

9-3-1984

## Merill Rally Speech: Final Draft

Geraldine Ferraro

Follow this and additional works at: [https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice\\_presidential\\_campaign\\_speeches\\_1984](https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice_presidential_campaign_speeches_1984)



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Ferraro, Geraldine, "Merill Rally Speech: Final Draft" (1984). *Speeches*. 152.  
[https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice\\_presidential\\_campaign\\_speeches\\_1984/152](https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice_presidential_campaign_speeches_1984/152)

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](mailto:tmelnick@law.fordham.edu).

MERRILL, WISCONSIN

FINAL

SEPTEMBER 3, 1984

THANK YOU FOR THAT WARM INTRODUCTION.

LET ME ASK YOU SOMETHING: CAN WE WIN?

WILL WE SEND RONALD REAGAN BACK TO HIS RANCH?

I THINK SO TOO. I HAVE A GOOD FEELING ABOUT WISCONSIN THIS YEAR. YOU HAVE EXERCISED GREAT JUDGMENT IN THE LEADERS YOU CHOOSE. THE PEOPLE OF WISCONSIN ELECTED AN OUTSTANDING GOVERNOR, TONY EARL. AS A MEMBER OF CONGRESS, I CAN SAY THAT YOU HAVE ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATIONS IN WASHINGTON IN DAVID OBEY, LES ASPIN, BOB KASTENMEIER, JIM MOODY, AND GERALD KLECZKA. AND THIS STATE PRACTICALLY CREATED THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT AND GAVE US ROBERT LAFOLLETTE (1a FAH 1et).

SO IT IS WITH CONFIDENCE THAT I PREDICT THAT WISCONSIN IS GOING TO VOTE PROGRESSIVE AGAIN IN 1984 AND SEND FRITZ MONDALE TO THE WHITE HOUSE.

THIS IS NOT ONLY THE FIRST DAY OF THE OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN OF 1984. THIS IS THE FIRST DAY OF A NEW PERIOD IN AMERICAN POLITICAL HISTORY.

FRITZ MONDALE MADE HISTORY WHEN HE SELECTED ME TO BE HIS RUNNING-MATE LAST JULY. YOU WILL ALSO BE MAKING HISTORY WHEN I STAND IN THE CAPITOL AND TAKE THE OATH OF OFFICE AS THE FIRST WOMAN VICE PRESIDENT OF THIS GREAT NATION.

AFTER THAT DAY IT WILL STILL BE POSSIBLE, BUT IT WON'T BE EASY, TO EXCLUDE WOMEN FROM POLITICS. IT WILL STILL BE POSSIBLE, BUT IT WON'T BE COMMON, TO KEEP MINORITIES FROM VOTING IN AMERICA.

THIS COUNTRY IS ON THE MOVE. WOMEN ARE ENTERING THE WORKFORCE IN UNPRECEDENTED NUMBERS. AND I KNOW ONE PARTICULAR WOMAN WHO PLANS TO ENTER A NEW JOB ON JANUARY 20, 1985.

THERE IS A SENSE OF EXCITEMENT, OF ENERGY, OF ENTHUSIASM IN THE AIR. IF THERE'S ONE THING MY CANDIDACY STANDS FOR ABOVE ALL ELSE, IT IS THE HOPE THAT OLD BARRIERS ARE COMING DOWN, AND NEW DOORS ARE OPENING UP. THIS IS A THRILLING MOMENT AND YOU AND I ARE PART OF IT. AND TOGETHER WE CAN THANK FIRST OF ALL FRITZ MONDALE.

FRITZ MONDALE HAS SPENT HIS WHOLE PUBLIC LIFE FIGHTING FOR MIDDLE-INCOME FAMILIES AND WORKING PEOPLE. NAME A DECENT, NOBLE CAUSE, AND FRITZ MONDALE HAS BEEN THERE FIGHTING.

WHILE RONALD REAGAN WAS MAKING MOVIES, FRITZ MONDALE WAS MAKING HISTORY AS A CHAMPION OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE.

