

9-8-1984

Hartford Italian Fest Speech: Final

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, "Hartford Italian Fest Speech: Final" (1984). *Speeches*. 120.
https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/vice_presidential_campaign_speeches_1984/120

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.

HARTFORD CONNECTICUT SEPTEMBER 8, 1984

I'M VERY HAPPY TO BE HERE IN HARTFORD TODAY AT THIS CELEBRATION OF OUR ITALIAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE. WHAT I LOVE MOST ABOUT THESE FESTIVALS IS THAT THEY REFLECT THE BEST OF OUR ITALIAN-AMERICAN TRADITIONS. THEY ARE HIGH ON PRIDE, HIGH ON TRADITION AND HIGH IN CALORIES.

AND I WANT TO INVITE ALL OF YOU DOWN TO OUR ITALIAN FESTIVAL IN NEW YORK. THE FEAST OF SAN GENNARO STARTED OUT AS A RATHER SMALL CELEBRATION ON MULBERRY STREET IN LITTLE ITALY. BUT OVER THE YEARS, AS PEOPLE FROM AROUND THE NORTHEAST GOT TO KNOW THE JOYS OF ITALIAN HERITAGE, AND ITALIAN COOKING THE FEAST SPREAD. NOW, WHEN YOU GET OFF THE TRAIN AT GRAND CENTRAL YOU CAN SMELL THE CALZONE IN LITTLE ITALY.

THERE ARE SOME GREAT ITALIAN AMERICAN LEADERS HERE TODAY. YOUR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR JOSEPH FAULISO, STATE SENATOR BILL DIBELLA AND STATE REPRESENTATIVE TONY PALERMINO. OF COURSE ALL OF US ARE DEEPLY INDEBTED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THIS FESTIVAL, NICK SIMIONE.

THERE ARE ALSO A FEW PROUD HONORARY ITALIANS HERE -- YOUR GREAT GOVERNOR, WILLIAM O'NEILL, SENATOR CHRIS DODD, MY GOOD FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

BARABARA KENNELLY, AND YOUR PROUD MAYOR, THURMAN MILNER.

WE'RE GLAD TO WELCOME ALL AMERICANS INTO OUR COMMUNITY AS WE CELEBRATE A TRADITION OF ACCOMPLISHMENT, PRIDE AND FAMILY. THE MUSIC AND FOOD WE ENJOY TODAY ARE PART OF THAT TRADITION. BUT JUST AS IMPORTANT IS THE STORY OF SUCCESS THAT ITALIAN-AMERICANS HAVE WRITTEN IN THIS GREAT NATION.

TODAY WE CELEBRATE NOT ONLY OUR LOVE FOR THE OLD COUNTRY, BUT ALSO OUR LOVE FOR OUR NEW COUNTRY.

MY FAMILY BEGAN ITS JOURNEY TO THE NEW WORLD WHEN MY FATHER CAME HERE FROM A SMALL TOWN CALLED MARCIANISE, IN CASSERTA. LIKE SO MANY IMMIGRANTS, HE CAME EXPECTING TO FIND THE STREETS PAVED WITH GOLD. WELL, THERE WERE NO GOLDEN STREETS, BUT THIS WAS A LAND OF GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY. IF YOU WORKED HARD AND PLAYED BY THE RULES, YOU WOULD CARVE OUT A BETTER FUTURE FOR YOURSELF AND FOR YOUR FAMILY.

MY MOTHER SHARED THAT DREAM. AND SO, EVEN WHEN SHE WAS WIDOWED WITH TWO YOUNG CHILDREN, SHE WENT BACK TO WORK. SHE TOOK A JOB IN NEW YORK'S GARMENT DISTRICT. I JUST READ THAT THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK ERECTED A 10-FOOT HIGH STATUE DEDICATED TO GARMENT WORKERS.

LIKE SO MANY OF YOUR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS, MY MOTHER

3
DID NOT WANT A MONUMENT IN BRONZE, SHE WANTED A MONUMENT IN THE LIVES OF HER CHILDREN. A BETTER LIFE FOR HER CHILDREN WAS WHAT SHE WORKED TO SECURE. SHE GAVE ME OPPORTUNITIES SHE NEVER HAD.

AND BECAUSE SHE WORKED SO HARD, I WORKED HARD. I WASN'T GOING TO LET HER DOWN. AFTER COLLEGE I BECAME A TEACHER IN THE NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS. AND WHILE I TAUGHT CHILDREN DURING THE DAY, I WENT TO LAW SCHOOL AT NIGHT. IT WAS HARD WORK, BUT I LEARNED THE ONE LESSON MY MOTHER AND FATHER MOST WANTED TO TEACH ME: HARD WORK PAYS OFF.

