

ARLEN SPECTER

October 1, 1981

After the Press Conference, Arlen said hello and asked me if I was busy for lunch. I went to Senate diningroom with him and Gordon and Bob Scott(?) former chairman of Allegheny County, who wants a federal judgeship. There had been some mixup in getting his name in there and Arlen wanted to talk about it.

Bob said he thought it was wise for Arlen not to "comment on every story that comes out in the papers."

"That was a conscious decision on our part, to keep quiet during our early period here. I didn't say a word in public for two months...I've just started to speak out now. Today's press conference was only the second one I've held. I've had press availabilities, where people would come if they wanted to; but this was only the second time I have called the press for a formal conference. I'll be saying more. I want to talk about immigration... There were good reasons for keeping quiet. I experienced it from the other end. When I was District Attorney I held press conference every day. I used to get 20 calls a day. I couldn't answer them; so I told the press that I would be available if they wanted to come in and ask. They wanted me to hold one for the AM's and one for the PM's; so I did every day. At 9:30 I had a conference for the Bulletin; and at 5:30 I held one for the news. And I learned something. The press wants you to answer their questions but they hate themselves for the coverage they give you. They want you to answer their calls, but they have a paranoia about being used. You can't avoid that reaction, but you don't have to encourage it."

Then Arlen said smilingly to Bob "I see you are comparing me to some others." Bob smiled, and Arlen said "John and I are getting along very well now. I worked very hard at. And he has responded beautifully. It's going well. The problem was the campaign of 1976--but I think it was more a problem

with some of John's friend and with his family than with John himself. But we've put all that behind us now. It took a lot of work. But things are very copacetic. And John is very good down here."

Bob mentioned Jack Anderson stroy saying that John was one of "least affective Senators". "It was printed in all the Pennsylvania papers."

Arlen said "Well that's wrong. John takes a rap from the media. But they are wrong. He's very effective down here. That same article said we were enemies. That's wrong--just wrong."

Mostly he and Bob chatted about judicial appointment politics. "That's a good question about how things work around here. Who makes the decision? Who makes the decision to sell AWACS? Who makes the decision to drop the AT & T case--some low level bureaucrat in the Commerce Department? Who makes the decision to appoint judges? The President tells us that the Senators will have a major say in the appointment to district courts, but not to appeals courts. We have a vacancy in the 3rd circuit. That is to be a presidential appointment. A fellow from the Justice Department called--an assistant to the Assistant Attorney General--and said they were going to move ahead quickly on that appointment. I told them that they could have a hell of a fight on their hands if they tried to make that appointment without consultation. The 53 Republican Senators are mad as hell about this. We had a caucus and said that if we didn't get a voice in this process, we would get Attorney General Smith up here for lunch. That's what they say around here when you want to have a fight with someone--they say have him to lunch. Anyway the fellow at the Justice Department asked 'who is your man?' I said 'Peckridge'. And he said, he's our man too.' Well, I said I wasn't going to fight over the principle so long as I got the right man. They call it a presidential decision. Certainly it's too

important to entrust to a lowly United States Senator. So who makes the decision--some assistant to the Assistant."

"I spent some of the morning looking at the Harrison Williams tapes. They've been exhorting us to go look at the tapes. I watched for 15 minutes and that was enough. I had read the Committee's Report. And I had read a lot of the testimony independently of the Report... It's terrible... If 1 guy is lucky enough to get to be a United States Senator, why.... He could make lots of money on the outside if he wanted to...Public officials on the take are the lowest."

Arlen (& Dan) said they saw my name on the back of Politics in America and seemed impressed. I guess that helps.