WHILE RONALD REAGAN WAS HOST OF DEATH VALLEY DAYS, FRITZ MONDALE WAS TRYING TO GET MEDICARE PASSED FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.

WHILE RONALD REAGAN WAS SERVING AS THE SPOKESMAN FOR GENERAL ELECTRIC CORPORATION, FRITZ MONDALE WAS A SPOKESMAN FOR THE AVERAGE AMERICAN FAMILY.

TODAY, WHILE RONALD REAGAN JOKES ABOUT BOMBING THE SOVIET UNION, FRITZ MONDALE WANTS TO NEGOTIATE WITH THAT TOUGH ADVERSARY AND CONTROL THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE.

AND MOST IMPORTANT, WHILE RONALD REAGAN IS STUCK IN THE PAST, FRITZ MONDALE HAS A VISION OF THE AMERICAN FUTURE. IN A FEW MINUTES, HE'LL DESCRIBE OUR PRINCIPAL GOALS. LET ME TELL YOU WHY THEY HAVE A SPECIAL MEANING FOR ME.

FIRST, THE GOAL OF PEACE.

IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS, TENSIONS WITH RUSSIA HAVE BEEN ON THE RISE. WE'VE SENT TROOPS TO CENTRAL AMERICA, AND OUR YOUNG MEN HAVE NEEDLESSLY DIED IN BEIRUT. THE

QUESTION IS, OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY SON JOHN, AND TO YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN? WILL THIS PRESIDENT, UNRESTRAINED BY THE NEED FOR RE-ELECTION, HEIGHTEN THE RISK OF WAR?

I DON'T WANT TO TAKE THAT CHANCE. I WANT A PRESIDENT WHO BELIEVES IN NEGOTIATION, NOT CONFRONTATION; WHO UNDERSTANDS THAT AN ARMS RACE DOES NOT LEAD TO PEACE -- IT LEADS TO AN ARMS RACE; AND WHO STOPS SPENDING SO MUCH ON THE ARMS RACE AND STARTS INVESTING MORE IN THE HUMAN RACE.

IF THIS PRESIDENT CAN'T STOP EXCHANGING INSULTS AND START EXCHANGING SOLID PROPOSALS TO CONTROL NUCLEAR WEAPONS, THEN IT'S TIME TO EXCHANGE THIS PRESIDENT FOR ONE WHO WILL.

SECOND, WE NEED A PRESIDENT WHO LEVELS WITH US ABOUT THE TOUGH THINGS WE MUST DO TO ENSURE OUR FUTURE.

IN THE LAST THREE WEEKS, I HAVE SEEN DRAMATIC EVIDENCE IN MY OWN CAMPAIGN OF WHAT I HAVE KNOWN AND PRACTICED ALL MY LIFE: THERE'S NO SUBSTITUTE FOR LEVELING WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

WITH ALL THE CHALLENGES OUR COUNTRY FACES, THAT'S WHAT WE NEED FROM OUR LEADERS TODAY. BUT WE'RE NOT GETTING IT.

IT'S EASY TO SAY THINGS ARE GREAT. AND TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, I AGREE: THIS IS THE GREATEST, MOST POWERFUL NATION ON EARTH. AND I'M PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN.

BUT ONE OF THE KEYS TO OUR GREATNESS IS THAT WE'RE A PEOPLE WHO FACE REALITY. THE PEOPLE OF WISCONSIN DON'T DEAL WITH THEIR PROBLEMS BY BURYING THEIR HEADS IN THE SAND AND THROWING THEIR HANDS IN THE AIR.

YOU DON'T BRUSH ADVERSITY UNDER THE RUG: YOU FACE IT. YOU DON'T RUN FROM CHALLENGE. YOU MEET IT. AND YOU DON'T NEED A PRESIDENT WHO DUCKS THE TOUGH ONES. YOU WANT A LEADER WHO ROLLS UP HIS SLEEVES, TELLS THE TRUTH, AND WORKS BY YOUR SIDE FOR A BETTER AMERICAN FUTURE. AND THAT'S WHAT YOU'LL GET IN FRITZ MONDALE.