ALL OF YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN. YOUR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS ARRIVED ON THESE SHORES WITHOUT MUCH MONEY, BUT RICH WITH DREAMS FOR A BETTER TOMORROW. THEY SACRIFICED AND STRUGGLED AND WATCHED AS THEIR KIDS GREW UP. THEN THEY WERE REWARDED AS THEIR CHILDREN BUILT A BETTER LIFE.

I'M PROUD OF MY HERITAGE. I'M PROUD OF WHERE I CAME FROM AND I'M PROUD OF WHERE I AM NOW. IT SAYS SOMETHING ABOUT MY PARENTS.

AND MOST OF ALL, IT SAYS SOMETHING ABOUT THE KIND OF COUNTRY THIS IS.

THIS IS THE BEST NATION IN THE WORLD. THIS IS THE FREEST NATION IN THE WORLD. THERE IS NO OTHER COUNTRY IN THE

4
WORLD THAT PROVIDES SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO NEW CITIZENS.
OUR PARENTS KNEW WHAT THEY WERE DOING WHEN THEY SET SAIL FOR
AMERICA.

BUT WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO THEM BEYOND MAKING A BETTER
LIFE JUST FOR OURSELVES. WE HAVE TO MAKE THIS A BETTER
COUNTRY FOR EVERYONE. OUR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS DID NOT
STOP WHEN THE JOB WAS MOSTLY DONE. THEY DEDICATED THEIR
LIVES TO MAKING THINGS BETTER FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.
TODAY, WE MUST RENEW THAT DEDICATION. WE MUST MAKE OUR
COUNTRY EVEN BETTER THAN IT WAS WHEN WE INHERITED IT.

THAT MEANS WE DON'T LEAVE OUR CHILDREN STRUGGLING WITH A
MOUNTAIN OF DEBT. WE WORK TO REDUCE THOSE DEFICITS NOW.

THAT MEANS WE DON'T LEAVE OUR CHILDREN WITH DIRTY WATER,
DIRTY AIR AND TOXIC WASTE SITES. THEY DESERVE A WORLD AS
GREEN AND FULL OF LIFE AS THE ONE WE FOUND.

AND IT MEANS STOPPING THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE. LET'S STOP
INVESTING SO MUCH IN THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE AND START
INVESTING MORE IN THE HUMAN RACE.

OUR PARENTS MAY NOT HAVE GIVEN US THE ANSWERS TO THESE
QUESTIONS. BUT THEY WORKED HARD TO GIVE US THE EDUCATION WE
NEED TO FIGURE OUT THE ANSWERS FOR OURSELVES.

5

ITALIANS HAVE A HISTORY OF RESTING ONLY WHEN THE JOB IS DONE AND DONE RIGHT. WE HAVE GIVEN THIS COUNTRY MUCH. FROM CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS WHO LITERALLY PUT AMERICA ON THE MAP, TO JOE DIMAGGIO WHO SHOWED US HOW WELL THE GREAT AMERICAN PASTTIME OF BASEBALL COULD BE PLAYED AND ON TO YOUR GREAT GOVERNOR ELLA GRASSO, WE HAVE GIVEN AMERICA OUR BEST.

ELLA GRASSO, WHO WAS THE PATRON SAINT OF THIS FESTIVAL, WAS AN INSPIRATION TO ALL OF US. NOBODY KNEW AND LOVED THE PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS OF FRANKLIN AVENUE MORE THAN SHE. AND NOBODY DID MORE TO KNOCK DOWN THE DOORS OF PREJUDICE THAN ELLA GRASSO. I KNOW THAT IF SHE HAD LIVED SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN RUNNING FOR VICE-PRESIDENT TODAY. SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN THE FIRST WOMAN, AND FIRST ITALIAN-AMERICAN ON A NATIONAL TICKET. AND I WOULD HAVE BEEN HERE TODAY PROUDLY CAMPAIGNING FOR HER.

THE VALUES THAT ELLA GRASSO KNEW SO WELL AND EMBODIED SO FULLY ARE ALIVE AND WELL IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS AROUND FRANKLIN AVENUE. AND THEY ARE THE VALUES THAT WE NEED TO KEEP AMERICA GROWING INTO THE NEXT CENTURY.

