TRIBUTE TO LU PALMER, CELEBRATED RADIO AND PRINT JOURNALIST

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would just add my voice to the accolades being given to George Mikan. He did his college basketball playing and attended DePaul University, which is in my congressional district. I can tell my friends from Minnesota that all of Chicago and Illinois are indeed proud of the accomplishments of George Mikan, and at DePaul University salivate every time they hear his name. I join your comments.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this evening to pay tribute to one of our country’s most celebrated and most effective print and radio journalists, Mr. Latrell “Lu” Palmer who is retiring and will be featured at a retirement celebration on April 14 at the Reverend Johnnie Coleman Complex, 119th and Loomis in Chicago.

Lu Palmer was born in 1922 in Newport News, Virginia, and attended its schools there. He then went on to Virginia University and earned a bachelor’s degree in 1942. Later on, in 1947, he earned a master’s degree from Syracuse University and later on went to Iowa State University in 1955 where he completed the course work for a doctorate’s degree. Lu never wrote his dissertation so he ended up with what people called an ABCD, that is, all but the dissertation degree.

Lu Palmer then went on to have an outstanding career at the Chicago Daily Defender newspaper, the Chicago Courier, the Chicago American, the Chicago Daily News, and then established his own paper, the Black X Express, which he ran for several years. He also taught for 20 years, from 1970 to 1990 for the Association of American Colleges and Universities of the Midwest where he trained a large number of students to really understand urban life. Of course, Lu also worked at WBEE Radio and WYON Radio, was the editorial director for Congressman Ralph Metcalfe’s communication vehicles and served as a public relations person for Michael Reese Hospital. He established the Black Business Network of Chicago, Black United Communities, CBUC, which he operated for several years, and BIPO, the Black Independent Political Organization. He established Menhelo, a mental health program for boys who were suffering from mental retardation which continues to operate.

As much of a journalist as Lu was, he was really noted more for his community action, community involvement, and was called upon to speak in colleges and universities and banquetts all over the country, as a matter of fact. He generally could not keep up. Plus he was very selective and did not just accept speaking engagements. He had to be something that he called relevant and meaningful if he was to go. Lu was very actively involved in generating outrage when Mark Clark and Fred Hampton were killed by the Chicago police, and later on was probably the single most effective voice in the election of Harold Washington for mayor of the city of Chicago because Lu had a slogan and the slogan sort of said, “We shall see in ’83,” meaning that that is what the election was going to take place. Lu was called the drumbeat of the African community. Everybody listened to his radio and everybody pretty much waited for WVON to come on in the evenings from 10 to 12 so that they could listen to “On Target” and Lu Palmer.

Lu finally decided that it was time to hang them up. He is about 80 years old with diabetes and all the other things that would afflict one. But we would hope that he would put his memoirs together and that he would spend the rest of his life writing and putting in voice some renditions of that “We shall see in ’83.”

Indeed, the University of Arizona Wildcat basketball team this year suffered a lot of punches, many thrown in their direction. Toughest of all, head