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## Association for a Better New York Speech

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REMARKS BY CONGRESSWOMAN GERALDINE A. FERRARO

ASSOCIATION FOR A BETTER NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 24, 1984

THANK YOU LEW, FOR THAT WONDERFUL INTRODUCTION. IT'S GREAT TO BE BACK AT ABNY.

*Mayor, former Mayor, former Mayor*

WHEN I ATTENDED THE ABNY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING LAST DECEMBER, ONE OF THE <sup>Questions I was</sup> ~~THINGS PEOPLE ASKED ME ABOUT~~ WAS WHETHER I WOULD RUN FOR VICE PRESIDENT. WELL, I GUESS I ANSWERED THAT QUESTION.

OF COURSE, ABNY HAS ANSWERED ONE OF THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT POLITICS: CAN THERE BE EFFECTIVE COOPERATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS? AND ABNY'S ANSWER HAS ALWAYS BEEN: JUST WATCH US.

YOU'VE WORKED ON ISSUES THAT MEAN A GREAT DEAL TO THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN NEW YORK CITY: FROM THE CONVENTION CENTER, TO THE SOUTH STREET SEAPORT.

ALL OF YOUR WORK, WHETHER SPURRING JOBS OR HELPING SENIORS, IS GREATLY AFFECTED BY THE SHAPE OF OUR ECONOMY. AND THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO TALK ABOUT TODAY.

THE MOST SERIOUS OBSTACLE BLOCKING LONG-TERM,  
NON-INFLATIONARY GROWTH IS THE UNPRECEDENTED FEDERAL DEFICIT.  
YOU KNOW HOW A MASSIVE DEFICIT AFFECTS US ALL. YOU KNOW IT MEANS  
HIGHER INTEREST RATES. AND YOU KNOW HIGHER RATES ARE BAD FOR THE  
CITY OF NEW YORK. AFTER STRUGGLING SO HARD, AND COMING SO FAR,  
THIS CITY SHOULD NOT BE PUNISHED BY FEDERAL DEFICITS THAT ARE OUT  
OF CONTROL.

BUT DEFICITS ARE NOT ONLY BAD FOR THIS CITY. THEY ARE BAD  
FOR WORKERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. BECAUSE HIGH DEFICITS DISTORT  
THE VALUE OF THE DOLLAR. THAT LEADS TO A TRADE DEFICIT. AND  
TRADE DEFICITS LEAD TO THE LOSS OF AMERICAN JOBS. THE MOST  
RECENT QUARTERLY TRADE DEFICIT IS THE WORST WE'VE HAD IN THE  
HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY.

IN FACT, OUR DEFICITS ARE EVEN HURTING WORKERS AND  
BUSINESSES THROUGHOUT THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BY CONTRIBUTING TO  
THE THIRD WORLD DEBT CRISIS. THAT CRISIS THREATENS TO TOPPLE OUR  
ENTIRE BANKING SYSTEM AND TAKE THE WHOLE FINANCIAL SYSTEM DOWN  
WITH IT.

LISTEN TO WHAT ONE CONCERNED CITIZEN SAID ABOUT THE DEFICIT NOT LONG AGO. QUOTE: "FOR DECADES WE HAVE PILED DEFICIT UPON DEFICIT, MORTGAGING OUR FUTURE AND OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE FOR THE TEMPORARY CONVENIENCE OF THE PRESENT. TO CONTINUE THIS TREND IS TO GUARANTEE TREMENDOUS SOCIAL, CULTURAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC UPHEAVALS." UNQUOTE.

THAT SPEECH WAS MADE BY RONALD REAGAN ON JANUARY 20, 1980. WHAT DOES HE SAY IN 1984? / FIRST, HE SAYS DEFICITS DON'T EXIST. THEN HE SAYS CONGRESS IS TO BLAME. / THEN HE SAYS THE DEFICIT IS BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE CARE OF ITSELF. /

AND NOW HE SAYS WE SHOULD LOOK AT THE BUDGETS HE SUBMITTED IN THE PAST IF WE WANT TO KNOW HIS PLAN FOR BALANCING THE BUDGET. ALL RIGHT, I ACCEPT HIS CHALLENGE. LET'S LOOK AT HIS RECORD ON BALANCED BUDGETS.

THE LAST BUDGET HE SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS HAS A PROJECTED DEFICIT, BY HIS OWN ESTIMATE, OF \$180 BILLION. / THIS PRESIDENT HAS NEVER SUBMITTED ANYTHING CLOSE TO A BALANCED BUDGET. / HIS MOTTO IS: / WE MAKE MONEY / THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY / -- WE PRINT IT. /

INSTEAD OF FACING UP TO THE PROBLEM, THIS PRESIDENT PROPOSES  
TWO REMEDIES WHICH DEAL WITH THE POLITICS OF THE DEFICIT, BUT NOT  
THE DEFICIT ITSELF. FIRST, HE PROPOSES A BALANCED BUDGET  
AMENDMENT. THE MEASURE CURRENTLY BEFORE CONGRESS WOULD TAKE  
EFFECT THREE YEARS AFTER RATIFICATION.

