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On The High Road With Ronald Reagan...

Four years ago, this nation was mired in a great dismal swamp of domestic and international problems. At home, raging inflation and interest rates devastated the economy. Abroad, humiliating displays of American timidity — highlighted by the United States' impotence when Ayatollah Khomeini seized 52 of its citizens as hostages in Iran, and by Washington's ineffectual response to the Soviet Union's open involvement in the Marxist movement in Central America — shattered the nation's prestige and its credibility as a foe of tyranny. The country had sunk into one of the most despondent moods in its history.

Contrast the miserable conditions of 1980 with the conditions of today. Inflation has dropped from the teens to about 4 percent. The prime interest rate has plunged from a high of more than 21 percent to slightly more than 12 percent. Income taxes are down. The economy pulses with vigor, and the public brims with optimism. Internationally, the United States has regained respect by firmly re-establishing its determination to defend its interests, by military means if necessary.

What accounts for the startling difference between 1980 and 1984? In a word, leadership.

In 1980, of course, the White House was occupied by Jimmy Carter, whose administration is generally considered one of the biggest botches in the history of the presidency. He failed domestically largely because of his unwillingness to reverse those of his party's policies that had contributed to the nation's economic decline. He failed internationally largely because of his naive belief that moral suasion could replace military strength as the United States' most effective deterrent to Soviet aggression. Supporting him in both arenas was Vice President Walter Mondale, now the Democratic candidate for president.

For the past four years, the United States has been under the leadership of President Ronald Reagan, who went into office as a crusader against excessive government and as a realistic and relentless foe of communism. He has battled from the beginning to reduce the cost, size and power of government. He has lowered taxes for individuals and businesses and eased the burden of government regulations, rejuvenating the economy in the process. He has rebuilt the nation's military forces, which had deteriorated alarmingly during the Carter-Mondale years, and has shown refreshing and justifiable toughness in dealing with the Soviet Union and its proxies in Central America. The United States is economically healthier and militarily more secure because of Ronald Reagan's leadership.

But he has done far more than repair the nation's economy and its defense system. He has rekindled its spirit. Ronald Reagan's dynamic and positive attitude, his emphasis on the nation's potential rather than its limitations — characteristics vastly different from the negativism of Jimmy Carter — have restored the nation's confidence in itself and inspired faith in the future. Confidence and faith are essential to progress, and it is a truly constructive leader who can generate them.

The election of Walter Mondale would halt the encouraging trends that Ronald Reagan has started. Mr. Mondale is committed to those traditional liberal Democratic policies which have had such a blighting impact on the nation over

the past several decades. He would tighten government's stifling grip on the affairs of the nation's businesses, institutions and private citizens. Mr. Mondale favors racial quotas in personnel systems, forced busing for racial purposes, gun control, unrestricted abortions and the proposed Equal Rights Amendment. He advocates a tax increase that would hit more than half the nation's wage-earners — and imperil the economic recovery that Mr. Reagan's policies have accelerated.

Despite Mr. Mondale's pious pledge to keep the nation strong militarily, his records as a United States senator and as vice president indict him as an advocate of policies of weakness. He has opposed such weapons as the B-1 bomber, the M-1 tank, the Harrier fighter plane and the sea-launched cruise missile. As the last presidential debate reminded us, he even opposed building the aircraft carrier Nimitz.

In negotiating with the Soviets, Mr. Mondale would revert to the discredited Carter policy of moral suasion. One of his conciliatory gestures would be to embrace a freeze on nuclear weapons in an effort to achieve an arms agreement with Moscow. No doubt he would get one, but it almost surely would favor the Soviet Union.

It also is highly likely that Mr. Mondale's trusting and propitiatory stance would encourage Soviet expansionism. History shows that the Russians respect firmness, and there is reason to believe that they have been impressed by President Reagan's determination to resist their aggressions. His decision to move militarily against Marxist leaders who were threatening to make hostages

of American students in Grenada, a move that also freed Grenadians themselves from the clutches of communism, had a sobering effect on Moscow. So, too, has his firm support, in the face of continuing intemperate criticism from liberals at home, for those who are fighting Marxism in El Salvador and Nicaragua. One sign that Mr. Reagan's policies are giving the Soviets pause is the increased interest Marxist leaders in Central America seem to be showing in reaching a peaceful solution to the problems there.

But Walter Mondale opposes Mr. Reagan's policies in Central America. There is a good chance that, as president, Mr. Mondale would fortify the Soviet Union's belief that the most effective way to deal with the United States is to push it around.

Ronald Reagan merits re-election on the basis of his record alone. But having Walter Mondale, who promises a return to the disastrous policies of the past, as his opponent makes Mr. Reagan's re-election even more desirable.



