

Mr. DRIEHAUS. Madam Speaker, I just wanted to join all of my colleagues as we give our thanks to Jack and Jack's family. I am a new Member of Congress, and I didn't get to know Jack Murtha until the fall of 2008 when I was running for Congress. Jack came down to Cincinnati and we visited the VA hospital. We sat down with some veterans and we sat down with the staff of the VA hospital and started talking about PTSD and the PTSD program that we had in Cincinnati.

Jack had such a sincere interest, and he exuded care for those veterans. He wanted to see that what we were doing in Cincinnati was replicated across the country.

Every time I went to Jack and asked for something, every time I approached him, he was open. As I talked to or as I listened to the Members here tonight, there seems to be an underlying theme: We didn't go and Jack asked us for things. Every time you approached Jack Murtha, he was asking what he could do for you. What a great Congressman. What a great dad.

Jack was the type of guy that in his district, he was always asking that question: What can I do for you? And that's the right question. We had perhaps the greatest challenge that we faced in Cincinnati this year, on a jobs program. It was the Joint Strike Fighter, the competitive engine program.

I happened to be the Congressman for the district for GE—Aviation where that engine is made. We were worried. We were worried that we were going to lose a thousand jobs. Now I know it to be a good program. I know it to be a cost-saving program, but the President, the administration, sometimes thinks a little differently about that program.

So I went to Jack, and I said, Jack, I'm really worried about this. This is a lot of jobs in Cincinnati. I believe this is the right thing to do for the country. Without hesitation, he just looked me in the eye and he said, Steve, don't worry about it, we'll take care of it.

I knew that it was taken care of, because I had Jack's word. He was that type of guy. He had that kind of strength and that kind of authority. Every time you approached him, he was always asking what he could do for you.

This House was a great place because of Jack Murtha, and we are a lesser body because of his loss. I lost my father a little over a year ago, and he was a lot like Jack. I hope the two of them have gotten to know each other since Jack's passing, because he reminded me a lot of my dad.

You will be greatly missed, Jack. I thank your family, and I thank your community for sharing you with us and the American people for so long.

IN TRIBUTE TO REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. MURTHA OF PENNSYLVANIA

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

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I will be brief. I have been tied up most of the afternoon and never thought I would have an opportunity to come down and join in this special order to our friend and our colleague, Jack Murtha. I am very pleased and heartened by all of the outpouring of Members who have come down here for the last few hours, and it has also given me an opportunity to say a few things about my friend, Jack Murtha.

Jack would be embarrassed about all of the attention being shown to him tonight, but for those of us who knew and love and respected Jack Murtha, it's been an especially hard week, especially those of us who hang out, as we say, in the Pennsylvania Corner. When we always look on the corner to see Jack there, we see a folded American flag. I guess it's appropriate for Jack's service to his country, not only as a soldier, but also as a Member of this House of Representatives.

If you want to know more about Jack Murtha, his courage, his love for this country, I would urge you to read the book that he wrote, "From Vietnam to 9/11: On the Front Lines of National Security." He really traced the history of this country, policy and military involvement of this country since Vietnam to September 11. It is written by a true patriot who lived it and urged all of us to also see the world and our commitment and our dedication to the men and women in uniform through the eyes of Jack Murtha in a book.

I said it's been a hard week, and I think everything that needs to be said about Jack Murtha has probably been said. I am thankful for having known him, and I am thankful for the opportunity of being able to come down here tonight and just say a few words and to express our love and condolences for Joyce and the entire Murtha family.

IN TRIBUTE TO REPRESENTATIVE JOHN P. MURTHA OF PENNSYLVANIA

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

Mr. WELCH. Madam Speaker, one of the qualities, of, I think, a great person is that they don't see themselves as great. They really see themselves as ordinary.

If they value something about themselves, it's that being ordinary allows them to do generous and good things for other people. Jack Murtha was a huge figure for those of us who were in my class, the class of 2006. People may remember that the big debate that year was about the war in Iraq.

I ran as a person who was opposed to that war, and I remember during the campaign being very dispirited wondering where we were going. Then a voice rose out of Washington, and it was a Vietnam veteran, it was a combat decorated marine, it was the chair of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, it was a man who had the highest credentials as an advocate for the military. That voice, of course, was Jack Murtha.

□ 1930

And he stood up and he said that this war was wrong. He said that his vote was a mistake.

What attracted me, I think my classmates, and all of my colleagues who have been speaking to this man, Jack Murtha, was his generosity—he was always wondering what could he do for you today—his integrity, but he also had a quality of incredible strength. You gravitated to Jack because he was a strong man, strong in his convictions, strong in his will to carry on, and yet with the strength of a person who had the strength of mind and was willing to experience and analyze what was going on. When he came to his conclusion about Iraq, it was through the eyes of the soldier on the ground in assessing what was going on and why.

Even as he changed his policy position on Iraq, no one was a stronger supporter of the troops getting what they needed to be safe and getting what they needed to be taken care of when they got home. And what he understood and he began to teach this Congress and this country was that if we respect the valor of these men and women who are willing to subordinate their own judgment to take an oath of allegiance to the flag of the Commander in Chief and to report for duty when and where ordered by the President, then Congress and he, Jack Murtha, had a solemn responsibility to do every single thing in his body, mind, heart, and soul to provide those soldiers with a policy that was worthy of the sacrifice they were willing to make.

Like I think everybody here in Congress, when Jack would ask what Jack could do for me, I oftentimes had an answer. But the first time he asked me that question was the first day of my experience here in Congress. I said to Jack, I understand that you go out and visit the troops often at Bethesda and at Walter Reed. And he told me he did. He usually went alone, almost always went alone, always quietly, never any press, never any entourage. I asked him if in the course of my 2 years in Congress sometime he would take me to go with him, and it turned out that the next day he did.

I will never forget going through the Bethesda Naval Hospital with Jack Murtha and seeing how, when he talked to our troops who suffered incredible injuries, he had that same directness, that same pride, that same confidence in engaging these soldiers—What happened? How did it happen? Was it an