Atlanta Rally Speech

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ATLANTA, GEORGIA
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1984

The pollsters and the pundits say we can’t win in November. They’ve decided the race before the first voting booth opens. But I want to take my own scientific, objective survey right here.

Are we going to win in November?

Are we going to send Walter Mondale to the White House and Ronald Reagan back to the ranch?

You bet we are.

A few days ago, George Bush asked a crowd in Columbus, Ohio: “Do you know what wins elections?” And he answered that question by pulling out his wallet and saying, “It’s who puts money into this and who takes money out.”

That says it all. That spontaneous gesture of selfishness tells us more about the true character of this Administration than all their pre-paid commercials.
On Monday, I read in the papers that poor George Bush still didn't understand what was wrong with his Comment. So, let me explain it one more time for him.

Of course we care about money. But let's get something straight: this is an election, not an auction. And the United States government is not up for sale to the highest bidder.

You care about peace. On Friday, Mr. Reagan sat down with Mr. Gromyko and they had a talk. That was a good sign, and I hope serious progress was made.

But you deserve a president who calls on the Soviets to negotiate an arms control agreement on his first day in office, not on the first day of his re-election campaign.

You care about reducing tensions. In Central America, this Administration is militarizing a conflict that should be settled peacefully, and it is Americanizing a conflict that is primarily local.

I say it's time to stop the covert war in Nicaragua.

You care about personal freedom. I don't want Jerry Falwell to pick the next two justices on the Supreme Court.
I want a Supreme Court that respects our rights and stays out of our homes, our churches, and our synagogues.

You care about your neighbors. When your neighbors lose their jobs, you know it's time for the President to lose his.

Right now, we're staggering under the largest trade deficit in our history. Let's be clear: trade means jobs. We must push our exports and demand that our trading partners open their doors as wide as we've opened ours.

This President doesn't understand that. He tells the unemployed to check the want ads. The problem is, they don't get all those foreign newspapers where your jobs are being advertised now.

You care about being fair to the disadvantaged.

According to this Administration, if you're a defense contractor, $2,000 for a thirteen-cent nut is not too high a price. But if you're an elderly woman living on Social Security, the minimum benefit of $122 a month is extravagant and must be cut.
If you're a Pentagon supplier, $7,000 for a coffee machine is market value. Now, you don't have to be Mr. Coffee to know that's too much. But if you're a young mother trying to feed your baby, this administration says $35 a month will bust the budget.

If you're homeless, they say you like it that way. If you're without a job, they say vote with your feet. And if you're hungry, they say eat cheese.

If that's his idea of compassion, I say let's vote with our hearts, take away his job, and send him back home in November.

If you're one of thousands of disabled cut off by this administration's cruel disability policy, they say "sue us." And then they cut the legal services programs that let you do that. But if you're a big bank failing because of mismanagement, they say: tell us how much you need and we'll send it.

And if you're a veteran, this president said you don't need job training. I want an administration that not only relies on its soldiers when they go to war, but also supports them when the fighting ends.
THIS ADMINISTRATION has a calculator where its heart should be, and that's not only a lack of compassion, it's a failure of leadership.

Our presidents are not elected to rule, they're supposed to lead. They're not chosen for their salesmanship, they're needed for their leadership.

Nowhere has this Administration's failure of leadership cost us more than in Lebanon. In the last 17 months, more Marines have been killed in Beirut than anywhere else since Vietnam. There have been three bombings. The first time, there was no gate. The second time, the gate was open. The third time, the gate wasn't even installed.

The first incident was a tragedy; the second showed neglect; and the third is a disgrace.

What has been just as disgraceful is the President's handling of this disaster. Leaders are tested in moments of crisis, not in television ads. And at this moment, President Reagan is failing the critical test.
HE BEGAN BY DENYING THE TRUCK GOT INTO THE COMPOUND,
WHICH IT DID. THEN HE BLAMED HIS PREDECESSORS, WHICH HE SOON
APOLOGIZED FOR. LET ME REMIND YOU, WHEN THE HOSTAGES WERE
HELD IN IRAN, ALL THROUGH THAT 14-MONTH ORDEAL PRESIDENT
CARTER NEVER ONCE BLAMED SOMEONE ELSE. AND I FOR ONE WAS
PROUD OF MY PRESIDENT.

