

Among those are a state-sponsored loan program which has significantly reduced the cost of financing for Airbus development, and that can lead to up to as much as \$26 billion in additional benefits to Airbus. In addition, they have received subsidies for their research and development costs; and of course, in the development of airliners, R&D is of tremendous importance to the ultimate cost of a product.

It appears clear that these subsidies, in fact, have continued, despite our efforts, our assiduous efforts to try and, in fact, maintain a rules-based trading system. And that now has to stop. The competition, the unlawful, the illegal competition that we have been facing due to these subsidies can no longer stand. And the United States Government needs to take a more aggressive policy to, in some sense, restore balance and fairness to this trading relationship.

In the next several weeks, my colleagues and me will be discussing the appropriate way to do that. Various means are at our disposal. We can consider trade efforts in an attempt to convince our partners in Europe to, in fact, respect a rules-based trading system and end these unlawful subsidies to this sector of the economy, with whom we are happy to compete under a rules-based system. We also may consider, in fact, assisting in the research and development in the technology to benefit America, and certainly in our energy policy. Many of us think that while we are assisting the development of an energy policy, we should assist the development of the most energy-efficient jet the world has ever seen, which we hope to be the 77 manufactured by Boeing.

So there are a variety of measures; but in some fashion, it is now time for America to get serious to insist on a rules-based trading system, one that can allow the best technologically efficient product to emerge so that the marketplace can choose, rather than having governments interfere with that process. And unfortunately, our European partners have muddled about in that system and governments have interfered in the functioning of this marketplace. That is something we have tolerated now for quite a number of years. It is no longer subject to toleration.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for America to become serious and engage in resolving this problem, and I will be working with my colleagues in the upcoming weeks to make sure that the rules are fair and applicable and assist the United States aeronautics industry.

#### A TRIBUTE TO AL DAVIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight to honor Al Davis, a dear friend, who died in the prime of life in a tragic, wholly unnecessary accident. But in his 56 years, he made a huge, if unheralded, contribution to the government of this country. We have lost a close associate, a valuable colleague. The House has lost part of its institutional memory and its analytical ability, particularly in the bramble bush we call tax policy; and the country, the country has lost a genuine, if sometimes critical, patriot.

Before Al became the chief economist for the Committee on Ways and Means, he was the chief economist for the Committee on the Budget; and it was on the Committee on the Budget that I came to know him best.

Mr. Speaker, if I might digress a minute, I would say that from 1969 to 1970 I served as a young officer, Army officer in the Pentagon and interacted with Congress and its staff; and when I came here in 1983 as a Member of Congress, the most striking change I found in the institution was in the staff, Members' staff and committee staff both. The number of staff had increased several fold, and the professional quality has increased even more. And more than I had ever appreciated, I soon found out how the House literally could not function without our staff. Their roles are often off stage. They make, however, those of us on stage look good. They keep the debate moving forward, and they see to it that the House churns out its enormous work product of bills and reports and conference agreements and correspondence and countless other documents.

Even among the excellent staff that is throughout the House on both sides of the aisle, Al Davis stood out. He was noted for two areas of expertise: the Tax Code and Social Security. And in those fields, he had few peers. He was good because he knew what he was doing, believed in what he was doing, and never tired of what he was doing until he got it right.

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I often asked Al a question and got a tentative answer. Then, a week later, long after I had forgotten the question I put to him, I got from Al a memo, a fax sheet, a graph, a table, whatever. He then came up and explained it to me meticulously in a way that anybody, me included, can understand; because Al was not just our analyst or our economist, he was our tutor. Not only did Al produce memos that answered the questions we put to him, but he

also came forth with memos containing answers to questions we should have raised but did not.

I can remember myself more than once in the well of this House struggling, coping to defend our position, only to have Al appear from the benches back here with a memo he just happened to have written in anticipation of this issue.

He was a Democrat, make no mistake about it, but he did not pull punches for partisan purposes. If one wanted a sophist to help rationalize a poor policy proposal, you did not want Al Davis. On the other hand, if we had the right position, if we were principled, if we faced entrenched opposition, special interests, and found our policy hard to defend, we wanted Al Davis on our side, because he would cut to the core of an issue and bend every effort to help us.

His encyclopedic knowledge, his keen mind, his corporate memory, his sense of principle, his passion for the truth, and his patience in explaining it made Al Davis a joy to work with, a colleague that we cherished, a friend we will never forget.

The House will go on without him, of course, but the debate about taxes will be a little less incisive, the explanations of Social Security will be a little less clear, the arguments against the deficit not quite so compelling without the work of Al Davis behind them.

He served his Congress, this Congress, and his country well, and those of us who worked with him will be inspired for a long time by his example, moved by what he taught us, consoled by his humor, for as long as we serve in the Congress of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO), former chairman of the Committee on the Budget who also worked with Al Davis on the Committee on the Budget.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, in this institution of democracy there is always a small group of smart, talented, hardworking, honest people who labor anonymously behind the scenes. They are absolutely essential to the success of our form of government. Al Davis was at the top of that group. His brilliance was exceeded only by his work effort and his integrity.

