

GONZALEZ] is recognized during morning businesses for 2 minutes.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, this is a tremendously mixed emotional feeling for me.

SAM GIBBONS is an ideal American: He is absolutely honest; he is courageous in every sense of the word; he cares about his fellow human beings; and he is a public servant of the highest integrity, the deepest commitment, and the most dogged determination. SAM GIBBONS is everything that anyone could ever hope to see in a friend, a neighbor, a soldier and an elected representative. SAM is the kind of man you are grateful to know and happy to serve with. If you had the ability to pick and choose who you would have for a friend and colleague. SAM would always be first on the list.

Others have or will speak about SAM's history as a D-day paratrooper, and of the details of his long and distinguished career. But I want simply to say that SAM is a decent man, the kind we all look up to, and the kind we always wish we could be.

One thing about SAM GIBBONS: He fights for what he believes in and for what he knows is right. He is not afraid to challenge the kind of arbitrary and frankly brutal behavior of the current majority in this House; nor does he shade the truth when it comes to the tough issues we face. He's old-fashioned in that regard: A gentleman whenever he can be, and a fighter if he has to be.

SAM is one we can always count on to be fair, and to be square with us. His word is never open to question: When he makes a commitment, he means it and he stays with it.

I've not always agreed with the actions of the Committee on Ways and Means—who does? But one thing I have always known is that if SAM says that a bill or a provision is good, you can trust his judgment. And if SAM says that he can't help you or can't agree with you, he'll give you a reason that you can both understand and respect. That's the kind of friend and colleague this House depends on. And that's the kind of person every American should want to represent them in the House.

Not many people have had a life as filled with adventure and challenge as SAM has. And very few who have had such distinguished lives and careers are as modest and self-effacing as SAM is. It's a measure of his greatness, that he maintains—and always has maintained—a sense of balance and proportion. SAM knows what really counts, and he doesn't forget it.

The House of Representatives has been enriched and enlivened by SAM GIBBONS. He has brought us life and light. He's been a friend to many, many people, and a model for all of us. I've known thousands of Members in my career here, and none has been more respected than SAM GIBBONS. He is a great representative for his district and for the whole country. When he leaves, the House will be diminished. I'm glad to have known him, privileged

to have served with him, and happy to join in this well-deserved tribute. Thank you, SAM, for being an ideal American, a great friend, and an outstanding colleague.

SAM GIBBONS WILL BE MISSED DEEPLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. LEVIN] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I first came really to know SAM GIBBONS and his wife, Martha, on what is now a rather famous bus trip to Eastern Europe. I think I was just a freshman then; not on the Committee on Ways and Means. SAM was good enough to invite me.

No junket was that. We worked 12 hours, sometimes 14 hours a day. We went to Czechoslovakia, to Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and we went to most of those places by bus. Mr. Speaker, I saw firsthand what SAM GIBBONS was really like. Hard working, down to earth, good natured, generous. He made sure that each of us had a crack at introducing the delegation to the distinguished, and not so distinguished in some cases, leaders of those countries.

Then, Mr. Speaker, I joined the Committee on Ways and Means and since then I have had a chance to work firsthand with SAM GIBBONS, to work on trade. He and I have not always agreed, but one thing all of us agree on and that is the caliber of leadership and commitment of SAM GIBBONS.

He has been compared to some other famous people. Claude Pepper, for example, another favorite son of Florida. But I do not think you can compare SAM with anyone. He is very much his own person. He is very much a real article.

SAM, you care so much, you have such a sense of commitment. So, I am not sure why you are leaving. I think maybe it is because his main passion is not for power; it is for public service. I think there is some hint that SAM is going to remain very much a public figure.

I close with this, SAM. I think with your streak of modesty you do not really know how much you are going to be missed. The answer is, very deeply.

SAM GIBBONS: A LIFE OF EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. PAYNE] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI].

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. PAYNE] for yielding, and since he only has 2 minutes I will not take much of this time except to join my colleagues in commending SAM GIBBONS, a great

leader in the Congress of the United States; a leader on the issues; and, a gentleman at all times.

Mr. PAYNE of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Florida, Ms. BROWN, for requesting this special order to honor our good friend and colleague, Chairman SAM GIBBONS.

Many years ago, Teddy Roosevelt compared success in life to success in football. The key to success in both, he said, is to hit the line hard day after day.

Those of us who have served with SAM GIBBONS know that by this or any other measure, he has been an extraordinary success.

For his entire adult life, SAM GIBBONS has served this nation with courage and tenacity. From the day more than a half-century ago when he took part in the D-day invasion, to his passionate defense in this Congress of the millions of Americans who depend on Medicare, SAM GIBBONS has always put his Nation first.

I first came to know SAM well through my service on the House Ways and Means Committee. I remember the very difficult circumstances under which he assumed the chair. SAM took over the committee without a hitch. His approach was inclusive and thoughtful and was marked by a great sense of bipartisanship.

Chairman GIBBONS will always be remembered for his passionate defense of the nation's senior citizens and poor, for his tireless work on behalf of free and open trade, and for his advocacy of a fair, and equitable, and economically efficient Tax Code.

SAM GIBBONS is the consummate southern gentleman, and I am proud to call him my friend.

Mr. Speaker, as SAM and Martha enter this new phase of their lives, I know the whole House of Representatives joins me in wishing him well.

A TRIBUTE TO SAM GIBBONS, A FRIEND OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from the Virgin Islands [Mr. FRAZER] is recognized during morning business for 1 minute.

