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Birmingham School Address: Rough Draft

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Rough Draft - Hungarian Families Speech, Toledo, OH
9/11/84

I FEEL A SPECIAL KINSHIP WITH ALL OF THE PEOPLE IN THIS AUDITORIUM THIS MORNING BECAUSE, LIKE MANY OF YOU, MY ROOTS ARE WORKING CLASS AND MY PARENTS CAME TO THIS COUNTRY FROM ANOTHER LAND.

MY FATHER CAME TO AMERICA THINKING THE STREETS WOULD BE PAVED WITH GOLD. HE FOUND NOT GOLD, BUT GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES. WHEN HE DIED, MY MOTHER WENT TO WORK IN NEW YORK'S GARMENT DISTRICT SO THAT I COULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THOSE OPPORTUNITIES AND TRY TO GET AHEAD IN THE WORLD. MY PARENTS TAUGHT ME THAT THERE IS NO GREATER GOOD, NO FINER REWARD, THAN TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN.

MY MOTHER AND FATHER FIRST SHOWED ME THE IMPORTANCE OF THE VALUES THAT CONTINUE TO GUIDE ME TODAY. THEY SHOWED ME, THROUGH THEIR EXAMPLE, HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO WORK HARD, TELL THE TRUTH, AND CARE ABOUT OTHERS. BECAUSE FAMILIES HELP FORM WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE WE ARE, STRONG FAMILIES ARE AN IMPORTANT FOUNDATION FOR THE STRENGTH AND STABILITY OF THE COUNTRY ITSELF.

IT'S FROM OUR FAMILIES THAT WE LEARN TO BE GOOD CITIZENS, TO OBEY THE LAW, TO WORK HARD, TO GET ALONG WITH OUR NEIGHBORS, AND TO LOVE OUR COUNTRY. FAMILIES TEACH THE BEDROCK VALUES THAT ARE SO IMPORTANT TO OUR NATION.

SO WHEN GOVERNMENT TOUCHES FAMILY LIFE -- AND IT DOES EVERY DAY -- WE NEED TO MAKE SURE IT SUPPORTS, NOT WEAKENS, AMERICAN FAMILIES.

BEFORE GOVERNMENT ACTS, WE NEED TO ASK OURSELVES A SIMPLE QUESTION: WILL THIS ACTION HELP OR HURT OUR FAMILIES?

I'M AFRAID THAT QUESTION ISN'T BEING ASKED IN WASHINGTON TODAY.

RONALD REAGAN EXTOLLS THE VALUES OF THE FAMILY, BUT ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS.

WHEN YOU SLASH CHILD NUTRITION, AND DAY CARE FUNDS, AND SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN, THAT DOESN'T HELP FAMILIES. IT HURTS THEIR ABILITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

WHEN YOU CUT THE STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM, THAT DOESN'T HELP FAMILIES. THAT DEPRIVES MANY FAMILIES OF THE ONLY WAY THEY HAVE TO SEE THEIR SONS AND DAUGHTERS GO TO COLLEGE AND GET AHEAD IN LIFE.

AND WHEN YOU TRY TO REPEAL THE CHILD ABUSE ACT, THAT'S CERTAINLY NOT HELPING FAMILIES. THAT'S PERMITTING THE CRUELEST, MOST SHAMEFUL, ANTI-FAMILY ACT OF ALL -- WHICH IS VIOLENCE TOWARD CHILDREN.

THIS ADMINISTRATION MAY NOT BE ANTI-FAMILY. BUT IT'S CERTAINLY INSENSITIVE TO THE STRESS AND HARDSHIP WHICH MANY OF IT'S POLICIES ARE CAUSING FOR FAMILIES.

FRIEZ MONDALE AND I OFFER YOU A PRO-FAMILY ALTERNATIVE. AN ALTERNATIVE BASED IN ACTIONS, NOT WORDS.