NOW, AT LAST, MR. REAGAN SAYS HE'S RESPONSIBLE.
OKAY, SO TELL ME WHAT THAT MEANS.

IN DECEMBER 1983, AFTER THE BOMBING OF THE MARINE BARRACKS,
HE SAID HE WAS RESPONSIBLE. IT DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING THEN, AND
IT APPARENTLY DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING NOW.

WHEN PRESIDENT REAGAN TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EMBASSY
BOMBING, DOES HE MEAN HE DIDN'T HEED THE MANY WARNINGS THAT
PRECEDED THE ATTACK?

DOES HE MEAN HE DIRECTED OUR PEOPLE TO BE MOVED INTO AN
UNSAFE BUILDING?

DOES HE MEAN HE DIRECTED THE MARINE GUARD BE REPLACED
WITH LOCAL MILITIA?
OR DOES HE MEAN, AS IT DID IN 1983, THAT HE WANTS TO END THE DISCUSSION AND NO ONE WILL ANSWER FOR NEGLIGENCE?

IF THE ANSWER TO THESE QUESTIONS IS YES AND HE DID MAKE THOSE DECISIONS, THEN THIS PRESIDENT WAS SERIOUSLY NEGLIGENT. HE MUST PAY A PRICE. IF THE ANSWER IS NO AND HE WAS NOT INVOLVED, THEN THIS PRESIDENT WAS NOT PAYING ATTENTION AND IS NOT IN CHARGE. EITHER WAY, HE LET US DOWN AND SHOULD PAY A PRICE.

AND TAKING RESPONSIBILITY IS AN EMPTY GESTURE.
I want a President who worries more about protecting American lives, and less about protecting his own image.

Leadership is not just telling people what you think they want to hear, it's telling them what they need to know. It's not just promising people more money, it's asking them to contribute to this country.

Name the last time Ronald Reagan took the lead on an issue in advance of his time. Walter Mondale was one of a handful of Senators who opposed putting multiple warheads on our missiles because, as he said, the Soviets would soon catch up and do the same thing. We should have listened to Walter Mondale then because we would be safer today if we had.

Name the last time Ronald Reagan took a chance for social justice. Mr. Mondale has. And the most recent chance he took was to select me to be his running mate. Everyone talks about equal opportunity, but when I take the oath of office as the first female Vice President in American history, I will know that that historic, moral victory was made possible by Fritz Mondale.
Some people are trying to make patriotism an issue in this campaign. But that is not the issue in 1984. No one is more proud of this country than I am, and no one is more patriotic than an immigrant's daughter nominated by her party to be Vice President of the United States.

The issue is how best to serve our country. In my opinion, the least worthy way to serve our country is with a commercial of swelling music and phony good cheer made on Madison Avenue.

What this Administration doesn't understand is that when someone finds jobs for the eight and a half million unemployed Americans — that will be a patriotic act.

When we educate our children, we build our country's future — and that will be a patriotic act.

When we keep the peace, young men don't die — and that will be a patriotic act.
WHEN WE FINALLY STOP THE ARMS RACE, WE'LL ENHANCE OUR SAFETY — AND THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

WHEN WE PASS THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT, WE OPEN DOORS EVERYWHERE — AND THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

It may be that Madison Avenue patriotism is smart politics. But I don't think so, and even if it is, I won't do it. I'm in this election to fight for what I think is right, and to stand for what I believe in.

I think it's right to stop the arms race; to restore fairness; to fight for American jobs; and to protect our environment. And if you agree, the time to help us is not later. It's now.

The time to help us fight is now later.
The time to register new voters is not later. It's now.
The time to create jobs is not later. It's now.
The time to freeze the arms race is not later. It's now.
The time to educate young people.
The time for Fritz Mondale to become President, and Gerry Ferraro to become Vice President, is not later. It's now.