

after the bailout, he said, you know, this actually ends up being a great day because we've federalized, socialized whatever you want—he didn't say that, but it's basically socialized a segment of the financial economy, the financial sector. And now we just need, according to him, to take over the rest of it and then we spread it across the country.

That sounds good. And I heard somebody call into a talk show and say, what's really wrong with socialism?

Well, let me explain it to you this way. When I was an exchange student in the Soviet Union back in 1973, I spent the summer over there; went out to a collective farm, and there were some farmers who were sitting in the shade, you know, mid-morning.

Well, I've worked on farms, ranches, growing up in East Texas, and I know, during the summer, like this was, you start your work as quick as you can after daylight, and you want to be finished before the sun gets too hot. I've worked in 104, 105-degree heat with lots of humidity and it isn't fun, so you try and finish before it gets that hot.

These guys were all sitting in the shade. And I spoke a little Russian back then and I asked them, trying to be nice, when do you work out in the field? And they laughed at me, at the question. And one of them spoke and said, I make the same number of rubles if I'm out there or if I'm here, so I'm here. That's why socialism never works, because when people find out that they can get just as much as the person that works from sun up to sun down, then it falls apart.

Now, the Soviets set a record of having socialism for 70 years. And the only way they could make it work was to have a tyrannical central government that could kill you or imprison you if you didn't play along. But it was doomed to failure.

Socialism is always doomed to failure. And this country, if it were to continue going down this road, would not make 70 years unless it went to a tyrannical government as well; and God help us if that were to happen.

In any event, I would rather the prayers be that God continue to bless America; that we get back to our founding principles; that we embrace the principles that made America great, and not the principles that brought about the Revolution.

My bill, H.R. 7309, helps get us back a little bit on track. And you know what a great healthy by-product would be? When people start realizing how much money they're sending to Washington, they might demand a little better accountability, the kind of accountability we have not gotten from the first \$350 billion that have been squandered for who knows what. It hasn't helped.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the patience. I would encourage, Mr. Speaker, people all across America to call your Representative, call your Senators, let them know that the tax-

payers should be the one to spend the \$350 billion, not the Treasury Secretary.

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KAGEN). Without objection, the 5-minute Special Order of the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) is vacated.

There was no objection.

THANKING AMERICANS IN UNIFORM WHO SERVED IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to do something that I think has been a long time coming. On March 19 of 2003, the United States made the initial strikes in Iraq with two F-117 aircraft carrying 2,000-pound bombs that initiated the action in which Americans took Iraq, overthrew the dictator, Saddam Hussein, ultimately established a free government, and built from scratch a security apparatus and a military in Iraq capable of protecting that free government. And today, Mr. Speaker, I thought it would be appropriate for this Congress to thank the more than 1 million Americans in uniform who have served in Iraq, in the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, the Air Force, the Coast Guard and in our intelligence services, to thank those more than 1 million Americans, men and women, for doing something that Americans often applaud; that's winning. We have won in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, it was March 19 when we initiated that operation with those first Tomahawk missiles that were launched on leadership positions in Baghdad, and those first two F-117 stealth aircraft that moved out and dropped 2,000-pound bombs on important sites. And after that, just 48 hours later, on March 20, 2003, two prongs of coalition forces moved across the berm in Kuwait, after American intelligence agents and American Special Operation Forces had laid the groundwork, and they moved out and they started to move toward Baghdad.

Mr. Speaker, the launch of the operations and the ground forces and, incidentally, those ground forces were led by Army Lieutenant General David McKiernan. He was the commanding general of the Combined Forces Land Component Command. They crossed the line of departure from the Kuwaiti desert into Southern Iraq, and they had to go about 600 kilometers to get to Baghdad. We covered that distance in record time. And I don't know how many people in Congress or in the American populace remember it, but you had many commentators, many armchair commentators stating that

the United States forces would be bogged down, that Secretary of Defense Don Rumsfeld had not sent enough forces, and that we would see this operation grind to a halt and we would take heavy casualties. They were wrong, and Tommy Franks' forces, in fact, you would have talk shows in which the commentator or the guest would be talking about American forces bogging down, and his statement would be interrupted by a news flash that Tommy Franks' forces had taken yet another one of Saddam Hussein's strongholds.

So we drove on to Baghdad. And on March 21, in fact, Iraq's 51st Army Division, which was estimated to be about 8,000 personnel, surrendered and deserted at Iraq's southern border.

The main ground effort was led by U.S. Army Fifth Corps under Lieutenant General William Wallace. Fifth Corps moved along a western route up to Baghdad, and the First Marine Expeditionary Force, 1MEF, under General James Conway, now the Commandant of the Marine Corps, moved along the more urban route closer to the border with Iran, on the east side. They took the far southern port of Umm Kasar. The main Marine force encountered some resistance as they pushed north, in particular, An Nasariya.

Mr. Speaker, I can remember talking with a young Marine who had some injuries and was at Bethesda hospital shortly after that operation, and he talked about how much he loved those Marine tanks when he was pinned down by fire coming from several buildings at An Nasariya, and these big Marine tanks came whipping in, laid some heavy fire on the Feyadeen who were laying down these torrents of RPG fire; that's rocket propelled grenades. And they rushed out, that is the Feyadeen did, after being hit with several tank volleys, and surrendered to the Marines at that choke point.

In the west, the Army faced a longer distance but a less populated terrain. And Fifth Corps began combat operations with two divisions under its command, the Third ID under Major General Blunt, and the 101st Airborne Division, the 101st under Major General David Petraeus.

The Third ID led the western charge to Baghdad. They moved speedily through the south. They reached Saddam International Airport on April 4 of 2003. At that point the division launched the first of what it called "thunder runs." And a "thunder run" was a fast armored strike going right into the heart of Baghdad. And according to the Brigade Commander in Charge, General David Perkins, the Americans wanted to "create as much confusion as they could inside the city." And the second purpose was to make sure that no one in that city, whether it was a member of the Iraqi population or an Iraqi leader, had any doubt that the city had fallen and the Americans were in charge.

The 101st followed the Third ID up the western route into Southern Iraq,