AND THESE VALUES -- BELIEF IN HARD WORK AND OPPORTUNITY, LOVE OF COUNTRY AND HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE -- ARE SHARED BY MILLIONS OF AMERICANS ACROSS THE NATION. WHAT BRINGS ALL OF US TOGETHER IS THE DREAM OF A MORE SECURE FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN.

THAT IS THE VERY MEANING OF A GOOD FAMILY. WE HONOR THE SACRIFICE OUR PARENTS HAVE MADE FOR US BY THE SACRIFICES WE MAKE FOR OUR CHILDREN.

IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS, WE UNDERSTAND THAT WE DEPEND ON EACH OTHER. THAT WE HAVE TO HELP EACH OTHER. THAT SPIRIT OF SHARED INTERESTS, OF MUTUAL CONCERN AND CARING IS A SPIRIT IMBRED FROM OUR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS. WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN TODAY.

EVEN THOUGH THIS WORLD MOVE FASTER THAN OUR PARENTS COULD HAVE IMAGINED, THE RULES ARE THE SAME. MANY OF US HAVE HAD THE SUCCESS OUR PARENTS DREAMED OF. MANY OF OUR CHILDREN HAVE ALSO MET THAT GREAT AMERICAN SUCCESS. THEY HAVE MOVED TO THE SUBURBS. THEY DON'T LIVE UPSTAIRS FROM US ANYMORE. BUT THEY ARE STILL AS CLOSE AS EVER. WE STILL CARE AS MUCH ABOUT THEIR FUTURE AS WE EVER DID BEFORE.

OUR NEIGHBORHOODS NO LONGER MARK THE BOUNDARIES OF OUR WORLD. WE UNDERSTAND THAT WE STILL DEPEND ON EACH OTHER, AS WE ALWAYS HAVE. BUT THE PEOPLE WE DEPEND ON NOW MAY NOT BE THE PEOPLE W THEY LIVE IN EVERY REGION OF THIS COUNTRY, AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

WE MUST LOVE OUR COUNTRY AND WORK FOR OUR FELLOW COUNTRY MEN AND COUNTRY WOMEN AS WE HAVE LOVED AND WORKED FOR OUR

7
FAMILIES IN THE PAST. KEEPING THE DOORS OF OPPORTUNITY OPEN
TO EVERY AMERICAN IS A GOAL CLOSE TO THE HEARTS OF EVERY
ITALIAN AMERICAN.

THIS FESTIVAL IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO COME
TOGETHER AND REMEMBER HOW MUCH WE REALLY SHARE A COMMON
DESTINY. TOGETHER WE CAN KEEP THAT DESTINY BRIGHT. WE CAN
KEEP OUR FUTURE PROMISING. THAT'S WHAT THIS COUNTRY IS ALL
ABOUT. AND THAT'S WHAT THE CHOICE BEFORE US THIS YEAR IS ALL
ABOUT.

WHEN I LOOK OUT AT ALL THE LOVELY PEOPLE HERE I KNOW OUR
FUTURE IS IN GOOD HANDS. AS OUR RELATIVES IN THE OLD COUNTRY
MIGHT PUT IT: OGGI L'ATMOSEFERA D'ITALIA E MOLTO IN EVIDENZA
NELLA FRANKLIN AVENUE. SONO MOLTO CONTENTA DI ESSERE QUI CON
TUTTI I MIEI COMPAESANI. CHE GODIATE LA FESTA!

WHICH MEANS: TODAY THE ATMOSPHERE OF ITALY IS VERY MUCH
ALIVE ON FRANKLIN AVENUE. I AM VERY PLEASED TO BE HERE WITH
ALL MY PAISANOS. HAVE A GREAT TIME AT THE FESTIVAL.

CIAO.

~~TOP SECRET~~

PHONETIC PRONUNCIATION OF THE ITALIAN:

AWD-gee lat-moe-SFEH-rah dee-TOLL-yah EH MOL-toe EEN
eh-vee-DENSE-sah NEHL-lah FRANKLIN AVENUE. SO-no MOL-toe
come-TEN-tah DEE ESS-eh-ray KWEE CONE TOOT-tee EE ME-yay
cohm-pie-eh-ZAH-nee. KAY go-dee-YAH-teh LAH FEH-stah.

Read these as if they were written in English and stress is
indicated by the capital letters. AW = as in law
EH = as in yeh, TOLL = as in doll not toll AH= as in hah!

Translated and phoneticized by Steve Engleberg and Frances
O'Brian.