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Presidential Candidates Respond to NC News Service Questions

REAGAN

Anti-Abortion Effort Pledged

Washington (NC) -- President Reagan promised, if re-elected, to seek passage of anti-abortion and tuition tax credit legislation and to protect Central America from "military solutions" imposed by communist-backed governments.

In response to written questions submitted by National Catholic News Service, Reagan also pledged "at least essential equivalence" in military strength with the Soviet Union. He said the United States provides nuclear strength for Western Europe because America's NATO allies have been reluctant to match growing Soviet-bloc conventional force power with increased conventional force of their own.

Reagan said that "for as long as my administration is in office, we will continue to support the pro-life movement in every way possible, including legislative initiatives." He added that "I support a constitutional amendment to end the tragedy of abortion and I am profoundly disappointed that the Supreme Court has struck down several states' efforts" to restrict abortion.

Similarly, he stated that "I have repeatedly said that tuition tax credits are at the top of my domestic agenda." He blamed failure to obtain them on Congress.

But he also said there is reason for optimism about tuition tax credit legislation because his re-election would demonstrate the backing of Americans for his programs. Thus, he added, "we will have an increased chance to move vital legislation like tuition tax credits through the Congress."

He also declared that "the United States is committed to encouraging internal reforms and negotiated solutions to political problems in El Salvador" but that "we will not stand by and let military solutions be imposed on the free people of Central America by their adversaries."

The president said that two thirds of U.S. assistance to Central America has been economic and humanitarian. Moreover, the United States has only 55 military advisers in El Salvador, while the Cubans have 10,000 military and civilian advisers in rival



PRESIDENT REAGAN

Nicaragua, which also received \$350 million in Soviet military equipment between 1979 and March of this year, he said.

The Nicaraguans are using that aid to wage revolution against "the democratic governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Costa Rica," Reagan added.

Questioned about NATO nuclear first-use policies, which have been criticized by the U.S. bishops as morally unacceptable, Reagan said that the United States and NATO "do not start wars and we use our forces, especially our nuclear forces -- only to deter aggression."

However, he said, since World War II Europe has seen development of "vastly superior Soviet-bloc conventional forces on their eastern borders." In response, "NATO

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MONDALE

'Moral Bankruptcy' Charged to Foe

Washington (NC) -- Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale "respects" the Catholic Church's teaching on the unborn but backs the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. He also pledged that if elected he will de-emphasize the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. defense policies.

In response to written questions submitted by National Catholic News Service, Mondale criticized the Reagan administration for "moral bankruptcy" in budget cuts and said he will restrain federal spending while protecting the poor and disadvantaged.

He likewise rejected tuition tax credits but said he favors other federal assistance to education which can benefit private schools.

Mondale said that he has "prayed over and deeply considered the question of abortion," "one of the most emotional and serious issues we are faced with today." Moreover, "I respect the teaching of the Catholic Church that guides its followers to believe differently than many other

Americans on when life begins."

However, he said, "I agree with the Supreme Court decision on abortion that says each person has to make a personal and private moral judgment for herself."

Mondale suggested Americans must understand that alternatives to abortion exist, such as adoption. He cited his previous backing for a liberal adoption law so that "more children could come to term" and urged development of "strong local family planning and service programs that give impoverished women the support they need to bear and raise their children."

Mondale renounced the concept of nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union. "It is futile and dangerous to seek clear nuclear superiority" because "this can only fuel the arms race," the Democratic candidate said.

"We should instead negotiate a mutual and verifiable freeze on the arms race now, and then move on to mutual, verifiable and equitable reductions," he added. Mondale also promised that "conventional forces



WALTER MONDALE

will have priority in my defense budget, which will grow at a rate of 3-4 percent a year," which is less than the current rate.

Discussing social programs, he said that "nothing else reveals more about the utter moral bankruptcy of the Reagan administration than their assault on the social support system. Their cynical approach has been to balance the budget on the backs of our nation's poor and elderly," in the process cutting "more than \$9 billion" in aid to "poor families and children."

Mondale said that he is "committed to reversing these tragic policies and substituting policies which recognize that at the core of our national philosophy is the desire to help those in need." He said he would restore \$30 billion in support for "prudent, successful programs de-

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ELIZABETH

She Makes You 'Feel Fantastic'

By Terrance J. Brennan

Elizabeth Clune is eight years old. She takes swimming and piano lessons, attends dance class, is an active member of the Brownies, goes to Sunday school, loves video movies, and has Down's Syndrome.

Elizabeth is fortunate because she is one of several Down's Syndrome children in the Ithaca area being "mainstreamed" into a more normal lifestyle than is sometimes offered to children with like afflictions.

According to literature from the National Foundation of the March of Dimes, Down's Syndrome, formerly called mongolism, is a birth defect caused at conception that leaves the child mentally retarded.

In appearance, a Down's Syndrome child very often is shorter than other children their age, with oval-shaped eyes and a tongue that seems too big for the mouth.

During a normal conception, the chromosome count when egg and sperm merge is 46 -- 23 from mother, 23 from father. Down's Syndrome is caused by the appearance of an extra chromosome, giving the fertilized egg a total of 47. The extra chromosome causes the condition.

According to medical authorities, the affliction is more likely to appear when the mother is over the age of 35 -- or under 35 if the mother has previously had a baby with the syndrome. JoAnn Clune, Elizabeth's mother,

When Elizabeth was born, my pediatrician told me, "You have to get your priorities in the right order," Mrs. Clune said. "You'll cry -- everyone does -- and then realize you have to get on with life, put aside the dreams you had of your child going to Harvard, and go on from there."

There is a misconception of "retarded," Mrs. Clune added. "These children are no different from the normal child, it just takes them longer to pick concepts up -- they learn at a slower rate."

The Clunes have lived in Ithaca for nearly 10 years and are members of St. Catherine of Siena Parish. Family patriarch, Robert, is a partner in the law firm of Mazza, Williamson and Clune.

"Elizabeth has the knack to make you feel fantastic," said her mother. "You just can't be down around her. She's very loving, happy -- she doesn't get grumpy or demanding."

A typical day for Elizabeth begins with a half an hour in the morning, each weekday, with a speech therapist, then off to the Montessori School until dismissal around 3 p.m.

Her outside activities are extensive -- she takes swimming lessons at Cortland State on Monday nights, lessons in the Suzuki Theory of Piano on Tuesdays, goes to dance class on Saturdays at the Ithaca Academy of Dance, and is an active member of the Brownies.

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JoAnn Clune gets a big hug from daughter Elizabeth, 8.

Photo by Terrance J. Brennan