

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 256

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives in remembrance of the brave servicemen who perished in the disastrous April 24, 1980, rescue attempt of the American hostages in Iran.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 3, 2005

Mr. SAXTON (for himself, Mr. HAYES, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. AKIN, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. HOSTETTLER, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. HEFLEY, Mr. KLINE, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. MCINTYRE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives in remembrance of the brave servicemen who perished in the disastrous April 24, 1980, rescue attempt of the American hostages in Iran.

Whereas on November 4, 1979, Islamic extremists stormed the United States Embassy in Tehran and took 66 American hostages, 13 of whom were released on November 19 and 20, 1979;

Whereas after months of diplomatic negotiations, planning, and intergovernmental debate, a complex rescue mission dubbed “Operation Eagle Claw” was approved by President Carter on April 16, 1980;

Whereas on April 24, 1980, a Task Force comprised of United States Army Special Operations Forces, Army Rangers, Air Force Special Operations Wing personnel, and United States Navy, Marine, and Air Force pilots succeeded in moving thousands of miles undetected until reaching a remote location in the Iranian desert known by the code name “Desert One”;

Whereas due to mechanical failures and weather problems only 6 out of 8 helicopters successfully arrived at Desert One;

Whereas at Desert One, a combination of helicopters and MC-130/EC-130 gunships rendezvoused with the intention of rescuing the hostages 200 miles away in Tehran the following evening;

Whereas 6 helicopters was the minimum number of helicopters that could successfully complete Operation Eagle Claw;

Whereas the bravery, dedication, and level of operational expertise of the men who participated in the mission were evident from the onset and tested by the mechanical and weather problems suffered in route to the rendezvous point;

Whereas within minutes of the arrival of the MC-130 Combat Talon at Desert One, the ground security force stopped a bus with 44 Iranians aboard and then a gasoline truck was blown up when it tried to pass through a roadblock that shielded the western entrance to Desert One;

Whereas once all of the helicopters had arrived, the rescue attempt was dealt its final blow when it was learned that one of the helicopters had lost its primary hydraulic sys-

tem and was unsafe to use fully loaded for the final assault on Tehran;

Whereas once the aircraft began moving into position to return to their respective launching points, one of the helicopters collided with a C-130 aircraft on the ground;

Whereas flames engulfed the helicopter and the C-130 and resulted in the death of 5 airmen and 3 Marines;

Whereas other soldiers were burned but survived, while their fellow soldiers acted bravely in restoring order and managed to evacuate the wounded men and salvageable equipment back to friendly territory;

Whereas Members of Congress were dismayed with the poor equipment, lack of funding, and inattention given to our special operations forces that came to light because of this aborted mission;

Whereas in response, legislation was enacted to form the United States Special Operations Command;

Whereas USSOCOM continues to prove its immense value to our national defense as witnessed by the sterling performance of our special operations forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, and many other countries of the world; and

Whereas we owe a great debt of gratitude to the members and families of our Special Operations Forces: Now therefore be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the bravery, sacrifice, and patri-
3 otism of the soldiers, airmen, sailors, and Marines
4 who participated in Operation Eagle Claw; and

- 1 (2) commends all of the Special Operation
- 2 Forces currently in service.

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