THE CHANGING WORKPLACE MAKES ENORMOUS DEMANDS ON THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE OF WORKERS. BUT PRESIDENT REAGAN SAID A FEW DAYS AGO THAT LIBRARIES DON'T MATTER.

OUR FARMERS SUFFER FROM THE WORST TRADE IMBALANCE IN HISTORY. BUT PRESIDENT REAGAN ISN'T EVEN AWARE THERE'S A PROBLEM.

MASSIVE FEDERAL DEFICITS ARE PUSHING UP INTEREST RATES AND THREATENING FUTURE ECONOMIC GROWTH. BUT PRESIDENT REAGAN WON'T TELL US HIS PLAN FOR REDUCING DEFICITS. HE TALKS ABOUT A RISING TIDE, BUT THE ONLY THING RISING IS AN OCEAN OF RED INK. HE TELLS DEMOCRATS TO CLOSE OUR MOUTHS ABOUT DEFICITS. BUT I WILL NOT CLOSE MY MOUTH UNTIL HE OPENS UP HIS SECRET PLAN FOR BALANCING THE FEDERAL BUDGET.

HE PROMISES CASTLES IN THE AIR. BUT WALTER MONDALE AND I ARE WORKING TO MAKE HOUSES AFFORDABLE HERE ON EARTH.

WE CAN DO THAT. WE CAN BRING DOWN DEFICITS AND INTEREST RATES. BUT IT TAKES STRONG LEADERSHIP AND STRAIGHT TALK. IF DEFICITS ARE BAD -- AND THEY ARE -- THEN LET'S REDUCE THEM. IF TAXES MUST GO UP TO DO THAT -- AND THEY WILL, NO MATTER WHO IS ELECTED -- THEN LET'S RAISE THEM FAIRLY. AND IF OUR LEADERS WON'T LEVEL WITH US -- THEN LET'S REPLACE THEM.

THIRD, WE NEED AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR US ALL. WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, MY MOTHER WORKED HARD IN THE GARMENT DISTRICT SO THAT I COULD GO TO SCHOOL AND GET AHEAD. LATER I TAUGHT IN THE NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM BY DAY, AND WENT TO LAW SCHOOL BY NIGHT, SO THAT I COULD ACHIEVE MY AMBITION OF BECOMING A LAWYER. THAT WAS HARD WORK BUT WE HAD A SOCIETY OF OPPORTUNITY THAT REWARDED HARD WORK.

THE QUESTION IS, WILL WE CONTINUE TO BE THAT KIND OF SOCIETY? OR WILL SUCCESS BECOME THE PRIVILEGE OF THE FEW?

I AM FRANKLY WORRIED BY THE DIRECTION WE'RE HEADED IN RIGHT NOW. IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS, TAXES HAVE GONE DOWN DRAMATICALLY FOR THE MOST WEALTHY INDIVIDUALS -- WHILE TAXES HAVE STAYED THE SAME OR GONE UP FOR AVERAGE FAMILIES. AND NEARLY 6 MILLION PEOPLE HAVE BEEN PUSHED INTO POVERTY.

THAT'S NOT MY IDEA OF FAIRNESS. IN AMERICA, WE SHOULD SHARE BOTH THE GAINS AND THE SETBACKS, THE BURDENS AND THE ABUNDANCE OF THIS COUNTRY.

I WANT A TAX SYSTEM THAT IS FAIR, IN WHICH AVERAGE FAMILIES DON'T PAY MORE SO THE RICH CAN PAY LESS.

I WANT OUR GOVERNMENT TO GIVE FULL SUPPORT TO OUR SCHOOLS, NOT TO LOBBY FOR TAX BREAKS FOR SEGREGATED ACADEMIES.

I WANT TO SEE LOANS MADE AVAILABLE TO YOUNG FAMILIES TRYING TO BUY HOUSES, NOT JUST TO BIG CORPORATIONS TRYING TO ACQUIRE OTHER COMPANIES.

