

June 9 / Administration of George Bush, 1992

Remarks at a Fundraising Dinner for Senator Arlen Specter in Bowmansdale, Pennsylvania

June 9, 1992

Thank you, Arlen, for that wonderfully warm introduction and, I might say at the top of these remarks, for being such a great United States Senator. It is essential that Arlen Specter be returned to office. May I just say that Barbara and I treasure our friendship with Joan and Arlen. We've known each other a long, long time. This isn't just kind of the normal political endorsement; I really mean it. There is a handful of United States Senators that really make things happen, that stand for principles, and that fight for his constituents. If you don't believe me, you ought to try riding in from the Philadelphia Airport, for example, into Philadelphia with Arlen. By the time you get there your arm is twisted out of its socket—[laughter]—he's brought up about eight proposals that will help Pennsylvania, and he never forgets how he got elected. He represents his constituents with honor and with principle. And you're very, very lucky to have him there.

May I thank Bob and Susan for this wonderful event. It's like being at the circus, and I'm not talking about all of you animals out there either. [Laughter] I'm just saying that it really is a wonderful way to campaign, and this beautiful countryside as we drove in made me want to count my blessings all over again. But thank you so much, to both of you, for hosting this wonderful dinner.

I know there are a lot of people to congratulate, but I congratulate Marilyn Ware Lewis and Alex Grass here who are the co-chairmen of the dinner; salute my old friend and our State chairman, Elsie Hillman; another old friend who is with us tonight, a strong supporter of Arlen, the famous and wonderful Walter Annenberg who is here, right there. Barbara and I have been married 47 years, but every time she sees Walter, I worry a little bit about it. She re-falls in love with him. And I'm troubled by that. [Laughter] But we Bushes admire and respect him.

To Bob Jubelirer who is with us and Mi-

chael Ryan, it's good to see so many elected members of the Pennsylvania Legislature with us here; to Anne Anstine and Herb Barness, our national committee people. Barbara Hafer is with us; Ernie Preate. And I want to thank Tonia Tecce for the national anthem; the pledge, done well by those kids. I asked them if they were nervous; not at all. They did it well, not one glitch in the Pledge of Allegiance.

May I single out another old friend—I don't want to date him in terms of age, but we went to college around the same time. But I think he must have been behind me—Joe Paterno. What a wonderful representative. He remains an inspiration to me and to my boys and to our whole family. And I'm just delighted to be at his side once more.

Now, you all know why we're here tonight. We are here for Arlen Specter. Arlen spelled out the ground—they've got the craziest campaign rules, financing rules. Literally, I cannot talk to you, and I certainly will not, about why I want to be reelected President of the United States. However—[laughter]—I can talk to you tonight about why Arlen Specter should be reelected to the Senate and why our programs that we have before the United States Congress ought to be enacted. And that's exactly what I plan to do.

Arlen knows how hard and how frustrating it can be just to get things done, which is his motto, and he does it well. But in Washington, "Republican" has meant being outnumbered. I really believe if this economy keeps moving now, that we have an opportunity to do that which is absolutely essential to move this country forward: end divided Government and bring Republican leadership to both the Senate and the House of Representatives. There is a gridlock in Government, yes, because there are roadblocks in the United States Congress. And the American people deserve better than that right now. I believe we're going to see the changes.

Yes, the voters are calling for change. But they also know that there's a flip side to change. It's called trust: trust to make the right decisions; trust to block the wrong decisions; trust to make the tough calls and put the public's interest before the special interests; trust to cast the votes that aren't always popular, to take the stands that aren't always fashionable, and to be a leader and not just a servant.

Our leadership, as Arlen very generously said, has helped change the world. Today we had Mr. Kozyrev, the Foreign Minister of Russia, there. As I listened to this reformer talk, I couldn't help but think how far we have come in the last 3 years. It has been dramatic, the changes that have taken place around the world. The cold war is won, and our steadfast perseverance to the security needs of the country have changed the world.

