

under heavy, brutal German fire. The sand was stained red with the blood of young American warriors and that of our friends, our allies.

Felix Branham went ashore at the second wave of Omaha Beach as a demolition man. Felix had joined the National Guard in 1938. Branham said of his landing: "The water was so rough. The guys were getting seasick. I saw water spilling up over the sides of our landing crafts.

"The seawater was splashing in on us from shells bursting and rifles hitting our boat. But I never raised up and looked over to the side of that boat. None of us did.

"When we got off the landing craft, the water was up to my knees. Of course, the tide was rising a foot every 10 minutes and we had to get in quick, because high tide would cover up the obstacles in the water that we used for cover and we would be blown out of the water. They were firing at us from everywhere.

"When we got to the beach, there were Rangers who were separated from their units piling in with us at the same time.

"My team was the first one to go over the sea wall; and I saw some of my friends die.

"In my team of 30 men, we had lost only about five or six of those men. We were lucky. God knows how lucky we were. We went up the hill and then we crossed over Omaha Beach and eventually made it to a little French town.

"The day after D-day, I walked up to the beach, went up and down the beach and saw guys lying on the beach who were dead. They were there with their eyes open, their rifles ready. They were solid in their death."

Mr. Speaker, these brave men who cracked the Nazi grip on Europe began with the liberation of France 65 years ago. And then from there they went on to Germany. Nothing like it had ever been done before in history. Over 150,000 Allied soldiers hit the beaches during the assault landings on the 6th of June. By the 4th of July, over 1 million joined the invasion force through Normandy. It was a miraculous feat for 1944.

These young men were from every State and territory of the United States. They were young and hailed from places in the rural farmlands to the big cities. Many had never been but a few miles from home until they went ashore and overseas. They have been called the Greatest Generation.

Growing up, I learned that my dad, a farm boy, served in the great World War II as a soldier in Europe. He was only 18. That's all I knew. Neither he nor my mom, a war bride, ever said anything about my dad's service until they went to a certain place. Here is that place, Mr. Speaker, a place called Normandy.

They went on the 50th anniversary of the D-day landing. When he came back to Texas after this grave-site visit here in this photograph, he started talking

about his buddies, those that had lived, and those that had died. He talked about the concentration camps he saw like at Dachau, and how he nearly froze in the Battle of the Bulge, and much, much more.

But he claims to be no hero, even though he is my hero. He says the real heroes are buried right here in this cemetery at Normandy, his fellow warriors who gave up their youth so our country could have our future.

Mr. Speaker, some today forget the feats of these warriors of World War II. Those World War II troops went to liberate but not to conquer. They fought for a people they didn't even know in a land they had never seen. They freed an entire continent of Europeans from tyranny and wanted absolutely nothing in return.

Mr. Speaker, here are some of those Americans that never came home: 9,387, to be exact, still buried in graves in Normandy. Buried on the cliffs, their white crosses and their Stars of David shine and glisten in the morning sunshine over Omaha and Utah beaches.

Mr. Speaker, others are buried in unmarked graves all over Europe, known only to God. They were great Americans and we should always remember them. We will always be proud, and we will always be free because of them.

And that's just the way it is.

REMEMBERING L. WILLIAM SEIDMAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to remember L. William Seidman, known to many as Bill. Among his many life accomplishments, he served as chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation through the recovery of the savings and loan industry following the massive scandals and excesses of the 1980s. He was a patriot, a wry intellect, and a very sharp financial system regulator.

Sadly, America lost Bill in mid-May, but his legacies will remain with us for years to come. Beyond his financial expertise, he led the effort for the creation of a State college in his home State, in the Grand Rapids, Michigan, area known as Grand Valley State University.

Education is a key indicator of individual success, and through the leadership of Bill Seidman, young and old alike can further their learning and obtain new skills to achieve their dreams. I can see why this achievement was said to have been one of Bill's proudest.

I've had the great privilege in my life of working with Bill Seidman during my own career, and most recently I invited him here to Congress to meet Members to engage his experience, along with that of Bill Isaac, another former effective Chair of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, on the

current financial crisis and the paths these two experts could suggest to resolve it and accelerate its resolution.

Of his major concerns, based on a life dedicated to finance and prudent banking system regulation and performance, Bill Seidman felt that the lack of regulation in the derivatives market, including credit default swaps, was a severe and continuing problem. He discussed how former Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan opposed regulating these instruments because they were agreements between sophisticated parties and need not be regulated.

□ 2115

Seidman strongly disagreed, stating that he felt that the credit default swaps market was a dishonest one. His words were prophetic.

Seidman also felt that securitization lay at the heart of the housing crisis because of the way the practice is carried out. He said they take a bunch of mortgages, they bundle them up, and then they sell them off without any connection to the value of what they are selling. He said, "If you can make money off garbage, go ahead and sell garbage, as long as you don't have to deal with it later."

Both Bill Seidman and Bill Isaac really advised America that we needed to fix securitization, including making sure that bankers have real "skin in the game," that is, hold on to some of the risk rather than passing it all forward. I couldn't agree more strongly. It's time for transformation in these instruments and in the overall financial system.

Our Members were honored to be discussing such matters with Mr. Seidman, as he had served as financial adviser to four Presidents, served as Chair of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation during a most difficult time as he helped steady our economic ship of State. And during his tenure, one of the Nation's largest banking scandals, the savings and loan crisis, unfolded, arising again out of a housing crisis.

