

LETTERS

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Specter's support for federal building is derided

Arlen Specter's recent Commentary Page defense of the proposed new federal office building at 30th and Walnut Streets demonstrates clearly why discontent with government and politicians is growing by leaps and bounds. He has orchestrated an elaborate rationale, supported by special-interest spokesmen, in an ineffective attempt to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear or, more precisely, to make a local bonanza out of pork-barrel politics at the expense of the taxpayers.

The federal office complex is a waste of money because it is simply not necessary. Federal employees in Philadelphia have adequate quarters in local office buildings, and the 18 percent office-vacancy rate makes plenty of additional space available at bargain rates.

No major employer in the private sector would even think about building a million square feet of new office space in this market. When Sen. Specter, Mayor Rendell and the General Services Administration argue for dumping hundreds of millions of dollars of public money into a new federal office complex, they are simply proving how out of touch they are with the real interests of the people and how far they will go to serve their short-term special interests.

Sen. Specter seems blissfully unaware of the financial problems facing the country, or he has no idea about sensible long-range planning. With our national debt tripling in 15 years and our deficit running around \$300 billion a year, it is foolish, if not irresponsible, to propose spending hundreds of millions of dollars on a new building that may or may not save money in the long term, depending on which experts you believe.

This is not the time for aggressive facilities expansion; it is the time to hunker down and make do with what we have.

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veals the double standard our leaders apply to domestic terrorism. Who can doubt that the same kind of investigation that captured the World Trade Center terrorists would also root out the terrorists of the right-to-life movements?

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