

9-25-1984

Youngstown Rally Speech

Geraldine Ferraro

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice_presidential_campaign_speeches_1984



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ferraro, Geraldine, "Youngstown Rally Speech" (1984). *Speeches*. 137.
https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice_presidential_campaign_speeches_1984/137

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the 1984 Vice-Presidential Campaign at FLASH: The Fordham Law Archive of Scholarship and History. It has been accepted for inclusion in Speeches by an authorized administrator of FLASH: The Fordham Law Archive of Scholarship and History. For more information, please contact tmelnick@law.fordham.edu.

Bob Luskin's
draft

YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

GREETINGS TO FOLLOW

This election will decide^y the direction of our country for years to come. It offers us clear choices on critical issues. At home, the most important question is what kind of people we are and what kind of future we will offer to our children. That's what I want to talk about today.

I think we are a people who reward hard work, who give everyone a chance -- regardless of race or religion or sex -- who take care of the elderly^y and who lend a hand to those less fortunate than we are. I believe we are a people of compassion.

But that's not the message that this President has emphasized. Instead of a leader who appeals to our better instincts, we have a President who appeals to the self-interest of the privileged few. Instead of a President who binds us together, we have a President who splits us apart, pitting old against young, rich against poor, black against white, and region against region.

Instead of a President who understands the principle of fair play, we have a President whose only principle is the double standard.

According to this Administration, if you're a defense contractor, \$2000 for a 13-cent nut is not too high a price. But

page 2.

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 pot is market value. But if you're ~~a laid-off steelworker whose~~ ^{one of the thousands of disabled, thrown} ~~on the ash heap by this Administration's Social Security, Disability policies,~~ ^{unemployment benefits are exhausted, this Administration tells} ~~they say "sue us."~~ ^{you to vote with your feet.}

Cruelly and illegally

If you're homeless, they say you like it that way. If hungry, have some cheese.

If you're steelworkers whose jobs have been swamped by the flood of imports, this Administration tells you to vote with your feet. But if you're a big bank failing because of mismanagement, it says: tells us how much you need and we'll send it.

Let's be clear about this: whatever we have lost to the dishonorable few who take advantage of the Food Stamp program doesn't hold a candle to the millions ripped off by defense contractors in the name of national security. Let's root out waste wherever it is found. Let's lend a helping hand to those who need it, and stop the handouts to those who don't.

We simply must reduce that deficit -- and do it fairly. If the budget must be squeezed -- and it must -- then let's share the sacrifices. If taxes must be raised -- and they must -- then let's do it fairly. Fritz Mondale and I won't let the rich pay less while average working families pay more.

Four years ago, Mr. Reagan came here to Youngstown and promised ~~you~~ that he "wouldn't forget" ~~the needs of this~~ ^{you.}

page 3.

And you know, after a fashion he didn't. After four years of presiding over the destruction of our nation's most basic industry, he's back again asking for your votes.

I think you expected a little more from your President. And I think you have a right to.

You have a right to demand a steel policy that boils down to more than "let it rust." You have a right to demand a President who stands up for American workers and American business. ~~And~~ You have a right to demand that the President stop talking about getting government off our backs and start talking about how to get it on our side.

I've got news for you: if you want more than a picture postcard every four years, don't ask Ronald Reagan.

Fritz Mondale and I have proposed a plan to restore to America a world-class steel industry, not one on a life-support system of trade-protection. We have offered a plan to raise capital, retrain workers, modernize our plants, and boost competitiveness.

You have a choice. ~~Do you want a plan for the future, or do~~ We have given you a plan for the future. Mr. Reagan has one to see him through the election. Will you put up with that?

If all you do is listen to this President, you'd have a hard time recognizing what is stake in this election. If he were being honest with you, his campaign slogan would be "Watch what I do, not what I say."

He says he's in favor of rebuilding our basic industries.

page 4.

The people of Youngstown know better. He talks about family values, but he won't discuss what kind of world his Administration is making for your children: whether it will be free from crushing debt, a poisoned environment, and the threat of nuclear holocaust. And, of course, he pretends to be fair and compassionate.

5

~~What offends me is not only that this Administration betrays 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-assisted 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, not just the income of the wealthy.

6

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 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 pass himself as something he's not.

7.

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.

- END -