

GREENHOUSE EATS OFFAL FOR BREAKFAST

I was at a loss for words about Arlen “Never Know Whether He’s Haggis or Scrapple” Specter’s loss on Tuesday. In the Village, our tragic figures never have the glory of Shakespeare or the Greeks, but rather only the tawdriness of Hollywood, and the whole thing really just made me sad—sad about the state of our politics.

Luckily, Linda Greenhouse has said most of what I would have said and more. You really ought to read the whole thing—so I’m just going to quote the last few lines.

Having spent four years in Albany covering the New York Legislature early in my journalism career, I don’t regard myself as naïve about politicians, their foibles or their inevitable compromises. What I mean to convey by these reflections on Senator Specter’s trajectory is not surprise so much as sadness — sadness because he knew better.

Specter knew better—and even admitted as much, which is more than most of his colleagues do. But the ideology of Specter-for-Specter nevertheless always won out.