I WANT TO SEE GOVERNMENT PROTECT OUR COMMUNITIES FROM TOXIC CHEMICALS. I WANT A GOVERNMENT THAT TAKES POLLUTERS TO COURT, AND NOT TO LUNCH.



FINALLY, IN THE VISION FRITZ MONDALE DESCRIBES, GOVERNMENT STAYS OUT OF OUR PRIVATE LIVES.

I DON'T BELIEVE ANY POLITICAL PARTY CAN SAY -- OR SHOULD SAY -- THAT IT IS THE SOLE POSSESSOR OF MORAL OR RELIGIOUS TRUTH. UNDER OUR SYSTEM, WITH OUR TRADITIONS, NO ONE CAN STAKE THAT CLAIM.

I AGREE THAT THE VALUES WE GET FROM OUR DIFFERENT RELIGIONS UNDERPIN OUR THINKING ABOUT THE GREAT PUBLIC ISSUES. BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO IMPOSE YOUR RELIGION OR YOUR MORALITY ON OTHERS IN ORDER TO BE A RELIGIOUS, MORAL PERSON. AND YOU SHOULDN'T.

THOMAS JEFFERSON SWORE HIS ETERNAL OPPOSITION TO ANY FORM OF TYRANNY OVER THE MIND OF MAN. AND TODAY I REJECT ANY NEW TYRANNY OVER THE MINDS OF BOTH MEN AND WOMEN.

MR. REAGAN TALKS ABOUT FREEDOM, AND HE SHOULD. BUT THERE'S NO FREEDOM MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE LIBERTY TO THINK AS YOU WANT, PRAY AS YOU BELIEVE, AND THE LIBERTY TO BE LEFT ALONE. MR. REAGAN IS FOR LIMITED GOVERNMENT -- EXCEPT WHEN HE WANTS GOVERNMENT TO AFFECT OUR MOST PRIVATE DECISIONS AND BELIEFS. I'M FOR STRONG AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT, BUT I WANT TO KEEP GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND OUT OF OUR HOMES AND CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES.

9.

IN ALL THESE WAYS, FRITZ MONDALE AND I WANT TO STRENGTHEN AMERICA. AND THAT CAUSE -- OUR COUNTRY'S CAUSE -- IS ULTIMATELY WHAT MATTERS.

AT THEIR CONVENTION, THE REPUBLICANS MADE MUCH OF THEIR PATRIOTISM. BUT I DON'T THINK THE AMERICAN PEOPLE BUY THE SELF-CONSCIOUS PATRIOTISM THAT'S MADE ON MADISON AVENUE. THEY FEEL THE SELFLESS, QUIET PATRIOTISM OF MAIN STREET AMERICA.

WHEN SOMEONE FINDS JOBS FOR THE EIGHT AND A HALF MILLION JOBLESS IN AMERICA -- THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

WHEN WE PROVIDE TEACHERS WITH THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO EDUCATE OUR CHILDREN -- THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

WHEN WE LEVEL WITH OURSELVES ABOUT THE DEMANDS OF THE FUTURE -- THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

WHEN WE FINALLY STOP THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE -- THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

AND WHEN WE FULLY ENFORCE OUR CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS -- AND MAKE THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT A PART OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION -- THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

MR. REAGAN PREACHES LOVE OF COUNTRY, AND I AGREE.  
BUT I SAY, LET'S LOVE OUR COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN, TOO.  
LET'S PUT PEOPLE TO WORK, ENFORCE THE LAWS, PROTECT THIS  
PLANET, AND KEEP THE PEACE -- THAT'S THE BEST WAY TO HONOR  
THE AMERICAN FLAG.

THE TIME TO BEGIN THAT WORK IS NOT LATER. IT'S NOW.  
THE TIME TO REGISTER NEW VOTERS IS NOT LATER. IT'S  
NOW.

THE TIME TO SEIZE OUR FUTURE IS NOT LATER. IT'S NOW.  
THE TIME FOR FRITZ MONDALE IS NOT LATER. IT'S NOW.  
LET'S GO OUT AND WORK TOGETHER TO WIN THIS ELECTION,  
NOT LATER -- BUT NOW.