

7-31-1984

## Jackson Rally Speech

Geraldine Ferraro

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### Recommended Citation

Ferraro, Geraldine, "Jackson Rally Speech" (1984). *Speeches*. 26.

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JACKSON, MS 7/30/84

Thank you, Congressman Bowen. It's a pleasure for me to be here, and it's a special pleasure to be introduced by a former colleague in the House of Representatives.

Much as Congressman Bowen did a great job, I'd like to do some further introducing.

My name is Geraldine Ferraro. You don't know very much about me. So far, all you know is my name -- and that I talk funny.

I want you to know I'm working on the way I talk. My good friend Jamie Whitten has been giving me lessons, and the next time I come down here I hope to sound just like Jamie.

For this trip, though, I'll try to talk a little more slowly than usual. And you try to listen a little faster.

I want to tell you about myself. Who I am, what I've done, what my values are.

I've always worked to earn the things I've wanted. In this campaign, I want your support. I want your vote. But I expect to have to earn them.

I learned early in life how much could be achieved through hard work. I learned by watching my mother, widowed with two children, go back to work to insure that her kids would have their shot at the American Dream.

As a teacher in the New York public schools, I saw the same belief in hard work I had learned at home. Those kids studied hard, because their parents -- many of them immigrants like my own father -- knew that a good education was the key that opened doors in America.

While I taught school during the day, I went to law school nights. After I passed the bar exam, I put my career on hold so I could stay home with my three children.

~~When the time was right, I went back to work.~~ I became an assistant district attorney, and I put my share of criminals behind bars.

I didn't just talk about being tough on crime; I was tough. When we got a conviction, it stuck. I never had a conviction overturned on appeal.

When I taught school, I taught the importance of hard work and fair play. When I was a prosecutor, I felt the same way about the rules. I believed then, and I believe now, that if you obey the law, you should be protected. But if you break the law, you must pay for your crime.

After four years as a prosecutor, I ran for Congress. The political experts said I couldn't win. But I put my faith in the people, and together we proved the experts wrong.

I won their support because I understood their values. They were my values too.

They are values shared by Americans everywhere. Hard work --- and plenty of it. Pride -- the kind that comes from earning your own way. Opportunity -- the promise that nobody will be denied a fair chance. Security -- parks your kids can play in and streets we can walk on. Patriotism -- love of our country, and special pride we have in our flag. And hope -- hope that our children and their children will have a better and more prosperous and more secure future.

jackson/3

Those are the values that my mother taught me, and that my husband John and I have taught our children. They are the values I will take with me to the Vice Presidency.

I've told you today about how close I am to my mother. Some of you may have heard that I call her on the phone every day.

All of you who have grown children know how much it means to hear from. You know how proud you feel to hear your daughter's or your son's voice.

This is my first trip to Mississippi. But I'm going to be calling again. I want the people of Mississippi to be proud when they hear my voice. Proud that it's a voice that speaks to your hopes, talks about your values, and understands the future that together we can build for America's future.

That's what this campaign is all about. Today we started it here in Mississippi, and over the next three months we're going to take it to every corner of this great country. And when we're through, we're going to give the American people a government they can be proud of.

Thank you.