Al worked hard to help those of us who are Members of Congress fulfill our responsibilities in developing, debating, and voting on tax and budget laws. He also helped other staffers, policy thinkers, academics, reporters, and the general public understand the issues. I am told that whenever tax policy experts around town ran into a particularly thorny problem, they looked at each other and would say, this is an Al question.

Al was also brutal in his honesty. If he thought something was a bad idea, it did not matter where it came from, he would tell the truth. Al made himself learn budget rules even when they

seemed silly, so that he could bring his understanding of economics and tax law into the budget process. He spent endless hours late into the night doing calculations and grinding out memos on every possible point of argument or challenge that might come up from a floor debate.

Al patiently answered the same questions over and over, so Members who had not been in the committee debates could understand what they were voting on. He spent endless hours helping our staffs learn what they needed to know.

Having said all that, I have to admit there are other staffers here who share these same traits. So what about Al made him so special and so sad to lose him? Much has been said of Al's love of irony and quick humor, but I do not remember him that way. To me, the best single word to describe Al is "twinkly." He was always smiling and winking about something, usually involving numbers. His eyes would sparkle as he saw wonderful number games and possibilities in his mind long before the rest of us caught up with him. There was a little bounce in those long, lanky strides as he walked down the hall, and when he had his special numbers game going in his head, he literally danced.

Like many of the people in the world I come from, Al was a man of few words, but he also was a man of many numbers. He used his profound understanding of numerical relationships and the flow of money to make life better for all Americans, but particularly for people in need. At heart, he was a deeply kind man and a true populist. The House of Representatives, indeed all the people of this country, have lost a great resource, and I have lost a dear friend. I will miss him very much.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), who serves on the Committee on Ways and Means and knew Al in that capacity.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), for bringing this Special Order tonight to honor Al Davis.

Mr. Speaker, it is true, Al Davis was a brilliant economist. But to all of my Democratic colleagues on the Committee on Ways and Means, he was so much more. He was our conscience on the committee. Somehow, the words "dedication" and "tireless" do not seem adequate to describe the strength of Al's commitment to his work. He spent countless hours on weekends and at night responding to all sorts of Members' inquiries and issues; even some that, to put it kindly, might be considered harebrained.

Still, he took every request seriously and would leave no question unanswered. His efforts were never half-hearted. Unsatisfied with one analysis or two or even ten, Al would often put together hundreds of analyses. Al would leave no stone unturned to pro-

vide all the facts, no matter how obscure.

Despite his unparalleled knowledge and command of some of the most complicated issues dealt with by Congress, Al had an amazing and rare ability to distill and explain information so that it was understandable to the least knowledgeable person. Yet he never, but never, condescended to anyone.

There was something about Al's absentminded-professor persona that was both disarming and reassuring. He could always be counted on to calm passionate temperaments and remind us all of the facts. He would not let us get caught up in hyperbole, and he kept us focused on why we are here: to serve as a voice for the underprivileged and the disenfranchised.

Though he might not have enjoyed the name recognition that my colleagues and I do, there is no doubt that his work was critical to our efforts. Without capable and dedicated staff like Al, this place, Mr. Speaker, would not run. I tell the Members tonight, we will forever be grateful for his service, commitment, and dedication.

Mr. Speaker, Al Davis fought the good fight. He kept the faith. He worked hard to make things better for those who needed it most. I truly believe we are blessed to have known him. Al, we will miss you. My friend, a job well done.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY), also a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), for organizing tonight's Special Order in honor of the memory of Al Davis.

Mr. Speaker, when I arrived in Washington as a freshman Member of Congress in January, 1993, I received an assignment to the Committee on the Budget. That was when I met Al Davis. At the time, Al was the committee's senior economist. For someone like me, brand new to the Federal budget policy, Al was nothing less than the Rosetta Stone.

Even before I knew his name, I knew him by my first impression. It was an impression that I held for the next 10 years working with him, our giant brain. The Washington Post said that Al could translate the most arcane economic data into real-world language. That is absolutely true.

But I must also admit that sometimes even Al's translations were hard to grasp. Why? Because, although he was a master of honing sharp political arguments out of obtuse provisions in the Internal Revenue Code, he would never sacrifice content or accuracy. If a Member came to Al with a winning political argument that did not quite square with the facts, Al would patiently explain how the argument could be changed politically and substantively to be sound and accurate. He loved politics, for sure, but Al cared deeply about the enterprise of govern-

ment, and believed that we all have an obligation to carry on our public debate with integrity.

Al was a senior economist and then chief economist for the Committee on the Budget for all my 6 years on the Committee on the Budget. Most know that until recently, Democrat staff of the Committee on the Budget were housed in the old O'Neill Building, which was also the dormitory for House and Senate pages.

