferson—who coined the phrase “separation of church and State” and said there should be a wall of separation—felt there was no problem with having a nondenominational Christian worship service in the United States Capitol and, in fact, at times, had the marine band come to play the hymns.

I have a bill that would require a plaque be put down the Hall so people would know. We're not advocating to have church services every Sunday down there—it's completely unnecessary—but it is important for people to not have this view that is completely inappropriate by people who would attempt to rewrite history.

The Family Research Council, as do so many other Christian groups, holds to the religious belief about marriage as was recognized by Jesus at his first recorded miracle at a wedding between a man and a woman, as is recorded in the Old Testament, in Genesis: that God saw man alone and felt it would be better for him to have a helpmate and then created woman.

Regardless of how anyone believes everyone got here, I love the way the late Bob Murphey from Nacogdoches used to explain in his country way—though he was a brilliant intellect, he explained things in a countrified fashion—“I feel sorry for atheists. I really do. They have to believe that nobody, plus nothing, equals everything.”

□ 1440

Well, the people that met through most of the 1800s down the Hall, most of them hoped for the day when slavery would be gone. Many of them attended church services down the Hall, including John Quincy Adams, spent their lives fighting to end slavery in America, pushing for that day as William Wilberforce did in England; and yet because the Family Research Council held the beliefs about marriage being between a man and a woman, that most people have in recorded history, and has, although there are some peo-

ple who interpret the Bible differently, if you look at the real interpretation, there is no mistake, what it says and what it means, but because people hold the values that the Pilgrims depicted down in the rotunda, having a prayer meeting with an open Bible believed, as the Family Research Council held the same views about marriage that George Washington did, who's considered the father of the country, because the Family Research Council held the same views about marriage that DeSoto, who is pictured down the Hall in the rotunda, finding the Mississippi River and being so overwhelmed that there was this incredible amount of freshwater this far inland, they commemorated the spot, as depicted in that massive mural, by digging a hole and planting a cross there to commemorate the spot.

Since the Family Research Council believed that marriage was the same thing as Pocahontas and those present for her baptism depicted down the Hall in the rotunda believed, because the Family Research Council believed that marriage, as all 56 of the signers of the Declaration of Independence depicted in the rotunda, because the Family Research Council had the same religious convictions about marriage of all of those people depicted down the Hall, as I've mentioned, the Southern Poverty Law Center claimed that Family Research Council was a hate group and stirred up animosity against them that eventually played a role.

As we found out later, no one wanted to jump to conclusions, but it was very clear that their branding the Family Research Council and Chick-fil-A as being hateful simply because they held religious beliefs protected by our Constitution that marriage is between a man and a woman, the Southern Poverty Law Center stirred up hate, animosity, and rage against the Family Research Council. And on the fateful day not so long ago, a gunman came to the Family Research Council with a bunch of Chick-fil-A sandwiches and a gun. And but for the valiant work of the man that stopped him and got shot in the process, there could well have been 15 dead Family Research Council employees with 15 Chick-fil-A sandwiches beside them.

There is an article here written by Bryan Preston on April 15, 2013. It says:

News broke Friday afternoon that an arrest has been made in the murders of three people. Those murders, of Kaufman County DA Mike McLelland; his wife, Cynthia; and prosecutor Mark Hasse, triggered national coverage. As R.S. McCain notes, MSNBC's Chris Matthews ran an 8-minute segment on the killings on April 3, detailing the widespread belief that Aryan Brotherhood white supremacist/thug groups were behind the killings.

Now I live in east Texas, and the widespread beliefs in east Texas were not that the Aryan Brotherhood had been involved in this. Usually, they take actions crazy enough to indicate they're not trying to hide from anything they did. It just didn't sound like

those people. Yet that's what some were stirring up, the sources at NBC.

The article goes on:

But if the reports out of Kaufman County are correct, the Aryan Brotherhood isn't behind the crimes. Former Kaufman Justice of the Peace Eric Williams is.

And we know now, a couple of days later, his wife has also confessed to being part of it. So it was the JP and his wife.

But this article says:

CBS reports that Williams was arrested Friday and charged with making "terroristic threats," which includes threatening county employees and issuing demands that had to be met at a "certain time on a certain date." A storage shed was searched, weapons were found, and they're being tested for ballistics. Capital murder charges may come in a day or two.

According to the report, Williams had a history with both McLelland and Hasse. The two had prosecuted and secured a conviction against him in 2012 for burglary and theft by a public servant. Surveillance cameras caught Williams taking computer equipment from a county building. As part of his appeal, Williams claimed that McLelland and Hasse did not like him. As the case unfolds, it is starting to look like a local vendetta, not part of a national anything by a political-crime syndicate like the Aryan Brotherhood.

Where did MSNBC and other national media quickly get the idea that the Aryan Brotherhood was involved? Possibly from the Southern Poverty Law Center, which on January 31—a day after Hasse's murder—posted a lengthy piece by Mark Potok bringing up the AB link. Potok also showed up on MSNBC April 1, the day after the McLellands' murders, to once again point the finger at the Aryan Brotherhood.

