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Subject: Draft for Tucson

Date: Tue, 23 Jul 2002 17:37:20 -0700

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Thank you.

I am glad indeed to be among my Arizona friends again. The last time I was here, it was because I walked here. Many of you walked with me and helped me. I have come back to thank you. Some of you were with me when we arrived in Washington, D.C. We were all a part of the effort to get corporate money out of American politics. We did part of the job, and it looks like the stock market will do the rest of it.

Arizona is a reform state. It didn't just start with your Clean Elections victory, ~~by the way~~, or your open meeting laws or your lobbyist gift ban or your campaign finance laws that limit maximum donations and require full disclosure. No, you have been a reform state from your very birth in 1912 —when I was two years old, by the way. You were denied statehood for several years because you were born in the era of the great Progressive Movement, and your proposed constitution gave the people the power to legislate by initiative, referendum and recall. That seemed like a pretty dangerous idea to President Taft and others. They turned you down.

But former president Teddy Roosevelt came out to Arizona to dedicate the dam that you named for him. You got that dam, by the way, because he got most of his Rough Riders for the Cuban War from Arizona and New Mexico, and so, when he

was president, he made sure that Arizona got the first big reclamation dam in the new federal water program. While he was here to dedicate the dam, he told you to drop the populist stuff from your constitution, get admitted to statehood, then put it all back in. And, God bless you, that's just what you did. And you have, ever since, been a laboratory turning out good reforms and, for balance, bad governors. (~~It is always a bad~~ ~~hair day in the Arizona governor's office!~~) ~~PRESENT COMPANY~~ ~~EXCEPTED, ALFREDO~~

The Progressive Movement, by the way --in case you haven't noticed, is back.

I am glad to have lived to see two of them.

At the turn of the 20th Century, it was the abusive practices of banks and railroads and other corporations that swept reform across America. Farmers and small business people organized because their livelihoods were at stake.

What happened as a result of that uprising, in a nutshell, was that the powers of government were expanded to keep the powers of the corporation in check --to keep corporations from overwhelming our human values and our ability to provide good lives for our families as free people. What Teddy Roosevelt began with his trust-busting, FDR continued with a wide range of government programs meant to balance the harm done to people by a harsh industrial culture.

What has happened in the last few years, in another nutshell, is that the government's ability to prevent corporate giantism and its abuse has been undermined and nearly emasculated. It was undermined for the benefit of the corporations who underwrite the political careers of their puppets in Congress, in the White House --Democrat and Republican White Houses--

and in the state houses. What the corporations got for their money was deregulation, and what we got for our taxes was —well, we got screwed.

The crisis this time around is more dangerous, for it is not just our ability to prosper that is at stake, but our ability --and nature's ability-- to survive at all.

the ability of the planet to live

Alaska's glaciers are melting. Seas are rising. Droughts and their fires sweep across our purple mountains and our fruited plains. Any mountain with coal under it is being sheared off and dumped in the next valley. More explosives are used against our mountains every day than we used in all of our recent wars --and why? So we can burn more coal in an already carbon-saturated environment. No respected scientist doubts any longer that we are destroying the planet rapidly. We have an obligation to our children. We will have to stand in front of our Maker --will we not?-- and explain how we properly cared for the great gift of life we were given --the birds and fishes and flowers of this Eden.

Pause

Even in this solar state, where is your solar energy? Your utilities are now opening another giant coal mine, this one across the line in New Mexico. What kind of madness is that? Isn't it enough that you are destroying the lives of Hopi and Navajo up on Black Mesa --destroying their land and draining their water-- so that you can heat your pools and cool your dog houses?

