

under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

HONORING AL DAVIS

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, Albert J. Davis was the chief economist on the Democratic staff of the United States House Committee on Ways and Means. He died Friday, May 30, 2003, of injuries caused by a car hitting him on May 19 in Arlington, Virginia, outside of the Metro stop on his way home from work. He was only 56 years old.

Mr. Speaker, it would be impossible for me to list all of the people who have come up to me since the accident to tell me how much Al meant to them. He had such a personal one-on-one relationship with so many Members of this body, so many staff, so many journalists, that all the meetings I had last week became times of reflection on Al's life. Whether I was meeting with other senior Democratic Members or columnists from a weekly news magazine or the experts on tax legislation, we forgot what we were meeting for so that we could pay honor to Al.

I could not help thinking that it was indeed a blessing that Al could have touched so many people so deeply through his hard work, his intelligence, and his good humor. Al worked nearly 20 years for this great institution of democracy, first on the House Committee on the Budget staff, at least the last 5 years at Ways and Means. He was one of those staff members who, though he never had to answer directly to the voters, devoted every minute to bettering the lives of ordinary working people.

Though he appeared soft spoken and cerebral, Al Davis was passionate about defending the interests of the working men and women of this country. Using charts and spread sheets and solid numbers, Al was a powerful fighter for economic justice.

He loved his job. He loved providing information to Members. His analysis was so honest that Members from both sides of the aisle would ask him for information even though they would disagree with him.

While Al was seldom quoted or mentioned in newspapers or on television, he had a profound effect in shaping legislation, publicizing poor policy, and changing minds.

Al is survived by his companion of 20 years, Mary Bielefeld. Mary's an incredibly kind and strong woman in her own right. Her strength has given those of us who worked with Al strength. Like Al, Mary works in public service as an attorney at the United States Department of Justice. They never got rich serving the people of this Nation, but they had a full and rich life in each other's company.

Al worked long hours when he worked here, often to midnight or 1:00

a.m. in the morning on days. He loved the outdoors. He loved getting to know the wilderness, and he shared these experiences with Mary and his close friends.

Most of all, Al valued honest government. He was mainly frustrated when people would cook books or fudge the numbers simply for political gain. Al believed that government in a democracy should be honest. He devoted his life to making sure that it was. He debunked myths whether they were Democratic or Republican. In a political environment too used to skirting around politically inconvenient facts, Al promoted honest opinion, honest budgets, and honest analysis.

Al's death is a loss for the entire Nation.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

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. Mr. Speaker, a number of us met today to review the Republican prescription drug benefit plan that is going to be presented before this House in the not-too-distant future. I have not seen the Democrat plan, but I am sure it has some of the same benefits and some of the same problems.

One of the problems that bothered me the most was that the pharmaceutical industry is going to continue to be able to charge exorbitant prices for many of the prescription drugs that are going to be covered under the prescription drug benefit bill, and that really bothers me.

For the last several weeks, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT), myself, and many others on both sides of the aisle have been looking into and complaining about the exorbitant prices that are being charged to Americans as compared to the people in Canada and France and Germany and Spain and other parts of the world. We pay the highest prices for prescription drugs of any country on the face of the Earth; and when we start trying to, as Americans, to buy prescription drugs, the very same drugs that are sold here in America, from Canada, from pharmacies in Canada, where they charge maybe one-fifth or one-half or one-tenth the price of what they are here, the Food and Drug Administration starts saying, oh, my gosh, there is a question of safety; and they threaten to penalize, even prosecute, people who bring pharmaceuticals into this country.

My question has been why is it that the American people are paying two, three, four, five, 10 times as much for pharmaceutical products as they are paying in Canada right next door or in Spain or France or other parts of the world? Now we are going to pass a prescription drug bill that does not address this problem? The taxpayers are going to spend billions, probably tril-

lions, of dollars for pharmaceutical products without any real control over these expenditures?

I am not for price controls. I believe in the free market system; but at the same time, I do not believe the American people should pay exorbitant prices for the same product that is being sold 50 miles away along the Canadian border to the Canadian people, and when Americans go up there to try to save money, because it costs so much for their pharmaceutical products, they are going to be penalized for it and the FDA says that they cannot be reimported into this country, the very same products, and they complain about safety.

We found that there has been absolutely no safety problem whatsoever; and so at this point, unless we make some changes in our prescription drug bill, I am not going to vote for it. I am not going to vote for a bill that is going to charge the American people, the American taxpayer, huge amounts of money for pharmaceutical products for seniors when they can get those same products next door for less money, and that is just something that cannot be tolerated.

In addition to that, what about the rest of us that will not be covered under the prescription drug bill? What about the rest of Americans that are paying these exorbitant prices? Will the additional profits that are going to be made be passed on to them so that they can lower the prices a little bit to benefit the seniors who are covered under the prescription drug benefits of this bill? It is something that we cannot tolerate.

We need to address the entire problem of exorbitant prescription drug prices, pharmaceutical prices here in the United States.

□ 1930

The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) has been working on this for a long time. I join in his army to try to do something about it. We are not for price controls but the pharmaceutical industry needs to realize we are not going to pay exorbitant prices when they are not charging the same prices in other parts of the world.

They are saying it is because we spend so much on research and development. If that is the case, spread it around, do not load it on the back of the American people.

