

**Introduction of**  
**HONORABLE ALAN P. LARSON**  
**Under Secretary of State for**  
**Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs**

**Jeffrey N. Shane**  
**President**  
**International Aviation Club**

**Westin Grand Hotel**  
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It is a great personal pleasure to be able to introduce the Honorable Alan P. Larson, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs.

I have known Al Larson since 1985, when we worked together as Deputy Assistant Secretaries in the State Department's Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs. I was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Affairs, having just transferred to State from DOT; he was Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Finance and Development.

Shortly thereafter, Al was appointed Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs. It was in that role that he first learned to cover the full range of the State Department's international economic policy responsibilities. Despite the breadth and complexity of those issues—which of course lie at the very heart of American foreign policy—Al always found time to provide support for our campaign to liberalize aviation markets. And, on a more personal level, he was also a valued guide to the intricacies and idiosyncrasies of “the Building,” as the State Department is known to its denizens.

From 1990 to 1993, Al served as American Ambassador to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris. Like all ambassadors, he was given a very nice house to live in. Happily for me, he was always willing to take in the occasional weary government traveler when he showed up on his doorstep.

During his time at the OECD, Ambassador Larson encouraged a new focus within that organization on the importance of air transport liberalization. He lobbied heavily for US funding of an aviation initiative, and the net result was a comprehensive OECD study of international air transport markets and some important recommendations for opening those markets to greater competition. I predict that those recommendations will be dusted off in the near future, particularly as the US and Europe begin to move their aviation relationship to a new level.

After returning from Paris, Ambassador Larson spent some time as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Energy and Resources Policy. He was appointed Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs in July 1996. Finally, on November 24th of last year, he became Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs, one of very few career foreign service officers

to hold that position.

It is fair to say that no Assistant Secretary of State, and certainly no Under Secretary of State, has understood better, or has done more for, the aviation industry. There is a lot of discussion today of moving the industry “beyond open skies.” It is safe to say that, if we are able to take some important steps toward a more sensible regime for international aviation, it will be in no small measure because Al Larson was there. And in the meantime, since it may be a while before that new regime emerges, talking OPEC into increasing output isn’t a bad way to have spent your time.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in giving a very warm welcome to Under Secretary of State Al Larson.