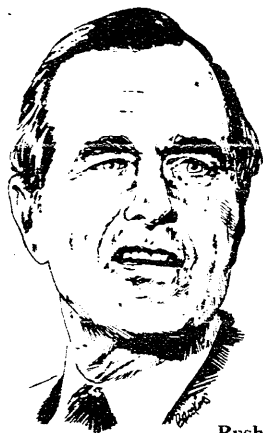
Reagan

... And George Bush

There is yet another reason voters should choose Mr. Reagan on Nov. 6: Vice President George Bush. A victory for Mr. Reagan would, of course, mean a victory for Mr. Bush, his running mate. It would be difficult to exaggerate the significance of this, for it is doubtful that the differences between the candidates for vice president have ever been more pronounced.

Consider the profound importance of the vice presidency. The assassination of one president, the resignation of another and the shooting of still another during the past three decades have dramatically demonstrated how quickly fate can thrust the vice president into the nation's highest office. It is imperative that the country choose its vice president with the same concern for ability that it displays in selecting the president. The vice presidency is no position for neophytes or hacks.

George Bush is neither. As a congressman, as ambassador to the United Nations, as head of the CIA, as the United States' representative to the People's Republic of China and, now, as vice



Bush

president, he has acquired knowledge and experience that would be invaluable to him as president. Moreover, he is highly competent and articulate. Of all the vice presidents in the nation's history, George Bush truly is one of the most highly qualified to be president.

In the event of a Mondale victory, who would become president if something happened to him? Geraldine Ferraro. A neophyte she is. Six years ago, she was a Queens housewife-attorney. She is completing her third two-year term in the House of Representatives, which constitutes the ultimate in her experience in national affairs. Never has she held an important administrative post, at any level of government, that would test her executive abilities. She has had no significant experience in foreign affairs. Yet it would be up to her to deal with the Soviet Union, to command the nation's armed forces and to manage all the other complex responsibilities of the presidency if fate should remove Mr. Mondale. Of all the people who have sought the vice presidency, she is one of the least qualified to be president. The thought that she might assume responsibility for the nation's destiny is chilling.

The nation cannot afford to take a chance on the liberal Mr. Mondale and the woefully inexperienced and liberal Ms. Ferraro, and there is no need for it to do so. Ronald Reagan and George Bush have proved to be effective, constructive leaders. They have lifted the nation from the great dismal swamp. They have put it back on the high road to prosperity, security and respect. In doing so, they have earned the nation's gratitude and the right to lead it four more years.

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Patrick J. Buchanan

Leadership? Who, Fritz?

CHICAGO — Citing President Reagan as the most detached, out-of-touch, ill-informed president in modern American history, Fritz Mondale is entrusting his political fate in the final two weeks of the campaign to the "leadership issue." As, heretofore, leadership has been considered Reagan's long suit, his greatest asset, it is hard not to conclude that Fritz Mondale, having lost Sunday's debate, has run out of options and decided to play out the hand.

Still, the Mondale emphasis on leadership is odd, because Mondale has never himself been considered a strong leader but rather the always-available consensus choice of those who could not decide upon someone else. He was not first elected attorney general in Minnesota, he was appointed; he was not first elected to the Senate, he was appointed to fill a chair left vacant by the elevation of Hubert Humphrey to the vice presidency. His first run for the Democratic nomination in 1974 having ended ingloriously, he dropped out, citing his weariness with the accommodations provided by America's Holiday Inns. In 1976, lightning struck when he was selected by Jimmy Carter as an acceptable Northern liberal to balance the ticket.

What has Fritz Mondale ever led?

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CONTRAST Mr. Consensus with Mr. Conservative.

After eight years as governor of America's largest state during the turbulent late '60s and early '70s, Reagan arrived in the White House with more executive experience than Nixon, Kennedy, Johnson, Ford, Carter and Mondale combined.

In 1976, Reagan led a conservative rebellion that almost took the nomination away from a sitting president of his own party, a feat not accomplished in a century. For 15 years, before coming to the White House, he had been the acknowledged national leader of one of the great political

and social movements of the 20th century — the post-war conservative revival. In 1980, with his 44-state landslide, he became the first nominee in 50 years to take away the presidency from a sitting, elected incumbent seeking a second term.

Derided in America's and Europe's capitals as a simple-minded cowboy, he forged a coalition which imposed his ideas upon the American economy: deregulation, across-the-board tax cuts, a reduction in the rate of growth of federal social spending.

Now, one may consider these ideas foolish then and foolish now; but there is no doubt who alone imposed them upon Congress and upon the country. By 1984, with recovery well in hand and America the envy of the industrial world, small supply-side revolu-

'No one is saying today what was commonplace four years ago: that the job is too big for one man.'

tions were being promoted in the once-skeptical socialist countries of West Europe.

Through his negotiation strategy, and his perseverance, the president won deployment of the Pershing and cruise missiles in Europe, holding the NATO alliance together, enraging and discomfiting the Soviets. Then in one bold stroke, he recaptured Grenada from Castroism. Mondale, who first disparaged Grenada as America's moral equivalent of Afghanistan, now says that — given subsequent evidence that the medical students were indeed in danger — he, too, would have launched the rescue mission.