Under his watch, the FDIC, through the Resolution Trust Corporation, was created to take over the troubled thrifts and resolve them. Bill oversaw that as Chair of the FDIC and closed or reorganized 747 institutions during the banking excesses of the 1980s. Their assets totaled over \$400 billion.

The assets were seized and sold at bargain prices through the Resolution Trust Corporation, and the goal of getting the maximum for those toxic assets and reducing taxpayer exposure was primary. Still, that mess cost over \$124 billion to the U.S. taxpayer. Stability was established at a great price, but after his tenure, rather than Congress tightening down on bad behavior and improving financial system regulation, it just opened the doors and rewarded bad behavior, and it carried us to our current sad state of affairs.

America will miss Bill Seidman's wisdom, his insight, his experience. He

continued his knowledge and advice right up until the day we lost him. May we remember Bill. We thank his family for his hard work and dedication to his callings and the lessons he learned and taught us. We need to reread his words and to act thoughtfully and swiftly to solve the current crisis facing our Nation. I know he would want that for sure.

I extend the sympathies of this Congress and our hope for strength to his family in the coming days to endure his loss, to Bill's wife, his children, his grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He truly was a great American.

Our country was strengthened by his service and it is with a sad and grateful heart and mind that I yield back the balance of my time this evening.

LET'S QUIT RUNNING UP THE DEFICIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate my friend Ms. KAPTUR's comments and appreciate her insights. It's always very valuable.

And she believes, as I do, that we're making a big mistake by running up the deficit like crazy. Well, some say, well, it was going on back under the Bush administration. Yes, it was, and it wasn't right then, and it's even worse now that it's being multiplied many times. Every week, we're running up more of a deficit. It's got to stop.

China continues to buy our debt. We just sent the Secretary of the Treasury over to China to encourage them to keep buying America. Buy our debt because we cannot control ourselves. Can you imagine a parent going into a bank and saying, I need a loan because I can't control my spending, but you see my little children over there, I've even got some grandchildren, I am going to pledge to you that some day—I can't pay it back, but some day they will? Well, there would be a move to take the children away from somebody that irresponsible.

And yet we sent our Secretary of State over to beg China to keep buying our debt because we couldn't control our spending. We send our Secretary of the Treasury over there to tell them to keep buying our debt because we can't control our spending.

We've done things in the last weeks, like \$25 million we voted for in this Chamber to buy land in foreign countries for rare dogs and cats. China has some. We'll borrow that money from China to buy land from China, so that they can have rare dogs and cats, if they're not eaten by people that are starving. And we are paying for that with interest while we run up our debt even higher. It makes no sense at all.

You know, I went back and did some looking. I remember pretty good—hav-

ing been a history major, I've loved to follow things as they occur because we're told those who fail to learn from history are destined to repeat it, which as a corollary to that, those who do learn from history will find new ways to screw up, but that's another story. Right now, we're not learning from history.

But you can look back at the Soviet Union, and we were reminded by that by bipartisan speeches just yesterday as Ronald Reagan's statue was unveiled. It's a great statue, a great tribute to a great President. But as he pushed the SDI, the missile defense system, and the Soviets tried to keep up, they were spending too much money. They were running up too much debt, and people were nervous about loaning the Soviet Union more debt.

Do you remember as Eastern Europe, the Baltic States started rebelling, what happened? Russia had seen that happen before. The Soviet Union would roll in with tanks. They could put it down. But for some reason, they didn't roll in with tanks and suppress it like they had in years past.

Well, it appears there's information indicating that they were needing us to loan them \$100 billion, which 20 or so years ago was real money, \$100 billion to keep them afloat. And we gave them word, We got your country, but if you roll in with tanks, we're not going to be able to loan you that money. We owned their future, so we could dictate what they could or couldn't do. Does it ring any bells?

If we keep selling our debt as we can't control it, we can't control the spending—we vote in here tonight to spend millions and millions of dollars to pay people for not working, while they're called employees, when they are millions and millions of Americans who are champing at the bit to go back to work and to get paid to actually work. And this is what we're passing?

You know, some believe here in this body that running up the debt is what's going to save the country, and I've been told, look, we don't think we're wrong, but if we were wrong, we can always come back and fix it. The Soviets couldn't because at some point when you no longer own your future, you don't have a future.

We owe the people we represent. We owe our own children better than that. Let's quit destroying this Nation's future. Let's quit running up the deficit. I yield back.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Ms. GIFFORDS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. GIFFORDS addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maine (Ms. PINGREE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. PINGREE of Maine addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE PROGRESSIVE MESSAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ELLISON. Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I'm about to grab some boards but I will claim the hour, and we'll get started.

Well, Mr. Speaker, welcome to the progressive message. This is the hour that the Progressive Caucus comes forward to offer a progressive vision for America where we put down markers, and we signal to the American people that there is a progressive vision, there is a way forward, and that way forward does include principles like generosity, like inclusion, like vision, like openness, like fairness, like sharing, not a vision of fear, not a vision as, Oh, my goodness, what's going to happen, we have to throw someone off the bus, but a vision of saying, You know what, we can include people, we can have peace, we can have a society where people are treated equally and fairly.

In fact, a few weeks ago we had a Special Order where the premise was, why the progressives? And we detailed how important it was to take note of the great contributions that progressives have made to America.

So, with that, I just want to introduce the wonderful array of leaders we