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Letter from Phyllis and Harold Gildston of the North Shore Center to Geraldine Ferraro

Phyllis Gildston
North Shore Center

Harold Gildston
North Shore Center

Geraldine Ferraro

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North Shore Center

campaign suggestions

DIRECTORS:

Phyllis Gildston, Ph.D.

Harold Gildston, Ed.D.

275 MIDDLE NECK ROAD
GREAT NECK, NEW YORK 11023
(516) 482-4444

July 13, 1984

RECEIVED

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DISTRICT OFFICE

Committee for Walter Mondale for President
2201 Wisconsin Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20007

Geraldine Ferraro, Congresswoman
108-18 Queens Blvd.
Forest Hills, N.Y. 11375

Dear Mr. Mondale and Congresswoman Ferraro,

Congratulations to both of you.

To you, Mr. Mondale, congratulations are in order because you selected a woman as a running mate and because you selected Geraldine Ferraro in particular.

Congratulations to you Ms. Ferraro for electing to take on the challenge. We believe you have what it takes to win, intrinsically. But we also feel fairly certain that your team will be detrimentally influenced by your manner of communication.

Our remarks are addressed to you Ms. Ferraro, although we expect that you, Mr. Mondale, will take serious note of them and provide the moral and financial support to effectuate our suggested plan of action.

You can make the difference between the Democrats winning and losing but you can only do so if you come across as strong and yet sympathetic, assertive and yet feminine. (These are not our criteria but are likely to be necessary images for the electorate.) Unfortunately, your style of communication will be your greatest handicap and could lose the election for you and the Democrats.

New Yorkers may not mind your mild to moderate sub-standard articulation and weak vocal projection. But to most of the rest of the country your mode of speaking is mildly "foreign." It's not southern enough to appeal to the southerners, not midwestern enough to appeal to midwesterners and not standard enough to be responded to neutrally by those with dialectical preferences for other than the dialect common to the greater metropolitan New York area. With all due respect, what you need most is a crash course in how to communicate more effectively. The course should include the following:

First, you need just enough training in diction to clean up the local dialectical variations in your speech without making you sound either affected or insincere.

Second, you would do well to have vocal training to allow you to "project" your voice in such a manner as to "project" an image of strength and assurance and yet maintain a certain softness.

Finally, you would greatly benefit by learning how to use the proper rhythm, stress, phrasing and body language to reach people emotionally. Your speech patterns tend to give the impression of your being somewhat weak, dry, and uninteresting.

As you well know, a national media campaign is not like a neighborhood campaign. You don't have the time to nurture people's affections by your kind words and good deeds. Your impact must be immediate and definitively positive. Unfortunately, you do not have communication skills at this point to present the truly fine qualities you do, indeed, possess.


We would be willing to train you in an intensive crash program covering a week or two (or whatever is needed to arrive at reasonable goals). It will require tremendous effort on all our parts to achieve the necessary results so rapidly but there is no choice.

When we finish our program you will be able to project an image that will bring most of the "on-the-fence" voters into your camp plus a hefty percentage of Republicans as well. You will be responded to as a person with the power of communication to touch the hearts and minds of a broad cross-section of the electorate.

We are licensed doctors of speech and professors at major universities with a combined experience of 50 years of teaching voice, diction, public speaking, and body language. At our private center and "on location" we have taught many prestigious professionals, including actors, politicians and lawyers. (We, ourselves, did not train Ronald Reagan but it should be obvious that a good part of his appeal comes from his extensive voice and speech training.) We promise you whatever degree of confidentiality you choose vis-a-vis our relationship.

Walter Mondale has chosen you. Now you want the people of the U.S. to choose you.

Very truly yours,



Phyllis Gildston, Ph.D.
Harold Gildston, Ed.D.

PG/HG/mjr

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Title: * Drs _____
 First Name: Phyllis & Heald _____ Middle Name: * _____
 Last Name: Gildston _____ Salutation: Doctor Gildston _____
 Address 1: North Shore Center _____
 Address 2: 225 Middle Neck Road _____
 City: Great Neck _____ State: NY Zip: 11023 W/B: B

CORRESPONDENCE INFORMATION

Letter Code: HSI _

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION *

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