I SAY IT'S PRO-FAMILY WHEN YOU PUT THE 18,000 PEOPLE OUT OF WORK IN TOLEDO BACK ON THE JOB SO THEY CAN SUPPORT THEIR FAMILIES.

I SAY IT'S PRO-FAMILY WHEN YOU GET INTEREST RATES BACK DOWN TO LEVELS WHERE YOUNG COUPLES CAN AFFORD THE SECURITY OF OWNING THEIR OWN HOMES.

I SAY IT'S PRO-FAMILY TO REFORM OUR PENSION SYSTEM SO THAT FAMILIES CAN SURVIVE THE DEATH OF A SPOUSE.

AND I SAY IT'S PRO-FAMILY TO PROVIDE OUR CHILDREN WITH THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS THEY NEED TO KEEP PACE WITH A CHANGING WORKPLACE.

IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO SALUTE THE FAMILY. WE NEED LEADERS WHOSE EVERY ACTION REINFORCES AND STRENGTHENS THE FAMILY. WHAT WE DON'T NEED IS AN ADMINISTRATION THAT PULLS THE RUG OUT FROM UNDER AVERAGE WORKING CLASS FAMILIES.

THIS ELECTION PRESENTS YOU WITH A CLEAR CHOICE ON THE POLICIES THAT WILL AFFECT YOUR FAMILY. JUST LOOK AT THE RECORD.

RONALD REAGAN HAS CUT THE DAY CARE PROGRAMS OF OUR COUNTRY. FRITZ MONDALE WAS THE AUTHOR OF THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE DAY CARE LEGISLATION IN HISTORY, A BILL THAT WAS VETOED BY THEN-PRESIDENT NIXON.

RONALD REAGAN HAS CUT PROGRAMS FOR DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN. FRITZ MONDALE HAS BEEN A FIGHTER FOR HEAD START AND THE EDUCATION FOR ALL HANDICAPPED CHILDREN ACT.

RONALD REAGAN HAS CUT PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES BY 62 BILLION DOLLARS DURING HIS ADMINISTRATION. THE HARM DONE BY THOSE CUTS WOULD HAVE ALMOST DOUBLED IF CONGRESS HADN'T STOOD UP TO HIM. FRITZ MONDALE HELPED

CREATE -- AND WAS THE FIRST CHAIRMAN OF -- THE SPECIAL SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH WHICH HELPED BLOCK SOME OF THE PRESIDENT'S MOST DANGEROUS PROPOSALS.

ONE THING WE ALL WANT FOR OUR CHILDREN IS A SECURE FUTURE. EVERY FAMILY -- FROM THOSE THAT CAME OVER ON THE MAYFLOWER TO THOSE THAT LANDED AT ELLIS ISLAND -- SHARES A COMMON DREAM. WE WANT TO LEAVE OUR CHILDREN JUST A LITTLE BIT BETTER OFF THAN WE WERE. WE WANT THEIR FUTURE TO BE JUST A LITTLE BIT BRIGHTER.

QUITE FRANKLY, I'M WORRIED ABOUT OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING NOW.

IF THIS ADMINISTRATION KEEPS CUTTING FUNDING FOR EDUCATION AND JOBS TRAINING, HOW ARE OUR CHILDREN GOING TO HAVE THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO FUNCTION IN A NEW ECONOMY?

IF THIS ADMINISTRATION'S ECONOMIC POLICIES ARE FORCING AUTO FACTORIES AND STEEL PLANTS TO CLOSE AT RECORD RATES, WHAT KIND OF JOBS ARE WE GOING TO PROVIDE FOR OUR CHILDREN?

IF THIS ADMINISTRATION KEEP LETTING FOREIGN COUNTRIES MAKE ALL THE PARTS FOR AMERICAN CARS, WILL THERE BE ANY JOBS LEFT AT ALL?

AND IF THIS ADMINISTRATION KEEPS PILING DEFICIT ON DEFICIT, WHAT KIND OF DEBT ARE WE GOING TO ASK OUR CHILDREN TO PAY FOR US?