Talk to any German, and they'll talk to you with pride about the U.S. role in the reunification of Germany. In the Middle East, ancient enemies talking to each other across the table, something that nobody would have dreamed possible a handful of years ago. There are plenty of problems out there as these new ethnic rivalries come to the surface, but Eastern Europe is free, and the former Soviet Union has now many, many independent countries all struggling to perfect democracy, struggling for freedom. It is an exciting thing that has taken place around the world. And in the Gulf, yes, freedom for a tiny country, but much more important than that, victory for a big idea, and that is that an aggressor bully cannot take over his neighbor without punishment.

They ask about it, and yes, there is a peace dividend. It's called peace, and we can take great pride in that. And one other point on this: When I saw some of the little kids here tonight, I thank God that our children go to bed at night far less worried about the specter of nuclear warfare. That is a major accomplishment in which we can all take pride.

And so I say we have, we have helped change the world. And I give my predecessor great credit. I give the Senators that have stood with us for strong defense and stood with us, say, on the Gulf, give them

lots of credit. We've helped change the world.

Now let me just talk for a minute about what we're trying to do to help change America. We're for free trade because Americans aren't afraid to meet and beat the competition. Protection is out; free and fair trade is in. And that means jobs for the American people.

Health care reform: I do not want to and I will not sign a socialized medicine nationalized plan. I have proposed the most comprehensive health care reform program. It makes insurance available to all, the poorest of the poor. But it preserves the quality of United States medicine, none better in the entire world.

We are for fundamental—I'm not talking about just transparent—we are for fundamental education reform. Our America 2000 is an innovative program that says to the Lehigh Valley, for example, where I was the other day, "You innovate. You figure out what's best for the people of Pennsylvania. And we will help you, but we will not dictate to you." We are going to revolutionize education in this country. If people have a choice of where their kids go to college, why shouldn't they have a choice as to where kids go to school? We are for school choice.

We are fighting hard for legal reform. When a guy can't coach Little League for fear of some silly suit; when a doctor can't deliver a baby for fear of some malpractice suit—[*applause*]. We are trying to have legal reform. We are blocked in the Senate today, as Arlen knows, by a very powerful lobby, but I will take this case to the American people. It is time we cared for each other a little more and sued each other a little less.

We are pushing for Government reform and so is Arlen because, you see, he and I believe that the Congress ought to abide by the same laws they make you and I live by.

While we're talking about Government reform, let me just expand on what our able Senator talked about. We have called for a balanced budget amendment. The very first piece of legislation that I took up to Capitol Hill when I was sworn in was a call for a balanced budget amendment. That was in

January of 1989, and we've done it each year. But the time has come now because, he is right, runaway spending threatens the future prosperity of our country. Every American family has to live within its means, and it's high time that the Federal Government did the same thing.

This balanced budget amendment is a top priority. Just today at the White House I met not only with the Republican leadership or some of the Democratic Congressmen, but we did something unique. We brought in some key business leaders who want to see this amendment passed and sat them down with this bipartisan congressional group that's spearheading this effort. We've had good sessions with other State legislators and other business groups. I've been working the phones to Capitol Hill, following up on the strong push that I tried to give it in last week's press conference, the press conference I gave at the White House that the networks didn't see fit to cover, incidentally. And I'm not too happy about that. But they can make their choices any way they want, but I'm going to take this message to the American people that we need a balanced budget amendment.

If the vote doesn't go our way and if the majority leaders on Capitol Hill get their way, the American people will then have it right in clear focus come fall, and they will decide on who wants to deal with this deficit or not.

Now, I've heard there's talk up there on Capitol Hill—Arlen, we didn't talk about this on the plane—about a balanced budget act. They say pass some legislation, a balanced budget act instead of an amendment. That act, incidentally, would not help balance the budget. But you and I know that Congress won't let a simple law get in the way of higher spending. No statute can substitute for the force of the Constitution of the United States. An amendment is the only answer.

Listen, I was with Arlen in Pittsburgh and with him in Philadelphia, and we both feel we ought to help the cities. Last month, I sent up a strong emergency package to assist the victims of violence in Los Angeles and other cities. Before the ink was dry, Congress had stuffed into that emergency bill an extra \$1 billion, \$1 billion spending.

In the meantime, people who desperately need help and need that emergency aid must wait. That's an iron-clad argument for a balanced budget amendment, and we need that amendment now.

So give us that amendment. And while we're at it, let me ask something else. Ask your legislators, demand of your legislators that they give the President what 43 Governors have, the line-item veto, and give us a chance.

