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Philadelphia Rally Speech

Geraldine Ferraro

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PHILADELPHIA ITALIAN MARKET

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1984

THANK YOU, TOM, FOR THAT WONDERFUL INTRODUCTION. ON NOVEMBER 6, THE PEOPLE OF THIS DISTRICT ARE GOING TO RE-ELECT A GREAT LEADER AND A FIGHTER FOR A BETTER PHILADELPHIA, CONGRESSMAN TOM FOGLIETTA.

LET ME ALSO RECOGNIZE THREE TERRIFIC PUBLIC OFFICIALS. STATE SENATOR VINCE FUMO, CITY COMPTROLLER JOE VIGNOLI, AND THE CLERK OF THE COURT OF DEEDS, RON DONATUCCI. NO QUESTION ABOUT IT, THE DEMOCRATIC SLATE IN PHILADELPHIA HAS THE KIND OF ETHNIC BALANCE I REALLY APPRECIATE.

THE EXAMPLE OF THESE FINE LEADERS -- AND THOUSANDS OF OTHERS -- IS PROOF OF HOW FAR ITALIAN-AMERICANS HAVE COME AND HOW MUCH WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED IN A SHORT TIME. BUT IT IS NOT SURPRISING. FOR WITHIN THE OVERALL SUCCESS STORY THERE ARE COUNTLESS INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS STORIES.

THE STORY OF MY FAMILY IS ONE OF THESE. IT IS A SPECIAL STORY, NOT BECAUSE IT IS UNUSUAL OR UNIQUE, BUT BECAUSE IT IS SO MUCH LIKE THE STORY OF SO MANY ITALIAN-AMERICAN FAMILIES.

MY FATHER CAME HERE FROM THE SMALL TOWN OF MARCIANISE, IN CASSERTA, BELIEVING THAT IF YOU WORKED HARD AND KEPT FAITH WITH YOUR GOD, YOU COULD CARVE OUT A BETTER FUTURE FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY.

MY MOTHER SHARED THAT BELIEF. AND WHEN SHE WAS WIDOWED WITH TWO YOUNG CHILDREN, SHE WENT BACK TO WORK IN NEW YORK CITY'S GARMENT DISTRICT TO MAKE SURE MY BROTHER AND I WOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITIES SHE NEVER HAD.

AND BECAUSE SHE WORKED HARD, / I WORKED HARD, / I WASN'T ABOUT TO LET HER DOWN, / AFTER COLLEGE I TAUGHT IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW YORK BY DAY AND WENT TO LAW SCHOOL BY NIGHT, / IT WAS HARD WORK, / BUT I OWED THAT TO HER. /

EACH OF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN. YOUR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS CAME TO THIS COUNTRY WITH DREAMS FOR A BETTER FUTURE FOR THEIR CHILDREN. THEY SACRIFICED AND STRUGGLED AND WATCHED AS THEIR KIDS GREW UP. AND THEY WERE REWARDED WHEN WE BUILT BETTER LIVES FOR OURSELVES AND OUR CHILDREN. IT IS AS TRUE TODAY AS IT EVER WAS: "NOI PONIAMO I NOSTRI SOGNI NEI FIGLI --- E CON FEDE IN DIO, LAVORIAMO AFFINCHÉ QUESTI SOGNI SI REALIZZINO."

IN THESE NEIGHBORHOODS IN SOUTH PHILLY, THOSE TRADITIONS ARE HONORED TODAY. IN THESE NEIGHBORHOODS, AS IN LITTLE ITALY IN NEW YORK CITY, THE NORTH END IN BOSTON, AND SO MANY OTHERS THROUGHOUT THIS COUNTRY, WE HAVE KEPT FAITH WITH OUR PARENTS.

BUT WE ALSO MUST KEEP FAITH WITH THE NEXT GENERATION. AND IT'S BECAUSE WE CARE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN THAT THE OUTCOME OF THIS ELECTION IS SO IMPORTANT.

I LOOK AT MY CHILDREN AND I SAY TO MYSELF: WHAT DO I WANT FOR THEM? AND THE ANSWER IS, I WANT FOR MY CHILDREN AND FOR EVERY CHILD A WORLD AT PEACE.

RONALD REAGAN HAS PUT ARMS CONTROL ON THE BACK BURNER FOR FOUR YEARS. IMAGINE WHAT HE WOULD DO WITH FOUR MORE YEARS. STOPPING THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE IS NOT JUST ANOTHER ISSUE. IT'S THE ISSUE IN THIS CAMPAIGN.

I WANT FOR OUR CHILDREN CLEAN AIR AND PURE WATER. WE'RE TRUSTEES OF OUR ENVIRONMENT -- NOT ITS OWNERS, AND WE OWE IT TO OUR CHILDREN TO PASS THIS EARTH ON TO THEM AS BEAUTIFUL AS IT WAS WHEN WE RECEIVED IT.

I WANT FOR EVERY CHILD IN THIS COUNTRY THE SAME OPPORTUNITY MY OWN CHILDREN HAVE -- TO DEVELOP THEIR TALENTS, OPEN THEIR MINDS, AND GO WHEREVER THEIR DREAMS WILL TAKE THEM.

AND LET ME MENTION WHAT I DON'T WANT FOR OUR CHILDREN. I DON'T WANT TO HEAR, AS I HAVE IN CALIFORNIA AND OHIO, THAT TOXIC CHEMICALS ARE SEEPING INTO GROUND WATER.

I DON'T WANT TO STICK OUR CHILDREN WITH THE BILL FOR OUR DEFICITS. I DON'T WANT TO SADDLE THEM WITH A RUNAWAY ARMS RACE. AND I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE THEM A GOVERNMENT THAT INTRUDES IN THEIR PRIVATE LIVES.

BUT MOST OF ALL, I WANT THEM TO HAVE THE SAME VALUES WE ALL LEARNED AS CHILDREN.

AND HERE'S WHERE WALTER MONDALE AND I PART COMPANY WITH OUR OPPONENTS. GEORGE BUSH HAS SAID THIS ELECTION IS ONLY ABOUT PUTTING MONEY INTO THE VOTER'S WALLET. OF COURSE WE CARE ABOUT MONEY, BUT THAT'S ONLY ONE THING, NOT EVERYTHING WE CARE ABOUT.

WE CARE ABOUT PEACE, WE CARE ABOUT EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, AND THE ONE THING OUR OPPONENTS JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND IS THAT WE CARE ABOUT EACH OTHER.

I WOULDN'T BE IN POLITICS IF I DIDN'T CARE ABOUT PEOPLE. AND THIS COUNTRY WOULDN'T BE SO GREAT IF IT WERE NOT ALSO GOOD.

THINK OF WHAT THE NEXT FOUR YEARS WOULD BE LIKE IF RONALD REAGAN WERE RE-ELECTED. THEN, THINK OF WHAT OUR FUTURE COULD BE LIKE WITH WALTER MONDALE AS PRESIDENT.

LET OTHERS SAY THIS ELECTION CANNOT BE WON. I SAY IT CAN BE. I SAY IT MUST BE. AND I SAY, WITH YOUR HELP, IT WILL BE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.