It was quite appropriate that the Committee on the Budget staff worked out of a dormitory, because when we went to see Al Davis, working along with his colleagues, Richard Kogan and the others who served with such talent the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO) and then the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), we truly felt like we were in the gifted and talented dorm at college. Here would be Al in his office, piled high with every budget and economic resource we could imagine, statutes, studies, charts, you name it. Of course, we would always find Al perched in the middle of it with an open collar, or in the summer a short-sleeved shirt, jacket and tie hanging on the wall, just in case of emergencies.

Al would field questions about budget and tax policy with the excitement and enthusiasm of a kid. He not only would answer the question, but also point out the humor, the irony, the inconsistency, or the sheer lunacy of the provision under discussion. When we went to see Al, we were truly talking to the smartest kid in the class.

Al was a very influential staffer, although he had no use for the trappings of authority. Al loved his work for its own sake and not because it made him powerful or sought after, which probably explains why Al treated people like he did. There would be no one in the world more surprised than Al to have an editorial written about him in the Washington Post. He was just as happy to explain the finer points of tax policy to a junior staffer as he was a senior Member. If one was interested in learning the substance, then Al Davis was interested in teaching it to you.

Because of his knowledge and intelligence, we made great demands on Al. We asked him not only to undertake economic analyses to support our policies, but also to develop the arguments and market them. On many occasions, I would decide the night before markup that our charts did not quite capture the perfect argument for the next day. I would ask my staff to call Al to find the data to create the perfect chart. Armed with such an 11th hour request, you can imagine how anyone would be exasperated, and occasionally Al was. But even those times, a few hours later, sometimes well after midnight, Al would send over the chart, just as we had asked.

I served, along with my legislative director for 10 years, Mike Smart, with Al and developed the greatest respect and admiration for him. As he loved

ideas, so he also loved life. I remember my surprise once at disembarking at the Bangor, Maine airport to find Al Davis and his loving partner Mary, Al having one of these goofy camping caps on. He was off for a canoe trip, an incongruous notion for me, thinking of our giant brain paddling that canoe in the wilds of Maine; but that is the kind of diverse and loving-life guy Al Davis was.

I have found my years in Congress to be enriched significantly by knowing Al and having the benefit of his counsel. I will miss him very much.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the following items: The Washington Post editorial on Al Davis; the June 9 Tax Notes write-up by Warren Rojas on Al Davis and his contribution to the profession; a tribute in the June 9 Tax Notes from Gene Steuerele entitled "Economic Perspective"; and last but not least, a beautiful eulogy that was presented at the St. Charles Catholic Church in Arlington, Virginia, on Monday, June 9, by Dan Maffei, also a staff member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The documents referred to are as follows.

[From The Washington Post, June 7, 2003]

(By 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."

[From Tax Notes, June 9, 2003]

ECONOMISTS, LAWMAKERS LAUD DEPARTED  
DEMOCRATIC COLLEAGUE

(By Warren Rojas)

Fiscal watchdogs on both sides of aisle last week grieved the recent death of House Ways and Means Committee Chief Democratic Economist Albert J. Davis—a public servant many revered for his sharp mind, quick wit, and commitment to economic transparency.

Davis, whom colleagues remembered as a fixture of the Washington economics community since arriving here in the early 1980s, died May 30 after being struck by a taxicab in Arlington, Va., on May 19. Although at press time memorial arrangements for Davis remained were uncertain, Democratic leaders plan to sponsor a special order on June 10 allowing lawmakers one hour of debate time on the chamber floor to share their memories of Davis.

"Our members are all sort of devastated because Al was our crutch," Ways and Means Democratic staff director and Davis's most recent boss Janice Mays said about Davis, that he was the unofficial "go-to" policy guru for most House Democrats.

"From my standpoint, he was the perfect staffer. I am really desolate," Mays said.

Davis's chief foil, Ways and Means senior economist for the majority Alex Brill, voiced genuine admiration for Davis's "strong commitment and belief in economics and his issues."

"We rarely agreed, but he was someone I respected," Brill told Tax Analysts. "He was someone who worked hard and made his issues vibrant and real." While they quite often digested the same economic data only to come to diametrically opposed policy positions, Brill said Davis usually emerged with a "fair read" of alternative views.

"He certainly had that strong grasp of the science," he said, adding, "And I know by reputation that he dissected [the information] very quickly."

Similarly, Ways, and Means Committee ranking minority member Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y., said that Congress as an institution would suffer from Davis's sudden departure.

"Though he appeared soft-spoken and cerebral, Al Davis was passionate about defending the interests of the working men and women of this country," Rangel said. "Using his spread sheets, his charts, and his memos, Al was a powerful fighter for economic justice. He promoted truth in an institution too used to skirting around politically inconvenient facts. Al's death is a loss for the entire nation."

