

Phila Inquirer Thursday 3-25-93 "Setters"
'Sen. Specter, kill the federal center!'

I have often heard, but never fully appreciated, the concept that history is determined not by what occurred so much as by how it is recorded. I read with great interest on the Commentary Page of March 10 Sen. Arlen Specter's portrayal of what transpired at the March 1 meeting hosted by the Chamber of Commerce. By his account of the events of the meeting, it appears that he left "at halftime." For the record, I would like to memorialize the other half of that meeting.

While he recalled what Karen Daroff, an interior designer, believed about the federal center, he somehow forgot to mention the cogent arguments made by Dick Jones, president of Jackson-Cross Co., a leading authority not only in Philadelphia but also nationally, who clearly and articulately came out against the federal center.

While he recalled the comments of the president of the Philadelphia Board of Realtors, Kelly Wolfington, he forgot to mention my remarks at all. I happen to be president of the Building Owners' and Managers' Association of Philadelphia (BOMA), which represents 150 office buildings in the city. I represent the BOMA position, not only in Philadelphia but also nationally — against all federal buildings that will waste taxpayers' money.

I found it odd that the senator quoted David Marshall, who I believe is Philadel-

phia's largest federal landlord, on his suggestion for the General Services Administration to "get a seeing-eye dog" to help it look for quality alternatives, and yet forgot to mention his lease proposal. His offer would save the taxpayers \$370 million in cash over the 40-year lease. Wasn't this worthy of mention?

It was also stated that we are losing federal jobs in Philadelphia and we must have this building to keep them. Well, the state Department of Labor and Industry reports that, in 1976, there were 53,600 federal workers in Philadelphia and, in 1991, there were 56,000.

There were self-interested parties on both sides making arguments for and against the project. However, independent studies by both the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and Temple University, which Mayor Rendell mentioned for the first time at the meeting, clearly show how the federal project would cost the city money, erode the tax base and should not be built.

Senator, the universities have told you, the press has told you, the business community has told you and your friends have told you, it's time to be a statesman, not a politician. Kill the federal center!

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