

has been able to make a living to support himself and his family. He believes the seas are now teeming with fish. He has seen such a rebound in the stocks, and he is very worried that the latest regulations proposed by the National Marine Fisheries Service will put him and many of his fellow fishermen out of business.

I share the grave concerns of the responsible fishermen such as Sam and those fishermen with whom I talked on Friday night at the annual fisherman's forum. They are good people. They know the sea better than any regulator in Washington, DC. How unfortunate it is, how wrong it is, that Federal fishing regulators did not involve the people who know the Gulf of Maine the best: The fishermen who are out there earning a living.

I am going to be working with my colleagues in both the House and the Senate and particularly with Maine's senior Senator, Ms. OLYMPIA SNOWE, who is the ranking Republican on the subcommittee with jurisdiction over this issue, to develop a plan, to develop an alternative approach that recognizes we can both support our fishermen and have the seas teeming with fish.

It is a false choice to say our fishermen can only go to sea half the number of days that they are now allowed, a restriction that is already extremely difficult for many fishermen and their families to accept. These further restrictions, the new approach proposed by the National Marine Fisheries Service, I fear, will spell the end for many Maine fishermen. It will make it simply impossible for them to earn a living; the restrictions are so onerous, so unreasonable, and so strict.

We need a different approach, and I believe if Federal regulators had only taken the time to involve the experts in the industry, the men and women who are fishing in the Gulf of Maine, we would have come up with a far better approach, an approach that would not only continue the process of rebuilding the fishing stocks in Maine, in the Gulf of Maine, but also would allow our hard-working, proud, and independent fishermen to earn a living.

This is an issue on which I will continue to be working with the Chair and others.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARPER). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, today, as I have done every year I have been in the Senate, I want to especially commemorate the anniversary of Texas

independence. Many know—many do not know—the history of Texas, but I am very proud of the heritage we have. Texas is the only State that came into the Nation as a nation. There was a treaty that was made between the United States and the Republic of Texas for Texas to come into the Union. The freedom the Texans got in 1836 was hard fought and it was a long time coming. They were a part of Mexico. The Mexican Government was becoming more oppressive, and they were taxing the people, they were not giving them religious freedom, and they finally passed a law that said no one could emigrate from the United States into the Texas territory of Mexico.

So the people rebelled. They had to fight for their independence, and one of the most famous battles in the history of our country was the Battle of the Alamo.

I commemorate Texas Independence Day, which is March 2, every year, by reading the letter from William Barret Travis, that has become very famous, as he was holding down the fort at the Alamo. This was at a time when the convention was meeting at Washington-on-the-Brazos to make the formal declaration of independence from Mexico for Texas. My great, great grandfather was one of the delegates to that convention. He represented Nacogdoches, just as Thomas Rusk did.

Thomas Rusk was the first Senator to hold my seat. He and my great, great grandfather, Charles S. Taylor, were very good friends. They were partners, and they were certainly patriots in the fight for freedom for Texas.

It is with that background I would like to read the letter from William Barret Travis, remembering there were 184 Texas rebels in the Alamo at the time. There was a huge army of Santa Ana's out there, and this was the second day of the siege of the Alamo, February 24, 1836.

Fellow citizens and compatriots: I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Ana. 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 demands with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the wall. I shall never surrender or retreat.

Then, I call on you in the name of liberty, of patriotism and of 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 to 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 to his own honor and that of his country—Victory or Death.

William Barret Travis, Lt. Col, Commander.

It turns out there were 3,000 to 6,000 Mexican soldiers. They did take the Alamo, which did not have reinforcements. Gen. Sam Houston decided it would be a waste of manpower to send reinforcements because he thought the

cause was lost. Those 184 men were able to hold off the Mexican Army for days, and that allowed Gen. Sam Houston to gather his forces. The Declaration of Independence was signed on March 2, 1836, and because he was able to marshal the forces after the Alamo and take a stand at San Jacinto, that is where the war was won and the Republic of Texas was formed.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to speak for 10 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ELECTION REFORM

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I understand we are going to be going back to a vote pretty soon relative to the issue of antifraud provisions associated with election reform. We all have different views on this issue. I can certainly recognize and support the simplicity of encouraging voters to have a relatively easy method to vote and register. However, Mr. BOND, the Senator from Missouri, has made quite a point of how fraud occurs. I gather we have seen scams, particularly in Missouri, relative to voter fraud, registering dead neighbors and diseased alderman, and in one case a dog that evidently voted several times and the jig was up when the dog was called for jury duty.

A system that allows that much flexibility is a little too flexible. I hope we address reasonable requirements to encourage people to vote but have reasonable identification so we do not have fraudulent activities such as the dog that was called to jury duty.

IRAQ

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I came to the floor last week to talk about Iraq. I indicated that U.S. forces enforcing the no-fly zone since 1992 were fired on for the second time this year. Of course, our forces responded by destroying an Iraqi air defense group north of Baghdad. This is a continuing commitment we have had to enforce a no-fly zone under the U.N. proclamation over Iraq.

The inconsistency is that, on one hand, we are enforcing this no-fly zone; on the other, we are importing oil from Iraq. Even on September 11, when the attack on the Trade Centers occurred, we were importing a little over 1 million barrels of oil a day from Iraq. Today we import some 875,000 barrels. We are enforcing a no-fly zone, putting