Many of Reagan's initiatives — the IMF bank bailout, for example —

have angered his conservative constituency. Yet about his leadership capacity there is no question. He appears to be the first president since Eisenhower headed for two full terms; he is the first president in the television age not to have been eviscerated by a cynical, hostile press. No one is saying today what was commonplace four years ago: that the job is too big for one man.

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ONE MAY be as repelled by Reagan's ideas and ideology as is Tip O'Neill; yet, the speaker's outrage and exasperation speaks volumes that Ronald Reagan is a successful leader.

There is a measure of truth in Bob Strauss' jibe that the reason Bill Clark was moved over to Interior was that Nancy felt the staff squabbles were causing the president too many sleepless afternoons. Perhaps Reagan does ride horses in the morning, take naps in the afternoon, doze off at boring Cabinet meetings and take long weekends to enjoy the "oldies but goodies" — movies he recalls from bygone days. So what?

The essence of presidential leadership is not mastery of detail; else, LBJ and Carter would have been our greatest modern presidents. It is a strong, deeply grounded philosophy, a concept of the nation and the world that is realistic, the ability to decide and act, and, most important, the capacity to communicate and inspire and persuade. Reagan has all these in spades. His collegial style may be exasperating; he is perhaps too indulgent of the foibles of friends and subordinates; he is a dismal disciplinarian. Yet, as Lebanon showed, he is a leader who knows when to cut his losses, and how to cover a necessary retreat.

Speaking of leadership, how many national Democrats has Fritz Mondale lined up behind that \$85 billion tax increase?

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John Chamberlain

Reagan's Public Relations Victory

IN THE Kansas City debate between Mondale and Reagan the Grenada operation wasn't mentioned once. Why?

Time after time Mondale laid it into Reagan that he is an incompetent as a commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Yet in all his four years as president, Ronald Reagan has had only one opportunity to test his mettle in a military operation. That was in Grenada. The invasion of that Castro-dominated island in the West Indies was carried out with neatness and dispatch, with a secrecy in its preparation that, however much it may have annoyed the press, was essential to the limitation of casualties.

Since Mondale was trying to score debating points, it is quite understandable that he should avoid bringing up the fact that Reagan, with the Grenada move, had forced the evil Soviet Empire to disgorge a bit of strategic territory for the first time in post-Yalta history. But where were Mondale's journalistic questioners when this peculiar act of omission was going on? Why didn't they ask Mondale to comment on Reagan's handling of the Grenada emergency?

And why, for that matter, didn't Reagan depart from the question-and-answer formula to bring Grenada up for himself? The answer here is that Reagan, too, had an overweening objective in mind. He had been called a warmonger, a man with an itchy trigger-finger, all too often in some utterly unconscionable attacks. He went into the debate resolved to paint a portrait of himself as a man of peace. He didn't want to get into an

argument about when war might be justified.

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SO WHAT WE had at Kansas City was a public relations contest that had little to do with the establishment of historical truth.

Judged strictly as a P.R. exhibition, it was all in Reagan's favor. All he had to do to "win" the debate was to remain unrattled and humorous in his responses. He did exactly that. The Louisville memory was erased. He let Mondale become bogged down in a silly repetition of obvious untruths, such as the charge that Reagan had once said a submarine missile or an airplane bomb release could be "re-called." Reagan had never said such an idiotic thing, as a check of the relevant transcript has proved.

Mondale kept hammering away at the proposition that a leader must know everything. In his opinion Reagan should have been able to divine suicidal kamikaze plots in the heads of Moslem fanatics in the Middle East. He should have been looking over the shoulder of a CIA contract writer in Nicaragua as a first draft of a guerrilla manual was being prepared miles away from the Oval Office.

But even as Mondale was excoriating Reagan for a lack of omniscience, new charges involving the real estate dealings of John Zaccaro, the husband of vice presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro, were being printed in the Philadelphia Inquirer. The stories alleged connections with mob charac-

ters. It may be unfair to insinuate that Ms. Ferraro has had any responsibility for her husband's business decisions, but according to the Inquirer account, reprinted in Murdoch's New York Post, the Democratic candidate for George Bush's office ran her husband's business from 1960 to 1974 whenever he was out of town.

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THE POINT to be made here is that Walter Mondale, who is so critical of Reagan's lack of omniscience as a commander in chief, failed quite completely to inform himself about the Ferraro-Zaccaro past when he was picking a running mate. How negligent can a prospective commander in chief afford to be?

Reagan can rightfully complain that many in the media have bent over backwards to favor Walter Mondale. The effort to picture the president as a doddering old man on the basis of a few uncompleted sentences during the Louisville debate was hardly cricket.

Nevertheless, freedom of the press has stood Reagan in good stead. It was the little "Moonie" paper in New York, the Tribune, that first broke the story of the Zaccaro real estate empire. The New York Post and the Philadelphia Inquirer then picked up the ball. As a result Mondale may lose New York State because investigative reporters have dogged the candidacy of the Queens County housewife who wanted to slip by with the barest references to some fairly entangled finances.

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