

D.C.

Subject: Washington

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From: Dennis Burke <Burke@FastQ.com>

To: Doris Haddock <grannyd@mcttelecom.com>, Jim Haddock <gofish12@excite.com>

Dear Jim and Doris,

Take a look at the DuPont Circle speech from last year. Maybe, if you can do Washington next week, we should promote your arrival by train and, starting tomorrow, distribute this speech widely. We could ask your email list subscribers, and maybe wider lists, to meet you and join you.

Just one idea among many.

Dennis

Doris Remarks at Dupont Circle, Washington D.C.
Saturday, January 20, 2001

The Rising Sun

Thank you.

There are many angry people in America these days, and there are many things for them to be angry about. Anger is a normal and healthy reaction to unfairness, criminality and injustice.

As I am young enough to yet see with my own heart, let me tell you that there are sufficient injustices in the world to keep us angry all the time, unless we give ourselves some freedom from anger. It is only with that freedom that we can truly improve the world.

As I am old enough to have seen and felt a third of our nation's history, let me tell you that there has always been a sufficient supply of raw deals to keep us toasty warm with rage, if we are only capable of rage, instead of loving action.

Let me tell you about anger. If you find yourself one day in charge of a company or a community or a kingdom, and you discover that you now have enemies who would try to bring you down, here is your best strategy: Keep them angry about little issues, so that their energies will be spent before they get to the big issues that could truly threaten you.

There are indeed people who use their wealth and power against the interests of our human community. They must now be immensely entertained by the fact that so many people are upset about the outcome of an election, when in fact they were set to win either way it came out. It was the old, rigged coin toss: Heads I win; tails you lose. They laugh if you fight about the outcome of that toss. They laugh because the real issues, so much bigger, might pass with little notice or resistance.

Our imperfect Union, our ever-wobbling Republic, beset as it is by occasions of corruption and assassination, poor judgement and faulty

elections, moves ever forward toward gleaming goals of human kindness, fairness, equality and peace. Our nation moves upward despite all its errors and deficiencies because it is somehow blessed--is it not? --as a society founded upon a dream that has proven more durably inspiring than can ever long be damaged by any sad episode or corruption.

Our secret to success is that this dream has always been better than its dreamers. Together with our Constitution and our shared expectations, the dream has moved us forward. America is a more fair, more just place than it was 91 years ago when I was born.

What is the real issue today? What battle must we see through all foggy distractions? It is the fight to preserve that dream --the fight to preserve the elements of representative democracy required to continuously enact that dream into law.

If we choose to be angry, let it be in defense of our standing as a self-governing people. Let its poison harden us in battle against those who, in exchange for campaign contributions, sell policy and sell access to power --which belongs rightfully to all of us. For how can we serve each other's needs and preserve our very earth if we allow greedy interests to steal from us the reins of our own democracy? There's the issue, friends: not the theft of an election, but the theft of a democracy.

During the Constitutional Convention, Ben Franklin, I am sure you have heard, looked at a half-sun carved on President Washington's chair and said that he had some confidence that it represented a rising, not setting, sun for our country.

But we look at that symbol today and think about the condition of Congress and it might suggest something else. I understood it when I looked up into the Capitol Rotunda on a day I was arrested there while reading from the Bill of Rights, for the sun streamed through the high windows. Here is the house that should hold the bright sunlight of our democracy, and it is now turned into a house of political prostitution.

There is a house in Washington
They call the rising sun
And it's been the ruin of many a man
Whom bribery has undone

Never has there been a time in the history of our planet when we so needed intelligent, honorable, leaders who will cast self-interest into oblivion. We can no longer afford the bribery that now runs rampant in the temple of our democracy.

When a Senator or Congressman takes, from an industry or group or company or an immensely wealthy individual, a contribution that will help ensure that politician's political future, a conflict of interest has been created, and they know it and we all know it.

Now, I would tell you that we need a good law against this bribery, but we already have a fine one.

It is United States Code, Title 18, Chapter 11, Section 201: Bribery of public officials. It is short and delicious. Let me read it to you:

"Whoever directly or indirectly, corruptly gives, offers or promises anything of value to any public official with intent to influence any official act;
Or, being a public official, directly or indirectly, corruptly demands, seeks, receives, accepts, or agrees to receive or accept anything of value personally or for any other person or entity, in return for being influenced in the performance of any official act, shall be fined under this title or

not more than three times the monetary equivalent of the thing of value, whichever is greater, or imprisoned for not more than fifteen years, or both, and may be disqualified from holding any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States."

18. 11. 201. Under the unambiguous provisions of this law, political parties that extract protection money from industries are in violation of federal bribery law and require prosecution, as do lobbyists who curry favor through donations, and as do elected officials and candidates, if the promise legislative support in exchange for financial support.

Now, which Attorney General will dare enforce this law? For eight years, the Democrat's Attorney General would not. Will the Republican Attorney General do better? Heads they win; tails we lose. Here is the issue for our anger and our energy. We must put an end to the bribery that poisons our democracy and poisons all of us and our very earth. Let us not be distracted from this mission. We have come to a time when we must purify our public life --at least to the extent that a free and roudy people can do so.

If you ever worked for a public official and you were in the room when the candidate agreed to soften or change a position to satisfy a major contributor, let me know about it at GrannyD.com.

If you ever worked for a lobbyist and you were in the room when someone decided to offer money to a public official as a way to influence a vote, let me know about it at GrannyD.com.

Let us gather our evidence, so that no Attorney General can again hide from the obvious truth.

Let us fight to win, with only as much anger as we need to sharpen our resolve.

We shall end bribery as we know it. We're going to do it through anti-bribery actions all across America, and Americans will gather in Washington to finish the job. They will arrive not in anger, but in great, American joy. A fine day it will be when we break those bonds of corruption that now keep Americans from their proper destiny as a self-governing people.

My one foot's on the platform
The other's on the train
I'm going down to Washington
To cut that ball and chain!

We shall do it for all who have given themselves to the betterment and the defense of our great idea: a government of people, for people. We shall do it for our children and grandchildren and great grandchildren, who need for us to be brave and take action at this critical moment.

We shall do it so that old Ben Franklin, looking down from his cloud, will smile again to see that the sun is rising yet on our great experiment, and that our great Capitol building is filled with the warm light that ever streams from the hearts of our people.

Thank you.