WE WANT TO GIVE OUR CHILDREN NEW OPPORTUNITIES, NOT SADDLE THEM WITH OUR

UNPAID BILLS.

THIS COUNTRY NEEDS ECONOMIC POLICIES THAT HELP AMERICAN FAMILIES BY KEEPING WORKERS EMPLOYED, ENSURING THAT OUR JOBS DON'T GO SAILING OVERSEAS, AND TAKING CARE THAT OUR CHILDREN ARE PREPARED FOR THE RAPID CHANGES IN OUR WORKPLACE. WE NEED

ECONOMIC POLICIES THAT KEEP DEFICITS AND INTEREST RATES DOWN SO ALL AMERICANS CAN AFFORD HOUSING. AND WE NEED TAX POLICIES THAT GIVE WORKING CLASS FAMILIES THE SAME ATTENTION RICH CORPORATIONS GET. THIS ADMINISTRATION SEEMS TO BELIEVE IN THE THEORY OF SURVIVAL OF THE RICHEST. FRITZ MONDALE AND I SAY WE NEED AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR US ALL.

FRITZ MONDALE AND I ALSO WANT THE CHILDREN OF WORKING CLASS FAMILIES TO HAVE THE SAME CHANCE AT A QUALITY EDUCATION AS THE CHILDREN OF REAGAN'S RICH FRIENDS.

EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO THE FUTURE. THE MINDS OF OUR CHILDREN ARE THE MOST PRECIOUS NATIONAL RESOURCES WE HAVE. OUR SECURITY, OUR LEADERSHIP IN THE WORLD DEPEND ON AN EDUCATED CITIZENRY. AND THE ABILITY OF OUR CHILDREN TO GET AHEAD IN A CHANGING WORLD DEPENDS ON THEIR HAVING THE BEST EDUCATION POSSIBLE.

BUT UNDER THIS ADMINISTRATION, FEDERAL FUNDING FOR EDUCATION HAS DECLINED DRAMATICALLY. RONALD REAGAN EVEN THINKS WE SHOULD ABOLISH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. FOR NEXT YEAR ALONE, HE WANTS TO CUT THE STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM BY ANOTHER 8 PERCENT, EDUCATION FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN BY 17 PERCENT, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION BY 25 PERCENT, AND HE WANTS TO GET RID OF OUR LIBRARY

PROGRAMS ALTOGETHER.

FRITZ MONDALE AND I BELIEVE AN INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION IS AN INVESTMENT IN OUR FUTURE. WE BELIEVE CHILDREN FROM ALL ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS SHOULD HAVE THE SAME ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES. THAT'S WHY, EVER SINCE THOMAS JEFFERSON, THIS COUNTRY HAS DEVELOPED A SYSTEM OF TOP-NOTCH PUBLIC SCHOOLS. WE CAN'T AFFORD TO ABANDON OUR COMMITMENT TO THOSE SCHOOLS NOW. FRITZ MONDALE AND I WILL MAKE SURE OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS ONCE AGAIN MEET THE HIGH STANDARDS WE KNOW THEY SHOULD. WE WANT TO GUARANTEE THAT THE FUTURE BELONGS TO ALL OF OUR CHILDREN, NOT JUST THOSE IN PRIVATE ACADEMIES.

I say it's pro-family when we adopt sensible nuclear arms control policies so we know there will be a future.
BUT MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, WE WANT TO BE SURE THERE IS A FUTURE.

WE NEED TO BE SURE OUR COUNTRY CAN DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST A STRONG AND FORMIDABLE ENEMY. WE NEED TO BE SURE WE HAVE A MILITARY THAT IS WELL TRAINED WELL EQUIPED, AND WELL STAFFED. BUT THIS ADMINISTRATION IS DIVERTING BILLIONS OF DOLLARS INTO SHOWY, BIG-TICKET NUCLEAR WEAPONS THAT WILL BE OBSOLETE THE DAY THEY ARE DEPLOYED. AND OUR MILITARY READINESS IS DECLINING AS A RESULT.