THAT MEANS THAT THE PRESIDENT IS PROPOSING A BLAANCED BUDGET  
REQUIREMENT WHICH WOULD NOT AFFECT HIM. THE MOST PROFLIGATE  
SPENDER IN HISTORY WOULD BIND THE HANDS OF FUTURE PRESIDENTS, BUT  
NOT HIS OWN.

MOREOVER, IT WOULD ALWAYS BE POSSIBLE TO CIRCUMVENT THE  
AMENDMENT SIMPLY BY PLACING EXPENDITURES OFF BUDGET.

THE SECOND REAGAN REMEDY IS THE LINE ITEM VETO. THIS IDEA  
IS A THREAT TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL BALANCE OF POWER. IF REAGAN  
HAD HAD SUCH A VETO, THINK WHAT HE WOULD HAVE DONE TO HOUSING,  
EDUCATION, AND MEDICARE -- BEYOND THE CUTS HE HAS MADE. AND  
THINK IF THE TABLES WERE REVERSED, HOW MY REPUBLICAN COLLEAGUES  
WOULD LIKE A LINE ITEM VETO IN THE HANDS OF PRESIDENT MONDALE.

WE DON'T NEED A LINE ITEM VETO.

WE DON'T NEED RHETORIC ABOUT BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENTS. WE NEED A PRESIDENT WITH THE WILL TO HOLD DOWN SPENDING ACROSS THE BOARD, INCLUDING DEFENSE. WE NEED A PRESIDENT TO FACE THIS CRISIS HONESTLY AND DIRECTLY, NOT WITH BLUE SMOKE AND MIRRORS. WE NEED A PRESIDENT WHO WILL STOP PUTTING OUR MONEY WHERE HIS MOUTH IS.

WALTER MONDALE AND I HAVE PRODUCED A FAIR PLAN TO BRING DOWN THE DEFICITS BY TWO THIRDS. AND WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT, WE HAVE LAID IT OUT ON THE TABLE FOR EVERYONE TO SEE.

BUT RONALD REAGAN WON'T LET US SEE HIS PLAN. MY QUESTION TO THIS PRESIDENT IS, WHERE'S THE PLAN?

I THINK I KNOW WHY HE WON'T REVEAL HIS BLUEPRINT. IF RONALD REAGAN HAD A FAIR PROPOSAL, HE'D DISCLOSE IT. BUT HE DOESN'T. AND IF HE'S RE-ELECTED, HE'LL DO JUST WHAT HE DID BEFORE: MAKE THE DEEPEST CUTS IN PROGRAMS THAT HELP THE WEAKEST PEOPLE.

ACCORDING TO THIS ADMINISTRATION, IF YOU'RE A DEFENSE CONTRACTOR, \$2000 FOR A 13-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, \$7000 FOR A COFFEE POT IS MARKET VALUE. BUT IF YOU'RE ONE OF THE 50,000 PEOPLE THROWN OFF DISABILITY HERE IN NEW YORK, THIS ADMINISTRATION TELLS YOU THAT YOUR MEAGER PAYMENTS ARE BUSTING THE BUDGET.

LET'S BE CLEAR ABOUT THIS: WHATEVER WE HAVE LOST TO THE FEW DISHONORABLE PEOPLE WHO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM *or any other gov. program* DOESN'T HOLD A CANDLE TO THE MILLIONS RIPPED OFF BY DEFENSE CONTRACTORS IN THE NAME OF NATIONAL SECURITY. LET'S ROOT OUT THE WASTE NOT JUST IN SOCIAL PROGRAMS, *in defense programs too* *^ u u waste*

*according to this article* IF YOU'RE HOMELESS, ~~THEY SAY~~ YOU LIKE IT THAT WAY. IF YOU'RE HUNGRY, HAVE SOME CHEESE. IF YOU'RE UNEMPLOYED, VOTE WITH YOUR FEET.

IF YOU'RE A FARMER GOING BROKE BECAUSE OF HIGH INTEREST RATES, TOO BAD -- SELL THE FARM. BUT IF YOU'RE A BIG BANK FAILING BECAUSE OF MISMANAGEMENT, TELL US HOW MUCH YOU NEED, AND WE'LL SEND IT.

THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS A CALCULATOR WHERE ITS HEART SHOULD BE. AND IT'S A CALCULATOR WITH A DOUBLE STANDARD.

