It was only a few weeks ago that he dropped by the office in D.C. for a chat. He was very tanned, I thought perhaps from playing golf with one or more of the endless luminaries with whom his life was intertwined. But our discussion was very down to earth, which was the hallmark of Heinz Prechter.

The day before he had been elected the new Chairman of the U.S. Automotive Parts Advisory Committee. He had agreed to take this post, even though he knew that he had already overcrowded his schedule with a wide variety of other endeavors such as the Global Automotive Institute, work on the board of the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, various projects in the Downriver communities, all in addition, of course, to his day to day business dealings. With enthusiasm he discussed how he intended to pick up the pace on efforts to win for American businesses and workers more equal access to the markets of other nations. On this subject, as was true for so many others in his life, there was no barrier because he was an active Republican talking with a Democratic member of Congress. For him, life was a web of different pursuits with changing alliances. He felt that he had the best chance to get things moving again, using his impeccable credentials in the automotive world and his relationships within the political party to which he was dedicated.

When he was leaving, we put our arms around each others shoulders; the last thought in my mind at the time was that I would never see again that ball of fire, that bundle of energy.

His life is an example for all—his dedication to human endeavors and relationships.

May his death serve not only to remember him well, as he so richly deserves, but also to tackle with the kind of energy he possessed the illness, depression, that cost him his life and cost us an invaluable citizen and friend. My condolences reach out to the entire Prechter family.