



Working the crowd: President Clinton took his jacket off and mingled with the masses. Then he went back to the podium and resumed his speech.

STAFF PHOTO BY DAN DEAN

Clinton charms Main Street

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

It was Main Street in Royal Oak where President Bill Clinton turned on the charm.

But symbolically it was also Main Street, U.S.A., where Clinton reached out, mixing his own brand of populism and politics.

"If you obey the law, work hard and pay your taxes," Clinton told the cheering crowd, "you're my kind of American."

Then, reminiscent of Harry Truman, Clinton said, "And I'm

going to work hard to make sure programs like social security and Medicare are there for you when you need them."

Clinton's words — and style — electrified the crowd, estimated at about 8,000, gathered in the general area of Main Street, Sixth Street and the tracks.

"He has a very common touch," said Nancy Altus of Farmington Hills. Even though much of the setting and the speech were carefully orchestrated media events, Altus said Clinton had a ring of sincerity.

"He wants to help everybody," said her daughter, Angela, a 6th grader at O.E. Dunckel Middle School.

"He's a very good speaker," said Stella Liu of Southfield. "He's so personal and the examples he uses are so meaningful."

"President Reagan was called the 'great communicator,'" said the retired Wayne State University educator, "but I think Clinton is equally good."

The President covered all bases, said Arnold Sabaroff of West Bloomfield, referring to Clinton's references to the envi-

ronment, full employment, education and other key issues.

"He was strong on family values," said Sabaroff, "and he was strong on quality of life issues. He's the kind of President I want to follow."

As he had earlier in the day in Wyandotte, Clinton said he has at least two major goals for his next administration: Upgrading reading skills for elementary students and installing computers in every school, even those in economically distressed inner-city areas.

Third graders must be reading at the third-grade level, Clinton said. "And every student should have access to the information super highway."

Lisa Parkinson, a teacher, said she was encouraged by Clinton's emphasis on education issues. "He wants every youngster to get a good education," she said. "I teach in Troy, an affluent district. The President is obviously concerned about less affluent districts."

Another Troy teacher, Kim Benbow, said he considers Clinton "the education president."

Not everyone was that enamored with Clinton. Bobbi Schlaff, who identified herself as a "Republican from Berkeley," said she was there because of curiosity. "I wanted to see the draft-dodger in person," she said.

Schlaff said she considers Jack Kemp to also be a draft-dodger. But she firmly supports Bob Dole, a World War II veteran, and is confident he will win in November.

But for the most part, most of the crowd seemed pleased with Clinton and his message. Many, including Sallie Dinwiddie of Southfield, had waited hours — and gone through security checks — to see the president.

Was it worth the wait? "Oh yes," said Dinwiddie, who had seen candidate Clinton four years ago, "definitely worth it."

Narayanan Ramesh of Troy saw the President's visit as both historic and educational. That's why he brought his son Ajay, 6, who is a student at Roeper School in Birmingham. "He (Ajay) is beginning to learn the political system," said Ramesh.

Dole, Kemp supporters were a negative sign for Clinton

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

For Vivina Rosal of West Bloomfield, the President's whistle-stop campaign in Oakland County evoked a different image of Bill Clinton.

As the 21st Century Express approached Royal Oak Tuesday, the Philippine-born physician didn't see Clinton as a successful and triumphant president mingling with adoring voters.

"He reminds me of Marcos (Ferdinand)," said Rosal, referring to the late, and some would say corrupt, president of the Philippine Islands. "He's very intelligent, but crooked. He's 'Slick Willie' all right."

Rosal was part of the local component of the Republican "Truth Squad" on hand when Clinton's train chugged into Oakland County en route to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

The goal, according to Rosal and others, was to demonstrate their support for the GOP ticket of Bob Dole and Jack Kemp. The "Truth Squad" included

U.S. Sen. Mike DeWine of Ohio, U.S. Rep. Joe Knollenberg and Republican candidates Ronna Romney and John Pappageorge.

But local Republicans were a vital component, according to GOP county chair Kathy M. Longo of Troy.

"We're very pro-family," said Lana Mangiapane, a Republican from Rochester Hills. Being pro-family encompasses a variety of issues, she said, including tax policies.

"Taxes are a very important family issue," Mangiapane said. "Lower taxes leave families with more money they can spend on their own welfare."

The GOP "Truth Squad" rallied near city hall in Royal Oak where Republicans distributed "Dole-Kemp" signs. One banner read, "Michigan Welcomes President Clinton's Tax Express."

For the most part, the "Truth Squad" was content to demonstrate support for the GOP ticket at various store-fronts and strategic locations along the whistle-stop route from Royal Oak to Pontiac and Holly.

See B1B6, A7

taking a peek: Keith and Margaret Spaccapan, of Birmingham, watch Clinton's train pass.



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