FAIRNESS IS ESSENTIAL. I KNOW YOU BELIEVE THAT, TOO. THE PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM ARE ON THE FAST TRACK, BUT YOU REMEMBER THOSE WHOM SOCIETY HAS LEFT BEHIND. YOU SUPPORT MEALS ON WHEELS; YOU HELP DIAL-A-TEACHER; YOU WORK WITH NEW YORK'S YOUNGSTERS TO KEEP THEM OFF DRUGS AND OUT OF TROUBLE; YOU PROVIDE SUMMER JOBS.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR A BETTER NEW YORK BRINGS OUT THE BEST THAT IS IN US: OUR COMPASSION. THAT QUALITY DISTINGUISHES US FROM ALL OTHER LIVING THINGS. AND IT IS A SPECIAL TRAIT OF AMERICANS.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE BLACK OR HISPANIC TO BE OFFENDED BY DISCRIMINATION. MOST WHITES ARE, TOO.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE FEMALE TO BE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS. MOST MEN ARE, TOO.

AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE POOR TO HATE POVERTY. EVERYONE SHOULD. AND IN AMERICA, MOST PEOPLE DO THINK OF OTHERS. WE ARE A GENEROUS PEOPLE, EVEN IF OUR GOVERNMENT SOMETIMES IS NOT.



LAST NIGHT, I LEARNED THAT THE SULTAN OF BRUNEI (BRU-NAY) IS DONATING A HALF MILLION DOLLARS TO NEW YORK CITY TO HELP FEED SHUT-INS. *As a human being, I appreciate the generosity of the Sultan* AS AN AMERICAN, I AM ASHAMED THAT WE MUST RELY ON LEADERS OF OTHER COUNTRIES TO BE AS COMPASSIONATE TO OUR PEOPLE AS ~~OUR OWN~~ *the* LEADERS *of our country* SHOULD BE.

THIS ADMINISTRATION DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THAT. BUT WHAT OFFENDS ME IS NOT ONLY THAT THEY BETRAY OUR TRADITIONS OF COMPASSION; IT'S ALSO THAT THEY PRETEND TO BE COMPASSIONATE.

IN A PHOTO OPPORTUNITY, RONALD REAGAN WENT TO THE OLYMPICS TO CONGRATULATE OUR ATHLETES, INCLUDING FEMALE ATHLETES. BUT BACK IN WASHINGTON HIS ADMINISTRATION HAS SIDED WITH THOSE WHO WOULD DISCRIMINATE AGAINST WOMEN IN SPORTS.

I, TOO, CONGRATULATE OUR OLYMPIC CHAMPIONS. BUT I AM AGAINST SEX DISCRIMINATION IN FEDERALLY-FUNDED INSTITUTIONS. I WANT TO HELP WOMEN GET TO THE STARTING BLOCK, NOT JUST PAT THEM ON THE BACK AFTER THEY CROSS THE FINISH LINE.

IN A CAMPAIGN APPEARANCE, RONALD REAGAN WENT TO BUFFALO TO DEDICATE A SENIOR CITIZENS HOUSING PROJECT AND CALLED IT "WONDERFUL...A SPLENDID EXAMPLE OF GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP." BUT IN THE CORRIDORS OF POWER, HE HAS DECIMATED THE PROGRAM THAT BUILT THAT VERY SAME PROJECT.

I WANT AN ADMINISTRATION THAT SHELTERS THE ELDERLY, AND  
DOESN'T <sup>just</sup> SHELTER THE INCOME OF THE WEALTHY.

IN A MEDIA EVENT, RONALD REAGAN VISITED A BLACK FAMILY THAT  
WAS THE VICTIM OF BIGOTRY. BUT IN REALITY, HE DRAGGED HIS FEET  
ON THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT, AND TRIED TO SUBVERT THE CIVIL RIGHTS  
COMMISSION.

I WANT AN ADMINISTRATION THAT FULLY SUPPORTS OUR CIVIL  
RIGHTS LAWS, AND NOT SEGREGATED ACADEMIES.

IN A SYMBOLIC GESTURE, RONALD REAGAN PLANS TO DEDICATE A  
MONUMENT TO THE GREAT NATURE PHOTOGRAPHER ANSEL ADAMS. BUT IN  
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, HE WORKS AGAINST EVERYTHING THAT ANSEL  
ADAMS LOVED.

I WANT AN ADMINISTRATION THAT USES THE EPA TO PROTECT US  
FROM DANGEROUS CHEMICALS. I BELIEVE IN GOVERNMENT THAT TAKES  
POLLUTERS TO COURT, AND NOT TO LUNCH.

