

7-18-1984

Letter from a Dutch Supporter to Geraldine Ferraro

Geraldine Ferraro

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Recommended Citation

Ferraro, Geraldine, "Letter from a Dutch Supporter to Geraldine Ferraro" (1984). *International*. 145.
https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice_presidential_campaign_correspondence_1984_international/145

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JUL 24 1984

Congresswoman G. Ferraro
Washington, D.C.

WASHINGTON OFFICE

Thanks
you for staying
news
Amsterdam,
July 18, 1984

Dear Congresswoman Ferraro,

Congratulations on your nomination for Vice President! Although I am a registered Republican, Mondale's choice of you as his running-mate has certainly caused me to seriously consider ^{voting} for the Democrats in the coming November election.

I began a letter to you over one month ago after I enthusiastically read the cover story in Time about the then increasing possibility for a woman as a Vice Presidential candidate. The subject of that letter (never sent) continues in this letter: your stance on Middle Eastern politics.

Although I do not profess myself to be an expert on this subject, I have had the good fortune in the past six months to have befriended quite a few Palestinians. Through my new friends, I have finally been able to learn the other viewpoint concerning this delicate Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Before I left the U.S. nearly one year ago, I had the same pro-Israeli bias that I believe the majority of Americans possess. We are constantly being bombarded by the press and with government policies

that are for the Israeli cause. Why is this? Could it be to please the powerful Jewish voting community?

My Palestinian friends, both Moslems and Christians, agree that life for them on the West Bank is intolerable. They live like prisoners in a country that is not their own, but on the land which, in their hearts, is still their homeland of Palestine. They are denied the rights and privileges that Israeli citizens enjoy - ie. freedom of movement. In the simple case of car license plates, Palestinians (West Bank inhabitants) are "marked" by the special license plates on their cars, making them more visible to be stopped/harassed/discriminated against by the Israeli army/police. My friends and their families no longer go out in the evening for dinner and entertainment in order to avoid the inevitable ruination of what could have been a nice evening by Israeli soldiers. Instead, they "choose" to stay home.

Many of my Palestinian friends have decided not to return to their homes on the West Bank until these "living" conditions improve. Is that freedom? Is that what America is supporting in Israel? Perhaps when you paid a visit to Israel (and Palestine) you were given a tour of the land through Israeli eyes. Although

the West Bank is small, its importance to the Palestinian people is similar to the American people's need to keep our country, the land of the free...

I hope that you consider what I have written to you from my heart... and the hearts of my friends. I wish you the best of luck in November.

Sincerely yours,