#### A NATIONAL TREASURE

Born in Dallas in 1947, Davis laid the foundation for his economic ascension by securing Bachelor of Arts in economics (with Honors) from Swarthmore College in 1968. He followed that up by earning a Master of Arts in economics (with concentrations in international economics and public finance) from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1974.

With tools in hand, Davis then began his professional career as a research director and fiscal policy expert for the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (1976-1980) before moving to Washington and leapfrogging from governmental agency to governmental agency, servicing as: senior analyst at the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (1980-1983); senior economist for the Democratic staff of the House Budget Committee (1984-1994); chief economist of the Democratic staff of the House Budget Com-

mittee (1995-1998); and chief economist for the Ways and Means Democrats (1999 to 2003).

While his résumé reads like a road map followed by the prototypical federal number cruncher, economists and friends claim his fiscal vision and translation skills made Davis an unparalleled ally.

According to Mays, Democrats treasured Davis's counsel because the combination of computer savvy and homemade economic models enabled him to provide lawmakers in the minority with in-depth analysis on par with what Treasury and the Office of Management and Budget deliver to the White House.

"He could kind of give you the facts of who would benefit and who wouldn't from various tax changes," Mays said of his understanding of how taxes, budget, and long-term fiscal policy changes here all interrelated. "He had a great overview of how all those things would work together."

Rather than hoard that knowledge, Mays said Davis enjoyed the intellectual exercise of sifting through the tax code and bringing all its hidden flaws to light.

"He enjoyed explaining how the machine worked. Members would talk to him and go away understanding something a little bit better," she said of the impromptu tutorials and explanations Davis could provide at a moment's notice. She added that often, Davis would make time to talk to any legislative assistant who reached out to him—happily logging 20-hour workdays to explain the underlying economic consequences of any legislative proposal.

Explaining how Davis was more than a mere policy work, Urban Institute economist and Tax Policy Institute codirector Leonard E. Burman painted Davis as a "legislative detective" adept at sifting through the fine print of most tax bills and spelling out the particulars to Hill watchers and members alike.

"If you talked to Al every day, you would routinely learn things that others might not read about in the mainstream papers till two or three weeks later," he stated, hailing Davis as "an ordinary guy who was pivotal to how tax policy works."

Burman praised Davis for working "tirelessly to keep both the Democrats and the Republicans on the Ways and Means committee honest and informed about their tax policy options and the implications of their choices," and thanked him for keeping everyone else in Washington up to speed on the day-to-day tax grind.

"He knew how to read the tax law and could figure out how these goofy provisions concocted in the dead of night would [affect] other issues down the road. And he knew how to write so that anyone could understand it," Burman said of Davis's copious policy memos.

On a personal level, Burman said he would most miss scanning the tax dailies in search of a (supposedly) clandestine comment from Davis. "I am going to miss reading articles in Tax Notes and other places where a House staffer or some other well-placed aide was quoted and picking out his voice—because I always knew it was Al," he said.

Congressional Research Service economist and close friend Jane G. Gravelle called Davis's death "a great, great tragedy" for those who were close to him and to the economics profession as a whole.

Although he prided himself on staying behind the scenes, Gravelle said Davis clearly had a "great effect on the transmission of economic knowledge" both in and around Washington.

"To me, he was the epitome of the staff adviser to Congress," she said—although Gravelle quickly added that Davis was somehow able to avoid getting mired down in the

political frustration and procedural malaise that often overtakes people who stay on Capitol Hill too long.

"Whereas there are those on the Hill to whom politics is the predominant issue, Al had principles. He always wanted to communicate the truth—even if his members didn't want to hear it," she stated.

"He was very quick in seeing through to the essence of things—particularly sneaky ways that people could turn and twist the tax code to benefit from policy changes," Gravelle said of Davis's economic intuition. She added that Davis's economic know-how and command of public policy would be hard to replace.

"To replace that set, to explain things and understand them—quite often these two do not go together. Particularly in economics," she quipped. "I can't help but believe that Democrats will suffer from the loss of those skills."

Brookings Institution senior fellow and Tax Policy Institute codirector William G. Gale said Davis's passing would leave a void that will not easily be filled.

"He was deeply committed to what he was doing—but he was also willing to take a step back and laugh about the policy silliness," Gale recounted. "He will be sorely missed both personally and professionally."

While noting that he believes there is a sea of unsung policy experts and congressional staffers keeping most lawmakers afloat, Gale hinted that the stereotypical Washington bureaucrats do their jobs "maybe not quite as well as Al did."

"He wouldn't have bothered writing such clear, compelling stuff if he didn't think it mattered," he said of Davis's economic convictions.

Moreover, Gale suggested that Davis's long commitment to combating complexity and other long-term fiscal concerns had renewed his sense of purpose in recent years.

"One of the things he really railed against was the disingenuity of how tax cuts were advanced over the last few years," Gale said. "It was a constant thorn in his side that tax cut advocates were using any argument to justify their tax cuts. So he spent a lot of time trying to be a reality check on those people."

