

Euglogy for Arlen Specter
Delivered October 16, 2012
by Tom Kline

I saw Arlen for the last time this past Thursday. I told him seven things which were important to me, which I now share with you.

First, that he was a great statesman who made our country a better place for our children and grandchildren. As the nation's flags fly at half staff and the front page of the *The Inquirer* proclaims him "a man of principle," I am reminded of Arlen telling me that he wrote "Life Among the Cannibals" to remind us where, as a nation, we should be -- not where we are. Today the nation reflects upon his legacy and lessons he sought to teach our country to his very last day.

Second, I told him that he was a wonderful husband, father and grandfather, for which his family is grateful. He and I shared the same view of family. We talked about it often. He wrote "Passion for Truth" for you Silvi, Perri, Lilli and Hatti. And for your children and grandchildren after you.

Third, we discussed for a final time a conundrum -- whether he was an older brother or a father to me. We never resolved, even as of last Wed, the issue. He told me one last time, in characteristic, convincing Arlen Specter logic, that he was too young to be my father.

Fourth, I thanked him a final time for being so kind to my wife, Paula, and to so many others -- when they were ill. I will never forget his visits that followed a long train ride home after a long week in Washington and how he wrote in his book of her and Ed Becker's and Carey Lackman's struggles which he witnessed firsthand and the unfairness and ravages of cancer. He will now be laid to rest within yards of Paula. Arlen wrote about his frustration--really anger-- in "Never Give In" that the war against cancer did not have the resources devoted to it to be won, and ultimately and ironically lost his inevitable battle to that cruel enemy which took many who were dear to him. He did the best he could do, which included his hand in guiding billions appropriated to cancer research, which some day may find that cure. He wrote "Never Give In" to remind us that this is a war and that it must be won.

Fifth, I confessed my great joy of the past two years -- practicing law within arm's reach of two Specters, and I thanked him for sharing the other Specter with me all of these years.

Sixth, I reminded him that there was still a future for him in comedy and maybe even one more gig. If you want to remember Arlen the way I remember Arlen, then go to You Tube before you go to bed tonight, and watch his comedy routine at the famous Carolines Comedy Club on Times Square in New York City from this past March. I was there for his New York debut. (It begins: "I've been Senate for 30 years practicing comedy.") As for this funeral-- let it be known that Arlen would have none of planning his own. He took a page from Bob Hope's book. When Hope's family asked what he'd like to see at his funeral, Hope said succinctly: "Surprise me." ... That one was a favorite of Arlen.

And seventh , I reminded him that the last time we played squash – Arlen this past July 3rd (just days before his new cancer diagnosis) that he still beat me off the front wall with that deceptive drop shot. I saw for a fleeting moment when I reminded him of his last winning point that special Arlen Specter smile for the very last time ... And, then he peacefully fell back asleep.

Arlen saw so many life lessons on that squash court. He reminded me and others often: "You can never be too far ahead, or too far behind."
He lived by that credo.

Arlen was great a public man, but a greater private man. He cared deeply about the things in life that matter most, and that started with Joan, and Steve, and Shanin and Tracey.

You left us better, and we will strive to your standards in our private and public lives, Arlen. That is our commitment and promise today back to you for what you have given to us.