Mr. FRAZER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my voice to my colleagues who have recognized, as many of us feel, the untimely departure of Mr. GIBBONS, but I am sure he is moving on to bigger and better things.

As a representative of the Virgin Islands, where we have no vote in this body, I would like to recognize the assistance that Mr. GIBBONS has given the Virgin Islands. As those issues that affect the Virgin Islands have come before his committee, I have always been able to go to him and ask him to make sure that he looks out for American citizens who happen to reside in the Virgin Islands, but in fact have no real voice in this institution.

So, Mr. GIBBONS, I thank you for the assistance that you have offered the

people of the Virgin Islands, the friendship you have shown me over the years, and I wish you well in your new adventure. I am sure that many of us are going to wish that there were times when you were here that we can come to you for counsel, but perhaps you will leave a phone number where you can be reached.

Again, thank you for the help and assistance and recognition of the people in the islands and their position of almost helplessness. You have taken it on on our behalf. God bless you for that assistance, and God speed in your new adventure.

LOSING THE NO. 1 MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, in the RECORD, I guess my remarks will appear last for my dear friend, SAM, who decided to leave the Congress and to leave the Committee on Ways and Means. Politically and legislatively that puts me as the No. 1 Democrat. But, quite frankly, we are losing the No. 1 Committee on Ways and Means member, a person that served with Wilbur Mills, a person that has been on the committee since 1969 even though he came to the Congress in 1962, one that no one challenges has done more to promote U.S. trade with NAFTA and with GATT as well as being the lead person with President Johnson on social issues.

We are going to miss SAM because he is the only one on the committee that had a sense of institutional memory. And I know one thing, I feel a lot more strong knowing that SAM will be there with me in the next year whereby every possible poll and every moral reason, the Democrats will be in charge of this particular House.

So Mr. Speaker, we will make certain that the gentleman's leadership carries on in the House and try to reverse some of the setbacks that we have had in terms of legislation that gentleman has been promoting, and I regret that I am last, but I am glad that I got here in time.

□ 1315

PARTING REMARKS BY THE HONORABLE SAM GIBBONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WELLER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GIBBONS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this every much. First I want to thank my colleague, Ms. BROWN, for arranging this and her staff for doing all of this. I realize that many Members could not be here today and have sub-

mitted their remarks for the RECORD, for which I am most grateful. I am very grateful, too, for those who were able to show up today and pay me this honor. I am very proud that my wife, Martha, is here in the gallery to my left hearing all of this. I am overwhelmed by it. I do not deserve it all, but I darn sure appreciate every bit of it.

This is not my last speech, and for that many of you can take a deep breath, because I am sure there are going to be many more battles in which we will agree and disagree, and I intend to participate in them.

I retire now because I think it is time to do so. I have enjoyed every minute of the service I have been privileged to have for my constituents and for the American people.

I am proud of the Congress. Oftentimes the Congress is misunderstood. We do not deal with the easy issues, and Americans really do not like conflict and they do not like us to express differences of opinion. They are very uncomfortable when they do that. Therefore, the Congress is often misunderstood.

This is a group of very dedicated people and vary skillful people, and people who have deep convictions about what they are doing. It takes a lot of patience to understand them and to tolerate the differences in views, but we must do that. That is democracy in action. That is what America is all about.

I have become acquainted with most of the other parliamentary bodies on Earth, and none has the responsibility or the power that is possessed by the Congress, and particularly by the House of Representatives of the Congress. That is a form of government that most other nations have looked at and have decided not to adopt, for one reason or another, but I think it has served our country well for all these years. It will always be a tremendous privilege to me to look back and say I was able to participate in all that deliberation and all that work.

Martha and I will go to a new career. I am not exactly sure what it is going to be. I hope to teach a little. I hope to practice law with my sons a little. I hope to come back up here and work with some of my colleagues and all of my colleagues on two particular issues that I am interested in. One is keeping the markets of the world open, because I believe that nations that trade with each other do not end up fighting each other, and I think it is good for America and good for the world that we keep the markets of the world open. I am proud of the small contributions I have made in that.

The other is to do something about our revenue system. America cannot afford the terrible revenue system that we now have. It is not that the tax burden is so high on Americans; it is the clumsy way in which we collect the taxes that really irritates the Americans.

Frankly, our misunderstood tax system extracts less on a per capita basis from our people than the tax systems of 25 other industrialized nations who inhabit this globe. But our very clumsy system of collecting taxes makes it a heavy burden for all of us to carry. That needs to be changed, because we cannot remain competitive, we cannot maintain our standard of living, unless we change our tax system, unless we keep our markets open, unless we educate our people, because from the brains and the bodies of our people comes the strength of our country and the standard of living which we all love to have and which is going to be more and more difficult to maintain.

So I get ready to leave here at the end of this term in a happy frame of mind and, fortunately, in good health, and very, very grateful for the friendships, for the experience, and for what I was allowed to do while here.

Martha and I love this place. We love the people. We love the staff and all those who work around here. Particularly we are grateful to those people who elected us year after year after year and allowed us to serve here.

Thank you, and God bless America.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House, and any manifestation of approval or disapproval of the proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the House stands in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 24 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. CLINGER] at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Reverend Luis Leon, rector, St. John's Church, Lafayette Square, Washington, DC, offered the following prayer:

Gracious God, Who has given us this good land for our heritage, we humbly pray that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of the grace You have granted us. Bless our land with honorable industry and sound learning and faithful leadership. Save us from violence and discord, confusion and chaos, pride and arrogance. Defend our liberties and fashion into one nation the good people brought here out of many lands and languages. Endue