In addition to that, many, many of these products have been subsidized by the American taxpayer through our health agencies, Health and Human Services. Last night the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) talked about one where \$500 million had been spent on research and development, yet Glaxo had a \$9 billion profit on this product and they only gave \$35 million back in royalties to the United States Government through HHS. Those are things that we cannot tolerate. Something has to be done about it. We are going to continue to

pound on this issue until there are some positive changes.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) and state that unless a bill comes to this floor that has a mechanism in it to have a negotiated rate for large numbers of buyers, as we do with our Department of Defense buying and our Veterans Department buying, we are going to force Americans out there in the drug market in their tiny little canoe on an ocean that is very, very rough. They cannot get a good price unless there is a mechanism within a bill which is cleared here which would provide for negotiated rate buying. I thank the gentleman for bringing this problem up.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, let me say I want to look at the gentlewoman's approach to making the way we deal with veterans' pharmaceuticals maybe the way that we deal with things under this health bill.

TRIBUTE TO AL DAVIS

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

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, at a later moment in this Special Order the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), the ranking member of the Committee on the Budget, will be speaking more fully about Al Davis, the chief economist for the Committee on Ways and Means, and formerly the economist for the House Budget Committee.

Today I come to the floor to pay tribute to Al Davis and express my deepest sympathy to Mary, Al's partner for more than 20 years. Al had a remarkable life, one in which he made an unforgettable and immeasurable contribution to the scope of this country's economic and budgetary policies. Although most Americans will never know his name or his extraordinary contributions, he has influenced each of us in our lives for the better.

Five years after serving in the U.S. Army from 1969 to 1971 during the height of the Vietnam War, Al began his lifelong career as an economist while working for the Wisconsin Revenue Department until 1980. While there, he rose from an analyst to the bureau chief in the research and analysis division in a very short period of time.

During the early 1980s, he served as senior analyst on the Taxation and Finance Committee with the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. And from 1994 to 1998, he was chief economist for the Democratic budget staff and then was the economist since 1999 until his tragic passing just last month as the chief economist for the Committee on Ways and Means.

Al was a master of economic and budgetary policy through four administrations. He helped our committee staff navigate every economic budget and tax proposal put before the U.S. Congress.

Al called us, that is the Members of Congress and his colleagues on the House Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on the Budget his customers, and he provided us with realms of memos and charts and analysis that only Al could produce. He did it with insight and humor. He stripped away the clutter to extract the critical details of major issues facing the American public.

You would often hear about Al's ability to translate complex and difficult economic concepts for Members, staff, and, of course, the press. On his own, he was a unique gift, but what made Al truly remarkable was his delivery of his translation and the integrity that he actually had which he imposed upon all of us because anyone dealing with Al Davis knew they had to be honest with themselves because of his basic decency and honesty.

When Al found a provision or proposal that he analyzed to be unfair to the American public, this translation, without fail, was laced with humor and simultaneously expressed his frustration, and he always exposed the unfairness of whatever he was working on if he believed it to be unfair.

Over the years, Al Davis provided the Democratic Members of the Committee on Ways and Means with probably 150-200 memos. Most of us read all of them, not only because of the analysis that he gave us, but also because of his humor and his sense of humanity. I would like to take a moment to quote two paragraphs in a January 30, 2003 memo. The subject from Al Davis to the Committee on Ways and Means Democrats is "Snow Hearing Next Week and Budget Deficits." Of course, we had a lot of snow during the month of January, so it was snow hearing and budget deficits. And the caption is "The Return of Budget Deficit as Far as the Eye Can See." He says, and I do not mean to be partisan here, but it is humorous. It is not dry. He says, "Normal mortals would be in the hospital with whiplash if they changed their positions as radically as my Republican colleagues." And then in the same memo he states. "Tax cuts and war look cheap because we are about to put them on a national credit card and pass the costs on to our children."

Al had a way of saying the obvious and stating public policy by actually communicating with a sense of humor to all of us. I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that we in this country are very blessed because we have always had through the agencies, through the executive branch and the judicial branch, but particularly through the legislative branch of our government, people who are dedicated to the betterment of our country, and truly Al Davis was a symbol of that standard that all of us are here to certainly aspire to.

Al, we are going to miss you very much and we thank you for everything you have done for all of us.

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

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

IN MEMORY OF AL DAVIS

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, like the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) who has spoken and the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI) who has now just spoken, and those who will speak after me about Al Davis, I relied on him every day on a wide variety of issues and on this floor and in committee I miss him every day.

When we hit a tough question, the answer was, "Ask Al." We expected and received from him a straight, unvarnished answer, and if he did not know the answer and I can remember many days he would say, "I am not quite sure," off he would go to find the information.

Al Davis was available with memos, with charts. His documents were so plentiful and useful during debates on taxes that the staff in my office often included in my briefing binders a tab entitled simply "Al Davis memos." I cannot recall a tax debate when so many of us did not rely on some document or some analysis that Al Davis prepared. He was prolific. He analyzed tax bills and budgets upside down and backwards. My tax counsel, who assures me that Al's memos were so valuable that he never deleted a single one, counted 44 memos, charts, and other analysis from Al to the committee from March 1 through May 19 of this year. So many points from these memos were used to help shape important tax and budget debates. He was blessed with the ability to take issues that were complex and numbers even more complex and to explain them in ways that everybody could understand. He hated dishonesty and inaccuracy.

In the past 2 weeks, many, particularly those in the media, have commented on how accurate and reliable his work was. His vigilance helped ensure that all of us who relied on him and worked with him also avoided the temptation to let the digestible sound bite overwhelm the accurate and honest debate that America deserves.

The Washington Post in its editorial, rather unusual in terms of a tribute to a staffer unknown to the public, so well known, though, within this institution, this is what the Washington Post had to say. "Unless you are a tax and budget wonk, you probably did not know Al