

The following is from the United States Congressional Record of February 29, 1996, for the Senate (page S1448), and is quoting Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (US Senator from Texas).

Considering that the Republic of Texas was resurrected in convention in December of 1995, and Austin officials were notified in January, her reading in February seems timely, doesn't it?

Mr. President, this month marked the sesquicentennial of the end of the Republic of Texas.

But I rise this morning to celebrate the beginning of our Republic, not its end.

One hundred sixty years ago Saturday, March 2, a band of Texans gathered in Washington-on-the-Brazos and declared our Independence from Mexico. Around them raged a fierce war for that Independence. I would like the Senate to remember the many brave Texans who gave their lives in that war as I read the last letter sent from the Alamo on February 24, 1836. In reading this letter, I continue a tradition begun by my late friend, Senator John Tower. Here then is the letter of Col. William Barrett Travis, from his fort at San Antonio.

To the people of Texas and all Americans in the world:

Fellow citizens and compatriots--I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannonade for 24 hours and have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken. I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls. 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. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due his own honor and that of his country. Victory or death.

P.S. The Lord is on our side. When the enemy appeared in sight we had not three bushels of corn. We have since found in deserted house 80 to 90 bushels and got in the walls 20 or 30 head of Beeves.

William B. Travis.--The Alamo, February 24, 1836.