Mays noted, however, that even though they had been overtaken by the immediate sense of mourning, she and her staff would ultimately honor Davis's memory by continuing to shine a light on potential abuses of the tax code.

"Al would want us to keep fighting. He would not want us to stop just because he is not one of the troops anymore," she stated.

Contributions in memory of Albert J. Davis may be made to memorial funds established in his name at Swarthmore College and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

[From Tax Notes, June 9, 2003]

A TRIBUTE TO AL DAVIS

(By Gene Steuerle)

Al Davis. Al Davis. Where are you, Al, now that we need you more than ever? Many tributes are going to be made about Al, who died on Friday, May 30, as a result of injuries from being struck by a taxi. Still, I feel compelled to add my own accolade, not just in gratitude for what he did for me over the years, but to challenge all of us who engage in tax analysis and policy to try to live up to his standards.

Anyone who worked with Al knows that he was a master at putting together information and disseminating it in easily digestible nuggets. He loved data and would reconfigure and recompile it until the stories hidden in the numbers came out and hit you over the head as if they were apparent all

along. He fed all of us information about actions we had missed—especially if they involved some sleight of hand, some manipulation of the numbers, or simply some little noticed special interest provision snuck into a bill late at night. In this endeavor he was ceaselessly bipartisan. Those for whom he worked, Democrats on the Ways and Means and House Budget Committees, may be well aware of his biting edge when he thought Republicans were running amok, but I can assure you that he was equally informative, honest, and skeptical when Democrats were dodging or ignoring principles of tax or budget policy.

Al was a national treasure. He knew more quirks of the tax and budget process than most of us will ever hope to guess at, much less understand. He could translate confusing rules, jumbled numbers, and incomplete actions, with a keen awareness of just how they were going to affect the policy process. He would spend whatever time was necessary to educate his bosses and his colleagues in the tax and budget community, even if it meant that he had to work 18 hours instead of 12 to get other parts of his job done.

Al and I go back to graduate school days at the University of Wisconsin long ago. We both had returned to school after a military tour of duty, and we both had a keen interest in issues of public policy. Al was quickly disaffected by some of the arcane aspects of economics—those that might be great for tenure but had no applicability to the real world. Al wanted to solve problems and his interest from the start was in public policy. How could it be made to work best for the public? From beginning to end, I don't think there was ever any other motivation that so drove him. He was an exemplary public servant, the embodiment of the concept of service.

At the same time, he was fun. Sometimes when action was fierce, battle lines drawn, and staff abuse the order of the day, Al would smile brightly and plunge harder than ever into the morass to try to come out with information that was straightforward, sensible, and influential. And always timely. He had a special smirk for much of the silliness that always prevails in the legislative process, and when you saw it come over his face, you got ready for a good story—the same way you anticipated a Bob Hope punch line. I think Al's energy cells were fueled by the action going on around him.

Integrity largely defines Al's approach to work and policymaking. There's something about our system of government that makes it dependent on people like Al, the ones who tell it like it is and are willing to bear the consequences. There's a story that circulates in government about the many staff persons in Congress and the Executive Branch who either stare at their shoes or simply tell their bosses what they want to hear. The shoe staring arises when an elected official says something outlandish or wrong, but no one has the nerve to correct him or even put better information into the conversation. Al's failure to play these games may have foreclosed certain career options, but he was usually in his element in the jobs he took, always just below the surface visible to the public but right at the heart of policy.

It's hard to convey fully the loss to the policy community, much less to Al's friends and loved ones. I do know this. Al's death warns us once again that those who would serve must do it now, not later after some power has been obtained or some career ambition achieved. Thanks, Al. And every time I see still more silliness in the tax or budget process, I'll sense your outrage that it couldn't have been done better and your humor at how it all happened. I'll try to

maintain hope that, with people like you to grace our lives, maybe, just maybe, we can muddle through once again.

REFLECTIONS AT THE MASS OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL FOR ALBERT J. DAVIS, ST. CHARLES BORROMEO CATHOLIC CHURCH, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA, MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2003

My name is Dan Maffei. I am the spokesperson on the Democratic Staff of the Committee on Ways and Means where Al worked.

I first got to know Al though his memos. Al's memos were sort of like his Star of Bethlehem. They did not reveal all the truths but they led you to him and you were seldom disappointed.

Al's title was "Chief Economist" but Al knew more tax law than most tax counsels and virtually anything about the federal budget. He knew American history. When I had a question about physics or Latin, it was a pretty good bet Al would know that too.

And Al didn't just know the answers, he knew where the answers came from. He could explain how to understand them to any journalist or staff member—his "clients" or "customers" as he called them.

Al was a greater communicator.

Too often, the simple soundbite answer can lead to unfair and unjust policy.

But, as a wise member of the Ways and Means Committee once said, "If you have to 'splain it' you've already lost."