Other press followed up, as Stacy McCain notes, flowing from that January 31 article posted by the Southern Poverty Law Center. But if Williams is the killer, then it looks like the SPLC got the whole story wrong. Meanwhile, on the ground in Kaufman County, suspicion was already falling on Williams much earlier, according to Stacy McCain.

This says:

The pieces might have fallen into place earlier—Mark Hasse's murder might have been solved, and Williams arrested before McLelland was killed—if law enforcement hadn't wasted time chasing the "white supremacist" wild goose, when the DA himself tried to tell them who murdered Mark Hasse.

Country Judge Bruce Wood said Sunday that McLelland repeatedly told him that McLelland believed Williams was behind Hasse's slaying. The first time was in the emergency room in the hours after Hasse was shot down by a mysterious gunman dressed in black.

He was distraught, Wood said. He very pointedly said to me, I know who did this. I said, Well, who, Mike? He said, Well, Eric Williams.

McLelland, who worked for years as a diagnostic psychologist described Williams as a "narcissistic psychopath" during that conversation and others. Woods said McLelland never elaborated on why he thought Williams was involved.

On March 27, Woods said he met with McLelland in the county judge's office. I said, Are you still convinced that it's Eric Williams? Woods recalled he said, Absolutely.

The SPLC and its "hate watch" and "hate map" fuel media and left wing speculation while helping the center generate donations,

and the latter even inspired an attempt at a mass killing at the headquarters of the Family Research Council last year. This time, the SPLC might have misdirected law enforcement long enough for a man to commit murder. One Federal prosecutor quit a case on April 3, citing the danger of dealing with the Aryan Brotherhood after those original three murders.

It is clear that there is hate in the heart of the Southern Poverty Law Center individuals who would stir up such hatred toward whites or toward a fantastic Christian group like the Family Research Council, and like other Christian groups of all types of races, against my black friends here in Washington who simply believe what they read in the Bible about marriage. And because they believe what they read in the Bible about marriage, you have a group in this country that is so full of hate that they can't stand the thought of someone having religious beliefs different from theirs, so they stir up hatred and animosity.

□ 1450

I was totally against the hate crimes bill. And yet this is a group that wanted a hate crimes bill, yet they're stirring up hate. As a Christian, it is my prayer that those in the Southern Poverty Law Center that are so filled with jealousy and hate and animosity will come to know the peace that passes all understanding that will allow this Nation to heal so many wounds that will only fester with a group like that stirring up hatred. We will continue to hope and pray for such peace and the complete diminishment and dissolution of hatred of such a vile nature within the hearts of those people there, so they could come to the point of being able to hold hands and sing songs and hymns together as so many did around this country on 9/12 of 2001, as I've done with others, different races, creeds, right here in Washington, D.C., because we share a love for our Nation and a love for God. And when we do that, there's no hyphenated American.

That was the one thing, with all the heartache, the anguish on 9/12 of 2001, that was so amazing. We were Americans. We were not hyphenated anything. We were Americans. We were one people. Out of many, we came together as one.

And it continues to be my hope and prayer that groups that stir up hate like the Southern Poverty Law Center and brand others as hate in an attempt to disguise their own will come to know peace and will come to know love and will take the example of the man whose bust is down in the rotunda as well, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who advocated to the very end peace and the love that Jesus showed to all of us. May the Southern Poverty Law Center find such love and such grace.

We also had a story here, April 17, by Helle Dale, Congressional Hearing Produces Shocker on Benghazi:

Kudos to members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee for squarely placing Benghazi on the table at today's hearing

with Secretary of State John Kerry. Kerry's answers were nothing less than shocking.

What we learned is that State is conducting yet another internal review of Benghazi, initiated by Kerry himself immediately after taking office and allegedly due soon. This amounts to a huge indictment of the credibility of Kerry's predecessor Hillary Clinton and of the investigation by the State Department's Accountability Review Board. Clearly, even John Kerry is not confident in the Obama administration's version of events.

Kerry promised the committee that he would "clear the air," though he also repeatedly used the phrase that clearing the air needs to be done "so we can move on" to far more important issues.

I am so grateful to Secretary Kerry for taking that position. We do need to get to the truth. The dead at Benghazi, the dead Americans, cry out for truth. Those who were harmed and hurt, Americans there, deserve the truth. Hopefully we will get that.

Mr. Speaker, with so much suffering and anguish right now in America, it is still the greatest nation in the history of the world. May God guide the leadership in this country that we don't drop the ball and fail on our watch, that we show ourselves to be worthy recipients of the gifts of liberty given to us by prior generations, all coming, as the Founders noted, as a gift from God.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

#### SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. CON. RES. 5. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that John Arthur "Jack" Johnson should receive a posthumous pardon for the racially motivated conviction in 1913 that diminished the athletic, cultural, and historic significance of Jack Johnson and unduly tarnished his reputation; the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 56 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, April 19, 2013, at 11 a.m.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1160. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's FY 2012 Foreign Language Skill Proficiency Bonus Report; to the Committee on Armed Services.