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Italian Press Conference Remarks

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September 25, 1984

Thank you all for being here today.

The Ethnic Council of the Democratic National Committee and Italian-Americans for Mondale-Ferraro symbolize the long standing commitment of the Democratic Party to the dreams and values of Americans who came to this country because it was the land of opportunity.

These values -- belief -- family, hard work and opportunities, love of country and hope for a better future are shared by millions of Americans. What brings all of us together is the dream of a more secure future for our children.

In a special way, my candidacy for Vice President represents the realization of an American dream -- not just because I am a woman, but because I am the first Italian-American to run for national office which demonstrates that the doors of opportunity are open wider than ever before. And, now that those doors are open, it will be hard for anyone to close them again.

In the last four years, we have seen the Republican party break faith with American hopes and dreams. Republicans pay lip service to the values that have made this country great, but their values are quite different.

In America education equals opportunity. It opens doors for the disadvantaged, lifts our sights and enables us to compete in the world economy. But the Republicans slashed aid to education and cut the student loan programs that have made it possible for the middle-class to get a college education. Instead of fighting for educational opportunities for all, they have fought for tax breaks

for segregated academies.

Owning a home is also part of the American dream. But the Regan deficits have driven interest rates so high that many of our children will not be able to buy homes when they are ready to start their own families. And that is only one of the many pernicious effects of those record breaking deficits that we will feel into the next century.

As Democrats, we know that our commitment to family extends not only to our children, but also to our parents. We believe that our senior citizens have a right to retire with security and dignity. Each year since his election, however, Ronald Reagan has pushed for cuts in social security and medicare. He has failed to propose any other way to control the deficits. If he serves another term, it leaves our seniors deeply concerned that they will be the first victims of his future budget cuts.

In the next four years and in the four years beyond, we must reverse these policies and return to the touchstone values that have made this country the freest and fairest on earth. I thank you for the help you will be giving to Fritz and me in the next six weeks so that we can begin that task in January.

Finally, I want to note that Dr. Joe Giordano, one of the doctors that worked to save Mr. Reagan's life after the horrible shooting in 1982, is with us today. He represents the best in America. He ~~was able to complete his medical education with the help of government loans.~~ ^{realizes how essential government loans are to getting a good education.} He is a concerned citizen who recognizes the importance of speaking out on behalf of those who have a greater need for government assistance. He demonstrates that, in order to achieve, we need only a fair opportunity. He also proves that

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Fritz Mondale and I are right when we say that Americans are
a caring and compassionate people.

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