

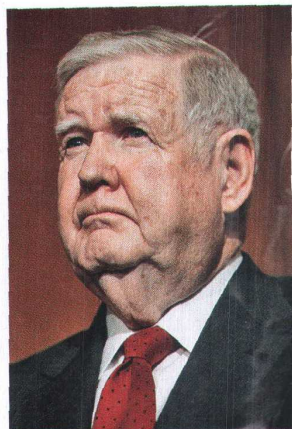
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Briefing

Milestones



John Murtha

JOHN MURTHA, WHO DIED ON Feb. 8 at 77, will be mourned in U.S. Congress because of the respect he commanded from his colleagues. We were honored to call him colleague; I was privileged to call him friend.

To watch Jack legislate was to see a master at work. But more indicative of his char-

acter was the way he communicated with our men and women in uniform, whether near the battlefield or at their bedside. He thanked them for their courage and listened to their concerns. He always answered their needs, responding to their calls for body armor, up-armored vehicles and reliable radios. In those moments, he bonded with them through his own personal military experiences—as a Marine who fought in the Vietnam War—and cared for them like a father. I'll never forget the sparkle in Jack's eye when he saw a wounded warrior proudly standing by his bed in a Pittsburgh Steelers jersey, saluting the visiting Congressman.

As the Representative of Pennsylvania's 12th District since 1974, Jack led as courageously in Congress as he did in the Marines. A man of great integrity, he bravely spoke

out against the war in Iraq in 2005, teaching us the need to distinguish between the war and the warriors who fight it.

As chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, Jack measured the strength of our country by its military might but also by the well-being of its people. He made sure the U.S. government supported important scientific research to fight breast cancer, prostate cancer, diabetes and HIV/AIDS.

"Semper fidelis," the motto of the Marine Corps, in which Jack served proudly for 37 years, was the motto of his life. He loved his hometown, Johnstown, Pa.; his country; his wife Joyce; his children; and his grandchildren. Giant of the Congress, champion, hero: that was Jack Murtha.

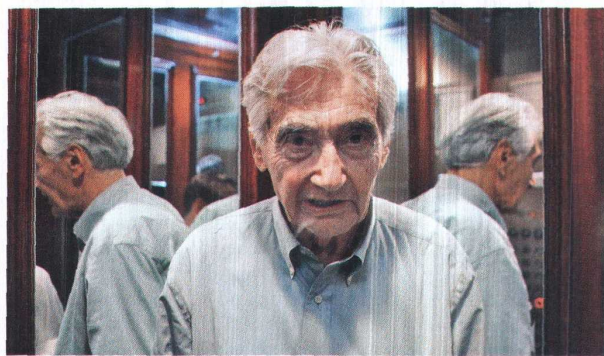
—BY NANCY PELOSI

Pelosi is the Speaker of the House

Charlie Wilson

The fact that Charlie Wilson's heart—his second—finally gave out wasn't all that surprising when you consider how much he lived. Wilson, a former Texas Congressman who died Feb. 10 at 76, was the kind of man who would declare on *60 Minutes*, "I love stickin' it to the Russians." The kind of man who would bring his then girlfriend, a former Miss World USA, on a fact-finding trip to Pakistan. The kind of man, his House colleagues used to say, who could strut while sitting down. Still, he was elected 12 times from Lufkin, Texas—a town so conservative that it didn't vote to allow alcohol sales until 2006. Even those who disagreed with Wilson couldn't help but like him: the liberal columnist Molly Ivins wrote admiringly that he hadn't

"an ounce of hypocrisy." *Charlie Wilson's War*, the 2007 movie about his work as the chief backer of the Afghan *mujahedin* who fought against the Soviets, opened with Tom Hanks, playing Wilson, in a hot tub with two showgirls—just as Wilson had specified in a 1990 interview. It's just as well they stuck to his wishes; nobody could have made up a character like Charlie Wilson. —BY KAREN TUMULTY

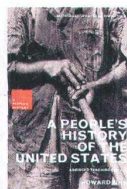


Howard Zinn

HISTORIAN HOWARD ZINN'S remarkable work, including his most famous book, *A People's History of the United States*, is summarized best in his own words. His primary concern, he once explained, was "the countless small actions of unknown people" that lie at the roots of the great moments of history—a record that would

be profoundly misleading, and seriously disempowering, if torn from such roots. Howard, who died Jan. 27 at 87, was devoted to the empowerment of these unknowns.

That was true from the days when, while teaching in the 1950s and '60s at Atlanta's historically



black Spelman College, he participated in the early, dangerous days of the civil rights movement—and lost his job as a reward.

Wherever there was a struggle for peace and justice, Howard was on the front lines: inspiring in his integrity, engagement, eloquence and humor, in his dedication to nonviolence and in his sheer decency. He changed the conscience of a generation. It's hard to imagine how many young people's lives were touched by his work and his life. Both leave a permanent stamp on how history is understood and

the conception of how a decent and honorable life should be lived.

—BY NOAM CHOMSKY

Chomsky is a professor emeritus of linguistics at MIT

MURTHA: MATTHEW GUNAWANIGH—EPA; ZINN: DIMA GAVRYSH—AP; WILSON: ANDREW COUNCELL—MCT/LANDOV