Swimming

This kind of cultural and environmental injustice and madness follows naturally from the presumption of corporate leaders --they are as stupidly short sighted as they are greedy, and yes, I'm talking to the presidents of Salt River Project and Arizona Public Service --Tucson Electric is trying harder. Let's

Arizona Public Service

pick on APS. They should be ashamed of themselves. They generate one megawatt of solar energy. That is it, of their 8,000 megawatt total. And they ballyhoo in environmental fairs and green-this and green-that programs how they are trying. If you look at their annual reports, they are all about how wonderful it is that demand is growing, and that they are burning coal for nearly half their demand. Now, maybe we need to revisit the idea that utilities should be for-profit *Salt River Project* corporations. Maybe they are killing us. SRP isn't much better, and is leading the way for coal mining. You need to put up some solar cells and put these sociopaths in lockup.

Do they get away with this because there is no political leadership, here or in Washington?

Where, indeed, are the leaders?

If we had any, we would expect that they might come to us and say, "Well now, we must all conserve these resources. We must stop burning coal, which is the largest contributor to greenhouse warming, and we must move rapidly to solar and wind and other sustainable energies. We must make better cars and design cities that people can move around in without trashing the planet." These leaders of ours would tell us that our children's lives are in the balance and that we must all pull together with sacrifice and creativity, and they would remind us that there are more new jobs in a green economy than in a dying carbon economy.

How can it be that this has not happened?

There is only one possible explanation: that there are people so greedy and so assured that their vast wealth will always find them a safe and comfortable place on a dying planet that they

think they need not worry about the costs of their rampages, and that these people have, through distortions of our political process and real thuggery, taken over the top positions where they can use every crisis as a new opportunity to further their position and advance their power over us --stealing our freedom, stealing out common wealth, misrepresenting our values around the world and bringing us accelerating harm and misery. *and hate.*

Is there another explanation? }

↘ Where is the leader who will move us toward a healthy, sustainable future?

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→ Who will defend the health and extent of our middle class --which is the necessary foundation of our democracy? Where is the leader who will say, "Dear People, our democracy rests on the solid ground of a strong middle class, and so we must find ways to eliminate the financial exploitation of our families --we must help them to rise, not cause them to fall."

Surely the leaders who represent our values and our interests would say this and would care about this. They would point to the big-box retail stores that destroy all the family businesses throughout a region, turning its people into greeters, and they would tell us, "The money you save at these stores is destroying your lives. Don't be bribed into destroying your towns and your fast-receding middle class."

Is there an explanation for why our leaders are not telling us this truth?

Who can lead us to a time and place where we have power over our own lives, the resources, and time to care for our

friends and family, and the leisure to live proper lives under God's sun and moon?

Pause

Well, I know you are fighting these fights. But they can wear you down, as they never seem to stop coming. I want you to understand that the American Dream is not a leaky old boat that always needs fixing. It is not an old house that always needs repair. No, this high-reaching society of ours is not in trouble from its own age or infirmity. It is in trouble because it is under attack. We are engaged in a cultural war, and we had better wise up to it and get rid of the leaders who are very clearly not on the people's side.

The corporate elites who have declared war on us give no quarter. They will shut down the factories we need without blinking. They will refuse us the medical care we need without blinking. They will burn coal when the sun is all around us. They will push for growth when they should be pushing conservation. They will finance the careers of politicians who will make nice speeches to us but will participate in our destruction without blinking.

Dear friends, we have our families to save. We have our planet to save. We have our water and our air and all the creatures of nature --including ourselves and our friends-- to protect. What a great and glorious fight we are in. But let us know we are in it. We did not declare this war against corporations and their wealthy elite, but they have declared it against us. Let us go for victory. Let us limit the size of these beasts, limit their political participation, limit their ability to ruin our family business and our needed jobs. They act like dictatorships, not only to their own employees, but to all of us. They are a hazard to us and they must change or go.

*limit
sensitivity*

Can we survive without the little darlings? Yes, with some inconveniences, of course. Can we survive if we let them continue on as they are? Clearly not. What do you do with a villain who trashes your world, threatens the peace and happiness of your town and family, and sends your children off to its selfish wars? You put its picture up in the post office. You go after it until this public enemy is caged and the world is at peace with leaders and institutions that represent the people's highest values and aspirations.