Al Davis was the antidote to that axiom.

Al could, by explaining something so well and so clearly, reveal the simple truth within a complex issue.

Al produced both quality and quantity. Memos, e-mails, distribution analyses, spreadsheets, one-pagers and charts—charts, charts, charts.

With such preparation, it is easy to understand why Al was such a good sailor and outdoorsman. Compared to Al, the best boy scout would look impromptu.

Al even could predict the future.

On the House floor, he was a walking library. A member would ask some obscure question and Al would say, "I happen to have something on that right here."

Though he had served with distinction in the United States Army, Al was not particularly good at taking orders, and not good at delegating. But that did not matter. He was a staff unto himself.

Al had many bosses throughout his career but his big secret was that he really worked for himself. All of his bosses would quickly realize that, if allowed to do it his way, Al could cause a great deal of trouble for some and do a great deal of good for the working Americans.

"Business is good," Al would say.

He would reveal the gimmicks, debunk myths, and correct bad numbers.

A couple of weeks ago, the Senate Republicans' tax bill was derailed by "an estimating error." A memo Al had written two days earlier revealed a flawed estimate. Even as Al lay in the hospital, he had thrown a wrench in the works of those trying to get away with too many short-cuts.

Al was angry at the current Administration and the Republicans, not for their views but for their dishonesty.

Al did not sit well for lies.

Honest opinions, honest numbers, honest budgeting—these meant a great deal to Al.

He had a particular dislike of logically inconsistent statements that were designed to con the public. He saw only one rational reaction—ridicule.

As he wrote, "Most recently, the President has equated tax cuts with 'jobs.' He has warned against a first-round of tax cuts as 'small' as \$350 billion. If economics is that simple, why not eliminate all taxes? If economics were that simple, families could get

ahead by spending twice their income every year."

Al's sarcasm had a lighter side too, frequently accompanied by that trademark grin.

Back in the army, Al would quip that he was given a rifle to guard a paint shed, a night stick to guard a depot, and nothing at all to guard the Pentagon.

Many years later when the Bush White House sent up a budget wrapped in an American flag cover, Al's memo ripping the budget's tax provisions apart had a bold stars and stripes watermark.

As the war in Iraq got under way, Al sent the following e-mail: "The newspapers today say that the stock market 'soared' upon news of the war. Forget the dividend tax cut plan, the stock market is taken care of."

Recently, I sent Al an e-mail about a new Democratic Leadership Council idea to set up a "prosperity reserve fund" so the Federal government could put away money to pay down debt later on. Al's response was five words: "Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey"

That was not the only Democratic dumb idea that came Al's way. As each new young staffer came along, feeling that he or she really had the solution, and came to Al with their flawed idea, Al would sign. Or, it was something he had heard a dozen times before, it would get the head shake.

Al was well practiced at rolling his eyes.

Yet, Al had near endless patience. Frequently, a young legislative aide would assure Al had lost patience with him when, lo and behold, they would get an e-mail from Al with all the answers they needed.

Al disdained it when other staffers or members of Congress would take themselves too seriously. That was a trait he did not have.

In fact, the most frequent victim of Al's acerbic wit was Al himself. He would apologize for "torturing" people with his depth explanations. Or say that some foolish person decided to do a detailed analysis of this bill and then attach a memo that he himself had done.

Just about 6 weeks ago, I asked Al whether he had ever taught college. Al could have made a great college professor. Al said that had he finished his Ph.D., he might have considered it.

But that would have taken Al out of the front lines. In the fight for better government and for a better life for the working people of this country, Al was in the best place he could be.

For even though Al could seem cloistered among his books and files and spreadsheets, and even though he would shun meetings and had to be dragged to the House door, Al loved being an agent in the process—and a potent one at that. He had found work worthy of himself.

And besides, it didn't whether he had the title, Al was the best professor I ever had.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SANDLIN), also a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from South Carolina for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, unlike many of my colleagues on the Committee on Ways and Means, I only knew Al Davis well for a brief period of time, although now I am in my fourth term. I had previously met Al, but I recently became a member of the committee. It did not take me long to learn that Al was an invaluable resource to all of us.

Al's mastery of economics, his vast institutional knowledge and patient demeanor, combined with the rare ability to simplify and explain complex data, helped ease my transition and the transition of many others to the committee.

□ 2045

It served committee Democrats well during crucial tax debates.

As several poignant columns have pointed out this past week, including these that have been referred to in *The Washington Post* and in *Tax Notes*, Al worked tirelessly to shed light on the ways in which data and statistics can be and often are manipulated and misrepresented to serve narrow purposes. At the same time, Al was proudly partisan and used his extensive knowledge to influence public debate on economic and fiscal policy.

Whether one agreed or disagreed with Al, everyone who was familiar with him acknowledged the accuracy of his data and the sincerity of his motives. He never stopped fighting for economic justice, and he was especially passionate in his criticisms of the increasing inequities in the Tax Code. He clearly stood for the working men and the working women of this country.