Lastly, just let me say, Government alone, and everyone here knows this, simply cannot solve all the problems we face. Ask yourself what keeps a kid in school, what keeps a kid off the streets, what keeps a kid away from drugs? It's not Government. It is family. I will never forget when those mayors, from big cities and small, of the National League of Cities came to see me, including Tom Bradley of Los Angeles. And they said the underlying problem is the decline, the diminution of the American family. And they are absolutely correct about that. There's this feeling out there that we're in disarray and that we're off the track. The way to help correct that is to take the first step towards it, and that is put the family first.

Arlen has done that. My heavens, I don't know how closely you've followed his record. He coauthored the Missing Children Assistance Act. He increased the funding, took the leadership on it, for a worthy program called Healthy Start. He won Healthy Start grants for Pennsylvania, for Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. He's also been a leader in the fight against pornography, the dry rot that degrades women and exploits children and vandalizes our values. He's out front fighting for these things. So let the ultraliberals defend the vendors of pornography. He and I are going to protect the victims. And that's what we should be doing.

You know, Government can and must, as I said earlier, reform education. But parents, parents must read to their children, teach them a love of learning. And Government can and must fight crime. But families have got to instill in these kids the respect for the other guy, respect for property, respect for the value of the others' lives. Gov-

ernment can and must foster economic competitiveness. But the work ethic is learned at home. Barbara Bush is right when she says what happens in your house is more important than what happens in the White House. That is fundamentally correct.

So let us vow to do everything we can in our neighborhoods, in our communities to help strengthen the American family. You know, we've inherited a great country from those that came before. I don't believe this stuff that America's a declining Nation, not for one, single minute. We are a rising Nation. And we can overcome any kind of adversity that we have. We've always done it in our past, and we can do it now. But we must determine that we've also borrowed America from all those who are going to come afterward. And we know that America is great because America is good.

I am dedicated to work with Arlen Specter to demonstrate to the entire world what you and I know is so true: We are the freest, we are the best, we are the fairest

Nation on the face of the Earth. And give us the tools with which to work, and you watch this country move forward.

Thank you. And may God bless the United States. And be sure to reelect Arlen Specter to the United States Senate. Thank you very much.

Note: The President spoke at 6:27 p.m. at Mumma Farm. In his remarks, he referred to Robert and Susan Mumma, owners of the farm; Elsie Hillman, Republican national committeewoman; publisher Walter H. Annenberg, president of the M.L. Annenberg Foundation; Robert C. Jubelirer, president pro tempore, Pennsylvania State Senate; Matthew J. Ryan, Republican leader, Pennsylvania State House of Representatives; Anne Anstine, chairman, Republican State Committee; Herbert Barness, Republican national committeeman; Barbara Hafer, State auditor general; Ernie Preate, State attorney general; and Joe Paterno, Pennsylvania State University football coach.

Address to the Nation on the Balanced Budget Amendment June 10, 1992

Tomorrow the House of Representatives faces a critical vote on the balanced budget amendment, and right now is the time for some straight talk about our national deficit. With our Federal debt averaging \$65,000 for the typical American family of four, I understand why the American people are fed up and why you are looking for change. I share your frustration, and I am determined to see things changed.

I am convinced that a balanced budget amendment is the only way to force the Federal Government, both the Congress and the executive branch, to live within its means. In fact, the very first address to Congress I made as President included a call for a balanced budget.

I confidently presented a balanced budget constitutional amendment to the Congress. I asked our Nation's elected leaders to put America's best interests first and to join me

in reaching a goal whose benefits will be measured in jobs and opportunity for ourselves and for our children.

Eighty percent of the American people agree: Government spending must be restrained and the budget balanced. Government is too big, and it spends too much. We are treating our national debt like the old fellow who borrowed money to pay off his loans. Inevitably, someone at some time must foot the bill. It is simply wrong to walk away from this mountain of debt and leave it to our kids.

Forty-four of our States have some kind of a constitutional requirement for a balanced budget. It's time for the Federal Government to follow their lead. We must balance the Federal budget without shifting the funding burden along to the States. We must pay our own way. Our future is at stake. Now is the time to pass a constitu-