I suspect you will have to talk each other into running for office before you will have such leaders. So do it. And work for your friends who are indeed running for office. Some of them are in this room, and this is your opportunity to do something that matters. Say you will help.

And don't stop Arizona's assembly-line of reform ideas. Get going on instant runoff voting or proportional representation. Those reformers are here with a booth today. Go say hello. Go learn about what that reform can mean to you and your children in Arizona.

Rawse

I know it's hard sometimes. Americans are tired, overworked, underpaid and sometimes we are filled with despair over the condition of our government and the institutions of American business. Can we save our American Dream and the free democracy that powers it? Sometimes we doubt that we have the energy to do it. We doubt that our efforts will make a difference. We are like the nearly-unconscious man in a house full of gas fumes. He knows he must crawl out to survive, but he is tired and tempted to just close his eyes. But we cannot do that. Too many wonderful people have given their lives for this democracy, this dream entrusted to us today. We have to find the time. We have to find the energy. We have to find the

optimism to get up and defend our Bill of Rights and the rest of our Constitution.

I am an old woman. I have seen a lot of bending and twisting of our dear Constitution. Thank goodness we always had, until now, an honest Supreme Court to set things right. But we now have reason to worry in this country.

A year and a half ago, George Bush swore to uphold our Constitution. The Constitution gives to Congress the power to declare war. It does not empower the president to put people in jail without attorneys or without the right to be reasonably charged within a reasonable time. It does not provide that American citizens can be deemed enemies of the state and deprived of their rights. It does not provide for the setting of some Americans against others with an elaborate snooping campaign. If we are indeed at war, then our enemies are soldiers who have rights under the Geneva Convention. If we are not at war, then citizens have rights. ~~And~~ are we torturing people? Are we arranging to have them tortured by other countries? What do we call all of this except by the dreaded name that I hesitate to say aloud? Are we in danger of becoming a fascist state?

Here is a man in our White House who was not properly elected but who calmed us by assuring us that he would bring us together. He brought us together all right. We come together to fight him so that we can save our world's environment and world peace. We have come together, Mr. Bush.

In future years, historians will write in amazement that the Bush Administration, after colossal incompetence that allowed a historic crime to take 3,000 American lives, took that crime for his political advantage and brought America into its moment of

greatest danger. It will be called the time when America almost lost itself, its values, its soul, --almost lost the courage of its Constitution --the Constitution that is indeed the First Wonder of the Civilized World, if we can keep it.

I'm not afraid to die for my freedoms, Mr. Bush. Don't make me safe from terrorists at the expense of my freedom. I gladly accept risks for my freedom. I have the courage of my Constitution, because I owe a debt of courage to all who gave their lives for my freedoms. I fear you, Mr. Bush --not Osama, not Saddam-- you. You are the threat to America and its Constitution. As one citizen, I ask you to resign for the good of a great nation.

If any of you out there are tipster spies, make a report on what I just said and send it to your block captains. Let them put me in jail. It won't be the first time, ~~and I always meet interesting people there~~. They have jails enough for us all. This has been coming.

But we will fight to keep our Constitution. We must do that in the short term, and we must all very soon go to Washington and march to stop a trumped-up war that will have as its first victim the remains of our Constitution.

And in the longer term, we must defend the health and wealth of our middle class against the neo-colonialism of today's corporate elite, and we must defend our right to elect people who will represent our interests, our values in the halls of our government. We must rise up and do this by a great new generation of courageous leaders. ELECTING

We must manage our own lives and our communities in responsible ways that do not require the exploitation of other

generations or other parts of the world.

I am proud to be with you Arizona reformers, because I know the good you do. I ask that you let your energies rise. Join with others around the nation and around the world in a new progressive wave to save our democracy and our planet while there is yet a chance. Be brave. Be bold. Fight like hell for your values and our common dreams of brotherhood and sisterhood on this, our garden earth.

Thank you.