His charts, graphs, spreadsheets and memos were highly regarded on the Hill and among fiscal and budget policy experts, and his research and presence will be greatly missed.

As many speakers here today are aware, Al's office space was a study in controlled chaos. I met with Al in his office shortly after I joined the committee in January, and I was impressed with both the volume of material in his office and the fact that he was able to quickly locate seemingly obscure information with very little effort. As committee members and staff know, Al typically carried much of this material with him at all times, carried it with him to the floor; and he always had relevant information handy. During our heated debates, he was a constantly reassuring sight to all of us on this side of the aisle and could always be counted on to clearly and concisely refute arguments on fiscal and budget policy made by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Simply put, Al is irreplaceable, a reality check for both Republicans and Democrats; and his friends and colleagues will feel his loss for years to come.

Al's friend and a friend to the committee, Janice Mays, is the Democratic staff director and Al's most recent boss. On the issue of going forward from this point, she recently said, "Al would want us to keep fighting. He would not want us to stop just because he is not one of the troops anymore."

There could be no better memorial than that; and Mr. Speaker, there could be no better compliment.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), also a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, as I am sure is the case with each of those who have spoken tonight, I come to these remarks with a heavy heart, one of the more difficult remarks that I make here I guess for two reasons, both because of my affection for Al and because he is not here to help me with the speech.

As I look back over the floor, I see the spots where I would see Al sitting with John Buckley and Janice Mays and Dan Maffei, with Beth Vance and other members of the staff of our committee, knowing the loss that each of us speaks of tonight as a Member is a loss that has been suffered by his colleagues who worked with him, the closest as staff members on the Committee on Ways and Means.

But I think of the many times that I have been here when I was over there vigorously scribbling the final notes of what I might say in rebuttal to some argument I heard when Al would come over and note something that had been omitted from the debate and totally change my speech; or when having concluded that the strongest argument for our side was a particular bit of data, I would turn to Al and have him indicate that it really was not quite as solid as perhaps the sheet that had come out from one of the various groups particularly interested in the matter might have indicated and that a stronger argument was to be found somewhere else.

Al did all this with that sense of gentleness, of cooperation that has been spoken of by others here tonight. He was a remarkable individual.

Also, I still have a collection of e-mails from Al because, as others have also pointed out, Al would see some bit of contradiction. One of them I came across was one that in a simple message said I was struck by the following sentence in the President's speech last night, preceded by an analysis by Al of the contradictions between what the President said and what the President and his administration had done.

Al has provided the kind of careful insight to public policy, the kind of careful analysis of the numbers but also with an understanding of the human condition, an understanding in a life varied in experience, filled with love from his family and from his colleagues, and he brought that special insight to us so that it was not just a matter of regurgitating the numbers but of putting flesh and bone on those numbers and translating them into what they meant to ordinary American citizens in a way that few people I met here, either elected or unelected, have a capacity to do.

As I think about the tragic loss of Al, something that came so unexpectedly to all of us, to his family, his friends, his colleagues, I think that while I will add a few more specifics in my extended remarks here tonight, that I would want to reflect on Al's commitment to words like dedication, industry, loyalty and integrity and would

say that when it came to issues like retirement security, like assuring that people could get health care, like guaranteeing that there was at least a little sanity in the budget process, and I initially met Al working with the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) and with his predecessor, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO), as a young member of the Committee on the Budget, on issues like tax fairness that have been so important to me personally, that Al was committed to those issues.

His tragic passing reminds us that we never know how long our tenure and our ability to serve what we view the public interest is going to be, and I think we are called upon in remembering Al to remember the causes that were most important to him and to redouble our efforts in his spirit and on his behalf to fight for fairness, to oppose hypocrisy, to stand up for what is right for the American people in much the way Al would do if he could be here offering us suggestions tonight.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his remarks.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleagues gathered here today to honor and memorialize Ways and Means Democratic Staff Economist Al Davis who life was tragically cut short.

Al dedicated many years of his life to helping Democrats in the House of Representatives promote policies to improve the lives of America's working families. He did this first when working for the House Budget Committee Democratic staff and more recently with the Ways and Means Committee Democrats as our chief economist.

Those of us lucky enough to serve in Congress know how important the role of staff really is. A good staffer is not someone who will just agree with you—though it takes many of us a very long time to discover that reality. The best staffer is someone who understands the facts and helps you use those facts to promote policy that you support or oppose, but will tell you when the facts aren't on your side.

Al excelled in this role. He knew the tax code and budgetary impact of any change in law better—and more quickly—than almost anyone. If you needed the facts to support your argument, he was there with a memo to assist you. But, only if your argument was correct and could be substantiated! And, that was why Al will be missed so greatly. He'd tell you if the facts didn't support you—and you couldn't convince him to do otherwise.

