

Editor
News-Post
Frederick, Md. 12701

8/22/84

Dear Editor,

Your today's editorial assault on Ms. Geraldine Ferraro is neither factually correct nor fair and balanced.

It is not factually correct to state that she is involved in an "income tax scandal" and this the entire basis for your assault and unfairness.

Income-tax preparation today is enormously complicated and requires the services of those who are expert in their preparation. Errors as well as disagreements in interpretations of various provisions of the complicated laws are commonplace. (40% of whose income was paid in taxes) Absent any showing of intent to evade the government by the taxpayer, when the preparer errs the taxpayer is innocent. Much more innocent than, say, a Reagan attorney general who is found to be in violation of the laws he is supposed to uphold and defend.

Your concern for who is a "heart-beat away" from the Presidency does not seem to extend to the man in that position today and again in the coming election, George Bush. Have you forgotten what he was responsible for when he was Director, Central Intelligence, and all of its incredible departures from traditional American beliefs and practises? (To say nothing about deliberate violations of the laws.)

I do not recall your concern over a President in power who thinks it is funny to "joke" about launching a nuclear war and incinerating the planet.

Or your concern over a President who cannot stay awake in his normal duties and assigns them to those who have a long series of scandalous oversights. Like the Meese he wants to be attorney general, the Casey he has who is involved in the most dubious financial practises and sows mines in the high seas to kill the innocent and so many others.

Or your concern over a President who was elected on his solemn word that he would reduce government spending and has instead given us a national debt that ten years ago could not even be imagined? This is honest and decent but you have questions when a professional tax preparer is wrong, and on this you can string out the kinds of

accusations you make?

Your account of the property sale also is biased and unfair. It was worth more than Ms. Ferraro paid for it and not long after she sold her share that property was sold at a \$200,000 profit. Moreover, it was not illegal for her to sell her share to her husband's partner and it would not have been illegal for her to sell her share directly to her husband.

The expression of opinion in editorials is perfectly proper, but editorials also ought to be both correct and fair. If they contain evaluations, those evaluations ought to be balanced.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Rd.
Frederick, MD 21701

The Frederick Post

Established 1910

George B. Delaplaine Jr.
Editor

Tom Mills
Executive Editor

Fred J. Archibald
Managing Editor

B-4

Wednesday, August 22, 1984

Frederick, Md.

Ferraro 'innocent victim?'

Efforts by people of both persuasions — Democrat and Republican — to paint Geraldine Ferraro as an "innocent victim" in the income tax scandal involving her and her husband, John A. Zaccaro, are missing two all-important points.

First, if elected vice president, she would be "only a heart beat away" from the presidency. The United States has had its share of "innocent victims" in the White House — unfortunately, the people didn't find this out until too late.

Americans do not want anyone in the White House, or next in line for it, who does not know what's going on in his/her own house — specifically in regard to income tax and the spouse's business and financial dealings.

Payment of \$53,459 to the Internal Revenue Service for back taxes was made by the couple Monday, to make up for a shortfall of \$29,709 in 1978 taxes (first noticed in the last few days by Ms. Ferraro's new accountants). The additional \$23,750 was owed the IRS for "interest due."

The original error, involving a gain of \$68,439 on the sale — to a business partner of her husband — of her half-interest in property purchased five months earlier for \$158,750, was blamed on Ms. Ferraro's former accountant.

This quick profit, added to gains from the sale to the same buyer of another piece of property, brought proceeds of \$130,000 — the amount she needed to pay back family loans declared illegal by the Federal Election Commission.

There have been questions about

Mr. Zaccaro's tenants in his property in lower Manhattan — one in which alleged pornographic materials are stored, and another, allegedly the site of gambling activities.

Giving the vice presidential candidate the benefit of the doubt, granted: Geraldine is an innocent victim. So, perhaps, were Senators Edward M. Kennedy and Thomas F. Eagleton, who took themselves out of contention for the highest offices in the land.

Second, bearing the banner of the "first woman" vice presidential candidate, and already besmirched by her own political waters, will she prove to be the unsullied, unblemished white lambskin the nation wanted and had a right to expect in this history-making moment?

The selection of a woman by the Democrats or the Republicans to share the presidential ticket was long overdue, and to its credit, the Democratic Party did it first.

But has the party chosen the best person to do this?

Has the party and its leader served well this cause?

Did Walter Mondale check far enough into the life of the Zaccaros before the nomination was tendered to her? Or was he also "an innocent victim" of his party lieutenants' failure to ask important, probing questions as to whether there was anything in the Zaccaros' past the Democratic Party should know about?

Apparently no one asked. If anyone did, what were the answers?

Response to editorial
of Ms. Ferraro
gress?
Ger-

Account of the property sale also
ed up fair at \$250,000, which more
likely to paid for it and not long
she sold her share that property
was sold at a \$200,000 profit. Moreover,
It was not illegal for her to sell her share
to her husband, but it would
not have been illegal for her to sell her
share directly to her husband.
The expression of opinion in editorials
is perfectly proper, but editorials also
ought to be based on correct facts. If they
contain evaluations, these evaluations
ought to be balanced.

HAROLD WEISBERG
7827 Old Receiver Rd., Frederick

YOUR NAME CAME UP
AT LUNCH TODAY!

Mr. George Delaplaine
Frederick News-Post
Frederick, Md. 21701

9/5/84

Dear George,

This junior-grade nazism in today's mail, unique in my experience in Frederick, has made me think.

Why should anyone react this way to a letter that asked no more than fairness for Mr. Ferraro and in comment on the political campaign?

It is not easy to avoid the possibility that it and more unspoken like it are engendered by a steady diet of hate and war as the solution to national problems.

I'm not in any sense criticizing you or the papers and this is utterly foreign to my experiences with you and the papers. My experience, without exception, is of fairness and there certainly is no racism that I've seen or even suspected.

But when loyalty to the country and patriotism are equated with unquestioning support of Reagan, and there is a diet of the kind of cartooning by that character Wright in Providence, which too often has exceeded decency and gets irrational, is not this the kind of thing that can be expected?

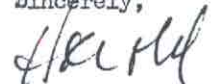
I'm sure this ignoramus believed he was expressing patriotism and loyalty and accusing me of the opposite.

I've been around quite a few years by now and I look back on much I cannot forget. In those years I've become more convinced than when I cast my first vote and split the ticket that our system and its benefits require the existence of all political views and the right to express them. In practise this has come to mean the Democratic and Republican parties as we have known them. I fear that the inevitable result of Reagan and the turn he has made in the Republican party will mean the end of that party as we have known it and its conversion into an extreme party. That, I believe, bodes no good for the nation.

When she was visiting in Frederick we met Mrs. Beryl Dellar, widow of a British army colonel. Like many in a wide cross-section abroad, she has become very fearful of the potential of United States policies and escalation of missile and nuclear warheads in their countries. Grandmother, army-widow that she is, she joined a woman's group protesting the increase in United States nuclear armaments in England, and she wrote a letter you published. She received a letter infinitely more indecent than this disgusting thing. I asked her to send it to the papers but she is ashamed, it is that bad.

The world is full of all kinds of people and there is no accounting for how some got the way they are. But I recall also that in my youth it was incredible to me that so fine a people as the Germans could accept and give such lusty support to a Hitler and his policies. So I am concerned about any manifestation of it, in any degree, in our country and about anything that can in any way foster such extreme and in the end self-defeating views. No matter how unintended the fostering of such beliefs.

Sincerely,


Harold Weisberg