FRITZ MONDALE AND I WILL PAY ATTENTION TO THE NUTS AND BOLTS THAT HAVE ALWAYS MADE OUR ARMED FORCES STRONG, BUT I CAN GUARANTEE YOU WE WON'T PAY A THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR THE NUT AND TWO THOUSAND FOR THE BOLT.

AT THE SAME TIME THAT WE NEED A STRONG CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE, WE ALSO NEED TO BUILD AN ENDURING PEACE FOR OUR CHILDREN.

MANY OF YOU HERE TODAY ARE EASTERN EUROPEANS, AND NOBODY KNOWS BETTER THAN

YOU THE THREAT POSED BY THE SOVIET UNION. BUT YOU CAN BE SURE OF ONE THING: FRITZ MONDALE AND GERRY FERRARO HAVE NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE SOVIETS. WE BELIEVE IN STRENGTH AND WE BELIEVE IN MILITARY READINESS. BUT AMERICANS NOT ONLY WANT A PRESIDENT WHO WILL STAND UP TO THE SOVIETS. THEY WANT A PRESIDENT WHO WILL SIT DOWN WITH THEM AND NEGOTIATE THE TOUGH AGREEMENTS WE NEED TO END THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE.

RONALD REAGAN IS THE FIRST PRESIDENT SINCE HERBERT HOOVER NOT TO EVEN TALK TO OUR ADVERSARIES IN THE SOVIET UNION. AND HE IS THE FIRST PRESIDENT SINCE THE DAWN OF THE NUCLEAR ERA -- DEMOCRAT OR REPUBLICAN -- NOT TO ENTER INTO AN ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT.

I SAY: WE OWE OUR CHILDREN THE SECURITY OF A WORLD AT PEACE. FRITZ MONDALE AND I WILL TALK TO THE SOVIETS AND WE WILL CONCLUDE THE MUTUAL AND VERIFIABLE AGREEMENTS WE NEED TO GUARANTEE A PEACEFUL FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

AS A MOTHER, I KNOW THE STRESSES OF FAMILY LIFE. I WORKED HARD RAISING MY THREE CHILDREN, AND THEN I WENT TO LAW SCHOOL AT NIGHT SO I COULD GO TO WORK AS A DISTRICT ATTORNEY AND HELP MAKE THE STREETS OF NEW YORK SAFER FOR EVERYBODY'S CHILDREN.

AS THE CHILD OF AN IMMIGRANT FAMILY -- AND A WIDOWED MOTHER -- I KNOW HOW HARD IT CAN BE TO STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM. AND I KNOW HOW REWARDING IT CAN BE AS WELL.

THE FACT THAT I STAND BEFORE YOU TODAY -- THE DAUGHTER OF IMMIGRANTS AND THE

FIRST WOMAN CANDIDATE FOR VICE-PRESIDENT -- IS TESTIMONY TO THE FACT THAT DREAMS CAN COME TRUE.

BUT WE NEED TO BE SURE THAT OUR CHILDREN'S DREAMS CAN COME TRUE TOO.

TOGETHER, WE CAN ENSURE A FUTURE IN WHICH OUR CHILDREN HAVE THE EDUCATION THEY NEED TO GET AHEAD.

TOGETHER, WE CAN ENSURE A FUTURE IN WHICH OUR CHILDREN HAVE THE JOBS THEY NEED TO SUPPORT THEIR FAMILIES.

TOGETHER, WE CAN ENSURE A FUTURE IN WHICH OUR CHILDREN HAVE THE TRAINING THEY NEED TO GET THOSE JOBS.

AND TOGETHER, WE CAN WIN THIS ELECTION AND ENSURE A FUTURE IN WHICH ACTIONS -- NOT JUST WORDS -- GUARANTEE THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END.