

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

Davis. Mr. Davis, the Democrat's chief economist on the House Committee on Ways and Means, was one of those classic Capitol Hill staffers whose effectiveness cannot be measured by the number of times they are mentioned in a newspaper. From his cluttered office in the Longworth House Office Building," and we knew well of the clutter in that office, "Mr. Davis helped mold and inform the public debate about what he saw as the troubling direction of the Nation's economic policy, churning out fact sheets that were as accurate as they were partisan. He could get as worked up, maybe more, about Democrats using distorted numbers as about Republicans who did so."

Like so many others, I will miss Al very much. He was not only an important asset to the country, but for so many of us, he was a friend. Our words today cannot replace the loss felt by Al's longtime companion, Mary Beilefeld. I express my deepest condolences to Mary. I hope it is somehow comforting that her loss is not only hers but is shared by all of us on the Committee on Ways and Means and by all of us in this institution who had the privilege of working with Al Davis.

[From the Washington Post]

ALBERT J. DAVIS

Unless you're a tax and budget wonk, you probably didn't know Al Davis. Mr. Davis, the Democrats' chief economist on the House Ways and Means Committee, was one of those classic Capitol Hill staffers whose effectiveness can't be measured by the number of times they are mentioned in the newspaper. But from his cluttered office in the Longworth House Office Building, Mr. Davis helped mold and inform the public debate about what he saw as the troubling direction of the nation's economic policy, churning out fact sheets that were as accurate as they were partisan. He could get as worked up—maybe even more—about Democrats using distorted numbers as about Republicans who did so.

Mr. Davis had the gift of being able to translate the most arcane economic data into real-world language that Democratic lawmakers—the people he called his "customers"—could use to make their case. For reporters scrambling to make sense of a study or to dredge up an obscure detail, he was the ultimate resource, with a seemingly encyclopedic understanding of the tax code. If you wrote or advocated about such matters, you'd quickly find your way to Al—or he to you. He patiently educated the uninitiated, from green legislative aides to reporters new to the economics beat. When a bill was on the floor, Mr. Davis was always there with his bulging accordion file, colleague Janice Mays recalled, offering when the most obscure of points came up, "I just happen to have a memo here."

Mr. Davis died last week at 56 after being struck by a cab on his way home from work. The accident occurred as Congress was finishing work on a tax bill that Mr. Davis detested, and, as he lingered in a coma for 11 days after the accident, we can only imagine how frustrated he would have been not to be immersed in the debate. Len Burman, co-director of the Tax Policy Center, recalled visiting Mr. Davis at George Washington University Hospital and delivering updates on the latest outrages in the tax measure. "I kept on thinking, he's definitely going to wake up for this," Mr. Burman said. Mr.

Davis's boss, Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D-N.Y.), said that Mr. Davis "promoted truth in an institution too used to skirting around politically inconvenient facts."

OUTRAGEOUSLY HIGH PRESCRIPTION DRUGS PRICES

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise again tonight to talk about the outrageously high prices that Americans pay for prescription drugs. But before I get started, I want to yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) because the gentleman wants to correct something that he said earlier.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I mentioned Glaxo that made the \$9 billion, and I think they made money on other drugs that we will be discussing later, but the company in question was SmithKline Beecham that made \$9 billion and returned only \$35 million back in royalties to this government for the patents they had.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. And there are published reports that the president of SmithKline Beecham 2 years ago earned over \$200 million.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Let me just comment on that. If he earned \$200 million, maybe he deserved it for ripping off the American people to the tune of \$9 billion for their very small investment.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Indiana mentioned earlier, we had a Special Order the other night and we had Republicans and Democrats, and we hope to do it next week with Republicans and Democrats because this issue about what Americans pay for prescription drugs is not a matter of right versus left, it is right versus wrong.

I think anybody who spends any time at all on this issue realizes it is wrong to force American consumers to pay the world's highest prices partly because we subsidize the research and development. There was a study done by the Boston Globe several years ago, and what they found was that of the 35 largest selling drugs in America, 32 of them were brought through the R&D channel by the Federal Government. The NIH paid for the basic research and development, got them to phase 3 trials. So we subsidize them in the research and development, we subsidize them in the Tax Code, and yet we are still required to pay the world's highest prices.

Two years ago this Congress came together, the House and Senate, and we voted 304-101, I believe was the final vote, but it was over 300 votes in the House, and we said Americans ought to have access to world-class drugs at world-market prices. That bill passed. It is on the books right now.

□ 1945

But unfortunately the FDA is not enforcing the law because in the con-

ference committee they put a little safety language in there that says essentially if they cannot absolutely guarantee safety, the FDA does not have to enforce that.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to talk about safety. What I have in my hand tonight is a counterfeit-proof package of prescription drugs. It is called a blister pack, counterfeit-proof package of prescription drugs. This packaging is available today at a cost of about two cents per package. It is available today. Let me tell you what is available soon. They have been working on this at MIT. I do not expect anyone to see this because I cannot see it; but in this little vial, and if you would like to see this, I will share this with Members, in this little vial are 150 tiny computer chips, microchips. Ultimately, this is going to become the next UPC code. With this little chip, we can know where that product was manufactured, where it came from. It can help with inventory control, and ultimately it can guarantee that it is in fact Prilosec and not something else.

Ladies and gentlemen, we can solve this problem. I have said before, it is not shame on the pharmaceutical industry; it is shame on us. The President of Glaxo or SmithKline does not work for us, but the head of FDA does. It is time for us as Members of Congress to do our responsibility, to make certain that Americans have access to world-class drugs at world market prices. No, there is nothing wrong with the word profit. I believe in the word profit. But there is something very wrong with the word profiteer. It seems to me in the heritage of Teddy Roosevelt and so many other politicians who have been here in this city who stood up for the little guy, it is time for us to say, it is not a matter of right versus left; it is a matter of right versus wrong. We need to do the right thing. We need to open American access, we need to create competition here in the United States, and we need to make certain that Americans have access to world-class drugs at world market prices.

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

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

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for the gentleman from Oregon's time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.