

PERSPECTIVES

FIRST PERSON

Gov. Bill Clinton rallies campaign support in Piedmont Triad Area

By Sarah Dings



Yesterday I stood in the midst of 3500 other people who all agreed on the same thing. Triad International airport hosted the rally for Governor Bill Clinton, America's democratic hope for the presidency.

The rally contained the excitement of a football game, only the fans were not divided. Well, I did see three lone men--Bush/Quayle signs tight in hand--wandering forlornly through through the mass of people. Freedom of speech was upheld and disturbances were minimal.

Sometimes it takes a foreign perspective to make an American realize the beauty of his or her political system. For example, an elderly British man visiting North Carolina gestured to two men standing in silence beside one another- one holding a Bush sign and the other wearing a Clinton shirt.

The British man said, "Back home in England, as a Conservative, I wouldn't consider even living on the same street as a Socialist, never mind standing next to him!"

Elsewhere in the crowd, people were saying exactly what they felt. One man held a sign saying, "A Woman Who Votes For Bush Is Like A Chicken Who Votes for Colonel Sanders."

One sign Bill Clinton himself commented on read, "Working Women for Hillary's Husband." I also saw signs reading "Hillary, Marry Me!"

A schmuck for political speeches, I was energized by Governor Clinton's vision. He said that he planned to move the country "forward, not to the left or to the right." This remark was probably a response to the media who try to depict him as a fanatic radical. You know, the kind who actually "allows" his wife to be a lawyer.

Clinton spoke to the predominantly college-aged crowd when he called for more affordable tuitions and more jobs for graduates. He spoke to the women in the audience when he reinforced his stand on the pro-choice issue.

He spoke to everyone when he said that he intended to get Americans motivated to rejoin the world economy.

People were packing themselves closer to the platform and were craning their necks so that they could see at least a sliver of Bill Clinton on the stage.

I heard a little boy complaining that he could not see. The tall guy standing next to me let him climb up on his shoulders. The boy's mother turned to her son to ask what he could see.

Other upturned faces questioned the child about what he could see from his high perch. The questioning was symbolic; the elders were turning to the young to help them see the events happening before them.

As environmental awareness, progress to aid an ailing economy, and improvements in health care were spoken of, it became obvious to the crowd that these were issues affecting young and old, issues upon which everyone's life would depend.

And yes, I did get to shake Bill Clinton's hand.

Photo by Sara Karpenske for College Relations