

8-7-1984

Ferraro Stump Speech

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Recommended Citation

Ferraro, Geraldine, "Ferraro Stump Speech" (1984). *Campaign Materials*. 50.
https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice_presidential_campaign_materials_1984/50

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FERRARO STUMP SPEECH

Horace Greely was right when he wrote those famous words years ago: "Go west young woman."

Well maybe not so young. And maybe those weren't his exact words.

But I have loved every minute of this trip through California, Oregon and now this tremendous welcome in Seattle.

And I've taken Mr. Greely's advice to heart. We're going to go West between now and November 6th so that Ronald Reagan can return to the West on January 20th, 1985.

* * *

I'm here today to share with you a message I'm hearing everywhere I travel.

I hear it from people who've stopped me on the streets of Mississippi and New York. They tell me they haven't voted in years, but this year they can't wait to vote.

I hear it from working people who voted Republican in 1980. Now they understand that you can't live like a Republican in America unless you vote like a Democrat.

It is a message of enthusiasm, of energy, of hope that America is opening the door to a new day.

The message I hear is that the experts who say this election is over before it starts are wrong -- and won't it be fun to watch their expressions on election night?

And if you hear a little desperation creeping into the Republican rhetoric, it's because they're hearing the same message.

The message is that Fritz Mondale and Gerry Ferraro are going to win this election and reclaim the White House for the American people.

* * *

Even in these early days of the campaign, I sense a great stirring among the American people, a troubling sense that while we may be living well for now, something's not right.

I think I understand that concern. It reflects something very deep in America's character.

_____ years ago, a young man named Dominick Ferraro arrived in New York from Marcianise, Italy. Now let me be honest. He was not wearing tattered clothes and carrying all his possessions on his back. He was well educated. He had a profession as an engineer. But he was prepared to start over again, to make that uncertain journey, because for him as for every immigrant who came to these shores, America was the future. And he was fiercely determined to build a better future for himself and for his children.

He married a remarkable woman. I have been lucky enough to have her as my mother.

She is driven by that same passion -- a deep, unspoken conviction that there is no greater good, no sacrifice too great, no finer reward than to build a better future for her children.

I'm very grateful for that legacy, but I don't believe for a minute that it is unique in America.

From the children of the Mayflower to the children of Ellis Island, all of us have inherited the promise that each generation of Americans passes to the next: the promise to keep building America's foundation so that our children will stand even taller.

And that's why I believe Americans are troubled in 1984. For they know that the path we're on -- at home and abroad -- breaks faith with the future.

We're drawing down America's capital, not building it up.

We're financing today's prosperity with record deficits that cast a giant shadow as far as the eye can see.

The nuclear arms race speeds ahead while the leaders of the two mightiest nations on earth prefer exchanging insults rather than solid negotiating proposals to end the arms race.

Even our most cherished resources themselves -- our rivers and our lakes and our forests -- have been placed in the hands of those who would exploit for today rather than nurture for tomorrow.

My friends, it's not right to betray the legacy of our parents by breaking the promise to our children.

It's not right. The American people know it is not right. And that's why, on November 6th, they will reject the politics of buy now and pay later, of arm now and negotiate later, of rhetoric for schools now and excellence for schools later, of balanced budget amendments now and balanced budgets later.

The time to build is not later. It is now.

And the time to start is on November 6th with the election of a new government -- a Mondale-Ferraro government.

* * *

The America I'm seeing is troubled by something else.

It's troubled because we're cheating on another part of America's legacy: the principle of fairness, that no select group gets special treatment, that we all play by the same set of rules.

But when 5% of the wealthiest Americans get _____% of the tax cuts, is our government playing fair?

When an economic program is built on throwing people out of work first and then financing a recovery with huge deficits next, is that playing fair?

When _____ million more people slide into poverty over the past four years but they call the recovery a success, is that playing fair?

When social security for our older Americans is seen as ripe for picking, but \$_____ army screwdrivers come as a big surprise, is that playing fair?

When our government tries to support segregated schools with our tax dollars but cuts dollars for loans to send our children to college, is that playing fair?

I don't think so either.

I believe Americans want their government to be efficient and to care.

Americans want the strongest defense in the world, but they also know that it must be built on the most competitive economy in the world.

Americans certainly want prosperity, but they want to achieve it with justice and fairness for all.

And that is the kind of America that a Mondale-Ferraro Administration will work to build.

We will look ahead, not back.

We will stop casting blame and start taking responsibility.

With Fritz Mondale in the White House, America will make the hard choices that are needed to restore our house to fiscal order. Some taxes have to be raised. Some costs will have to be cut. But we will make those sacrifices fairly, and we will assure that the rewards are shared fairly as well.

Our America is accepting the challenges of the future. It is investing in the plant and equipment, the roads and bridges, the minds and educations that will create tomorrow's jobs. It is insisting that everyone plays by the same rules of world trade, and then beating our competition. It is renewing our commitment to excellence in education. It is reclaiming America's rightful place in the world as the leader for peace.

And with a new sense of urgency and purpose, it is negotiating to stop the nuclear arms race.

I see an America that is pulling together for the national good, not pulling apart for our separate advantage.

I see an America where we all remember that each of us has to give a little ground so that all of us can gain ground together.

Most of all, with your help in the next three months, I see America keeping our shared promise: our commitment to build a safer world and a stronger America for our children.

* * *

We stand today on the threshold of a new century.

I believe it can be America's century.

But we cannot walk backwards into the future.

We must seize the future -- each of us and together -- and make it ours.

* * *

Thank you very much.