

Friday, June 1, 2012

12:45 PM

Clinton advocates 'shared responsibilities and shared sacrifice'



MILWAUKEE -- Former President Bill Clinton today told hundreds of cheering supporters of Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett that Wisconsin needs "a government with shared responsibilities and shared sacrifice, not 'winner take all.'"

Clinton said, "People look at Wisconsin and see America's battleground." He said Gov. Scott Walker has created "constant conflict."

Noting that the Pledge of Allegiance mentions the idea of a nation "undivided under God," Clinton declared, "Every day when a child in Wisconsin says the Pledge of Allegiance, it's a rebuke to the far right's winner-take-all, take-no-prisoners, divide-and-conquer, constant-conflict philosophy of government."

"Ordinarily, I'm against recall elections," Clinton said. "But sometimes it's the only way to change a disastrous course."

Barrett, wearing a Milwaukee Brewers jacket, told the crowd gathered at Pere Marquette Park that Clinton "is a fella who knows a lot about the middle class, a fella who knows a lot about balanced budgets, a fella who knows a lot about running a surplus, a fella who knows a lot about leading this nation to the largest economic expansion in our nation's history."

"I couldn't be more charged up," Barrett said, adding that he didn't sleep well after last night's debate, during which he said Walker indicated he considers the middle class an enemy of the state.

"Our governor has done a wonderful job of making the wealthiest people the happiest people," Barrett said.

The biggest cheers of the event went for Clinton, with some onlookers jumping up and down in excitement. Afterward, people clamored to shake Clinton's hand and take his picture.

Clinton praised Barrett on education, saying, "As far as I know, he's the only mayor in the country who's taken the lead in putting 3,000 or so high school kids into the workplace so they can understand what's going on and they got a

better chance to get a job."

Referring to the Milwaukee 7 economic development initiative, Clinton said of Barrett, "He's the head of a regional economic council that turned the Menomonee Valley from a brownfield into a commercial success with nearly 4,000 new jobs."

Clinton added, "I'll bet you anything there were some Republicans on that council. They were worried about how to put people to work and not divide and conquer. "

In a reference to collective bargaining, Clinton said, "If you believe in an economy of shared prosperity when times are good and shared sacrifice when times are not, then you don't want to break the unions, you want them at the negotiating table and you trust them to know that arithmetic rules."

Clinton reminded Wisconsinites that they supported a Democrat when he was on the presidential ticket.

"In 1992 when Wisconsin voted for me, if this were a divide-and-conquer state, is this were a winner-take-all state, you would not have voted for me," said Clinton. "You know why? Because in 1992, Wisconsin was one of only two states in America that were actually better off than they had been in 1988. The other 48 states were worse off. Because you understood that over the long run, we had to build a nation of shared prosperity, shared responsibility."

Clinton and Barrett shared the stage with several other local and state politicians, including Lt. Gov. candidate Mahlon Mitchell, U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore and state Sens. Jon Erpenbach and Lena Taylor.

Mitchell told the crowd, "We live in a time when American values are being trumped by special interests." Citing Walker administration cuts to education and issues of workers rights and voter ID, Mitchell said, "It's more like, we sacrifice and they share the wealth."

Moore read a poem which started off with, "Great Scott, Scott Walker, you've gotta go, baby."

Complaining about Walker's effort "to take away women's contraception and repeal pay equity for women," Moore chanted, "Your respect for women is a misconception and a mere deception, to which we take exception."

A woman named Shyquetta Mcelroy, who said she is a single mother from Milwaukee, stood at the podium and said it seems Walker is attacking ordinary citizens.

"It really hit personal when he proposed to cut BadgerCare," she said. "I'd have to kick one of my children off BadgerCare and that's not a decision I'm going to make. I have two words for Governor Walker: You're fired," she said.

The crowd chanted "Bar-rett, Bar-rett" and "Recall Walker" and held up signs saying, "It's time -- June 5," "Stop the War" and "Extremism makes for toxic politics."

At least a few Walker supporters were in the crowd, too, however, including one man who held a large sign saying, "Support Scott Walker, not union thugs."

A group of six teachers held up "Tom Barrett for governor" signs, joking that, "We're teacher thugs."

-- *By Kay Nolan*

Labels: [2012_recall_elections](#)