IN A RECENT SPEECH, RONALD REAGAN TOLD A MOVING STORY ABOUT DR. GIORDANO, WHO SAVED THE PRESIDENT'S LIFE -- AND HOW THAT DOCTOR HAD RISEN FROM HUMBLE ORIGINS IN THIS SOCIETY OF OPPORTUNITY. EVERYTHING MR. REAGAN SAID WAS TRUE -- AND PRAISEWORTHY. BUT HE LEFT OUT THE CRUCIAL FACT THAT GOVERNMENT LOAN PROGRAMS HAD HELPED DR. GIORDANO COMPLETE HIS EDUCATION. AND TODAY DR. GIORDANO CRITICIZES MR. REAGAN FOR CUTTING GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND WEAKENING CIVIL RIGHTS.

I AGREE WITH THE MAN WHO SAVED THE PRESIDENT'S LIFE. GOVERNMENT DOES HAVE A ROLE, A POSITIVE ROLE, AND THE PERSON WHO HEADS IT SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT.

IN A GIMMICK, THIS PRESIDENT PROMISES TO SEND A TEACHER INTO SPACE. BUT IN HIS BUDGET, HE SLASHES STUDENT LOANS AND EDUCATION FUNDS.

I WANT A PRESIDENT WHO BELIEVES IN EDUCATION, AND HELPS BOTH STUDENTS AND TEACHERS HERE ON EARTH.

IN A TONE OF REVERENCE, A FEW DAYS AGO, MR. REAGAN SPOKE NOSTALGICALLY ABOUT JOHN KENNEDY. BUT IN POINT OF FACT, MR. REAGAN WAS A LEADER OF DEMOCRATS FOR NIXON IN 1960. HE TRIED TO BEAT JOHN KENNEDY. AND HE HAS OPPOSED NEARLY EVERY DECENT CAUSE WHICH THAT GOOD PRESIDENT LOVED.

I SAY TO MR. REAGAN: DON'T TELL US YOU SUPPORTED JOHN KENNEDY, BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T. / DON'T TELL US YOU CLEAN UP THE ENVIRONMENT, BECAUSE YOU DO NOT. / DON'T TELL US YOU'VE EXPANDED OPPORTUNITY, BECAUSE YOU HAVEN'T. AND DON'T TELL US, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT YOUR POLICIES ARE FAIR -- BECAUSE THEY AREN'T.

I SAY: GIVE US A PRESIDENT WHO IS NOT ONLY FAIR, BUT WHO DOES NOT PORTRAY HIMSELF AS SOMETHING HE IS NOT.

WALTER MONDALE AND I HAVE LAID OUR CARDS ON THE TABLE. MR. REAGAN HAS OPENED UP AN ALBUM OF PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES AND ASKED US TO LOOK AT THE PRETTY PICTURES INSIDE. /

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL NOT BE FOOLED. / THEY KNOW WHO'S ON THEIR SIDE, AND WHO ISN'T. /

THE UNITED STATES IS NOT A STAGE. / PEOPLE AREN'T CHARACTERS. / PROBLEMS AREN'T STORY LINES. / EMPTY RHETORIC WILL NOT PERSUADE. / THE ISSUES DO MATTER. / AND THE ELECTION WILL NOT GO ACCORDING TO THIS PRESIDENT'S SCRIPT. /

IN 1984, WE FACE REAL CHALLENGES AND AUTHENTIC NEEDS. ONE OF THE GREATEST NEEDS IS TO RESTORE A SENSE OF FAIRNESS IN THIS LAND. THE BEST WAY TO DO THAT IS TO DEFEAT RONALD REAGAN AND ELECT WALTER MONDALE.

SOME TIME AGO, I WAS INVITED TO GIVE A TALK AT A BROKERAGE HOUSE. BEFORE MY SPEECH, I WAS TOLD THAT THE AUDIENCE WANTED TO HEAR ABOUT HOW CONGRESS WORKS, FROM AN INSIDER'S POINT OF VIEW. BUT WHEN I GOT THERE, I FOUND THAT THEY WANTED TO TALK ABOUT TWO THINGS: BERYL ANTHONY'S BILL TO REDUCE THE CAPITAL GAINS TAX, WHICH THEY LIKED, AND THE BRADLEY-GEPHART BILL TO SIMPLIFY OUR TAX LAWS AND GET RID OF MANY OF THE LOOPHOLES, WHICH THEY OPPOSED.

MY DAUGHTER DONNA HAD JUST JOINED A BROKERAGE HOUSE HERSELF. WHEN I TOLD HER THE STORY, SHE COULD TELL I WAS DISTURBED BY THE NARROWNESS OF THE CONCERNS OF THE BROKERS. AND WHEN WE GOT HOME THAT EVENING, DONNA TURNED TO ME AND SAID: "DON'T WORRY MOM. I WON'T LOSE MY SOCIAL CONSCIENCE." I KNOW SHE WON'T. AND AS A COUNTRY, I KNOW WE CAN'T.

- END -