There are two words that I think best describe Al Davis. The first is "integrity". As I've said above, he always held true to the facts and helped us do so as well. The second word is "commitment". Al was truly committed to the work he was doing here on Capitol Hill. He was here helping us whenever the Ways and Means Committee was meeting or the full House was considering Ways and Means bills—no matter how late at night it was. When the House wasn't in session late, he was usually still here long after we'd gone home analyzing bills, making charts and getting his memos out to us to make sure that we had the facts necessary to promote or combat various policies.

Al Davis will be sorely missed. He was the consummate Congressional staffer. We need

more Al Davis' on both sides of the aisle. It is very sad that, instead, we have one less in our presence today.

Mr. MCNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join with my colleagues tonight in celebrating the life, and mourning the loss, of an exemplary public servant, Al Davis.

Al was the embodiment of the concept of public service. He possessed an encyclopedic understanding of the tax code and was committed to the promotion of truth and honesty in American tax and budget policy. In fact, if there was one word synonymous with Al, it would be "honesty". Members and staff on both sides of the aisle expected nothing but the raw truth from Al, and they were never disappointed. It was the core of his being.

Armed with a keen sense of American history, a quick mind and sharp wit, and the passion of his convictions, Al would cut through the political rhetoric to translate complex technical data into readily understandable facts. While the Congress may be diminished by his physical absence, his commitment inspires us to continue the fight for better government.

Al, you will be missed both personally and professionally. But as you look down on us from a better place, we will be inspired by your example and the sense of purpose you set in the fight for a better life for the working people of our country.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to join my colleagues from the Ways and Means Committee honoring Mr. Al Davis.

As one of the two newest members on the committee in the 108th Congress, I was privileged to become acquainted with Al and appreciate his round the clock efforts to make sure the Democratic members of the committee and their staffs were kept abreast of the upcoming events and legislation we would be dealing with. And I do mean round the clock. Messages would come on my Blackberry pager at 11 o'clock at night, sometimes later. When major bills were getting ready to be discussed in a hearing or markup before the committee, the first memo that reached my hands in the morning would be the most recent information that Al had spent the previous night researching and compiling.

To say that Al provided sage-like advice to the committee is an understatement. While my colleagues on the committee are extremely knowledgeable of the economic issues related to the Ways and Means' jurisdiction, rarely would they not yield to Al as he would offer greater insights into the complex issues we faced. I think I can speak for other members when I say that a common first response to questions we had for our staffs was "Let me check with Al and see what he thinks."

Al's tireless work ethic, attention to detail, and cunning sense of humor will be remembered by all his friends and colleagues, here on Capitol Hill and elsewhere. As I take these moments to remember Al, I also want to thank him for his steadfast commitment to the ideals of the committee.

#### AMERICA'S GREATEST THREAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FEENEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I think that our recent military successes in Afghanistan and Iraq have demonstrated very clearly that we are the preeminent military force in the world. Our economy, although it has been somewhat slowed recently, is certainly the strongest in the world.

By most measures, the United States is the most powerful Nation in the world. At the present time, we stand alone in a position of preeminence; and so sometimes when one is in that position, it is easy to begin to think that we are invincible and that this will go on forever, and certainly we hope that that is the case.

Then I think it is important that we cast a historical frame of reference on all of the recent circumstances on things that have happened.

Certainly 2,500 years ago, the Greeks were preeminent; and they, I am sure, felt that their culture would last forever and that they would be in a preeminent position until history ended; and then 500 years later, 2000 years ago, we found that the Roman empire had superseded Greece, and again, for a period of time, it was the most powerful nation in the world, just dominated the then-civilized world as we knew it.

150 years ago, the British Empire certainly was the most dominant nation in the world and controlled most of the affairs in the discovered world at that time; and of course, even the Soviet Union just 20 years ago appeared to be an almost invincible force. It was our rival. And so the United States and Soviet Union were the two most powerful nations in the world; and yet in each case, each one of these great civilizations, each one of these nations fell, and the interesting thing was that they did not fall from outside forces. It was not because somebody took them over. Rather, they fell from internal factors; and so their unity of purpose, their national resolve, the character of their people began to crumble, and as a result, they all to some degree became less powerful, and to some degree they became history.

So what is America's greatest threat today? I am sure some would say al Qaeda. Some would say it is the ongoing conflict in the Middle East between Israel and Palestine. Some would say it is the nuclear capabilities of North Korea and possibly Iran. Others would say the biggest problem we have is the economy, and certainly all of these things are important, and certainly they are all worthy of our attention, and they certainly get it in this body on a daily basis.

I would submit to my colleagues that from my perspective the greatest threat that this Nation faces today is not outside forces, but rather, it is unraveling of the culture from within. So I am going to tonight, Mr. Speaker, document this thesis in some ways, and the reason I say this is because I have had considerable experience working with young people over 36 years.

From 1962 to 1997, I spent almost all of my time working with young people.