

# Mondale succeeds in lighting slow-burning nuclear fuse at President Reagan's feet

In the old cartoons — in fact in the cartoons that used to precede Ronald Reagan movies — one character always thought he had won a fight when in fact his opponent had lit a slow-burning fuse under him. Something like that happened at the



**Richard Cohen**

presidential debate in Kansas City. The real explosion may be yet to come.

There was, of course, no immediate knockout. Ronald Reagan proved that 73 is just a number — not an age ceiling for the presidency. And Walter Mondale showed once again that he is neither a wimp nor just a creature of the Senate cloakroom. He looked into the camera as if it were a friendly interest group. Politics, as we all know, makes strange bedfellows.

But the immediate — especially when it comes to presidential debates — is not necessarily what matters. George Bush proved that when, in the opinion of most observers, he bested Geraldine Ferraro in their debate and then went on to lose it in the following week.

Mondale may have pulled off the same feat. He transformed himself into a personification of what the polls say the voters think when it comes to nuclear arms and U.S.-Soviet relations. In fact, the script for what he said in the debate closely follows an article in Foreign Affairs magazine. In it, the pollster Daniel Yankelovich and an associate wrote that time has passed Ronald Reagan by. The militant mood of 1980 has become the anxiety of 1984.

The voters, Yankelovich wrote, both distrust the Soviets and see no choice but to deal with them. They are simultaneously in favor of strength and negotiations. They think that neither side could win a nuclear war or, for that matter, achieve nuclear superiority. " . . . Americans have experienced a serious change of heart about the impact of nuclear

weapons and national security," Yankelovich wrote.

The poll data Yankelovich cited are unambiguous and the majorities enormous. Interestingly, these findings are relatively new and they represent a massive change in public opinion from 1980 when Americans were more harshly anti-communist and more willing to believe that nuclear superiority was possible.

Of course, the poll data is no secret to either the Reagan or the Mondale camp and both candidates attempted to preach the new gospel. Reagan, though, is handicapped by his record. He has presided over a massive military buildup and has been downright lackadaisical in his pursuit of arms-reduction talks with the Soviets — aspects of the Reagan record that Mondale repeated over and over again.

Indeed, if there was a Mondale theme to the debate, it was that he, Mondale, was the president the American people seemed to be telling the pollsters they wanted. Unstated, but a part of this theme anyway, was the suggestion that Reagan had built up the military, suited the harsh anti-communist mood of four years ago, and now ought to pass from the stage.

A 90-minute debate is never limited to just one or two themes. Both Mondale and Reagan tried to say far more — Mondale that Reagan was a leader in political commercials only; Reagan that Mondale was a ghost of the Carter administration past. But Mondale, better than Reagan, laid a foundation for the debate that will follow the debate — the one that will be conducted from now until Election Day. If Mondale has his way, it will be about nuclear disarmament and Reagan's so-called Star Wars initiative.

This is the debate Walter Mondale has wanted all along — the one where he, not Reagan, best exemplifies voter sentiment. He could have been sharper when he faced the president here, and God knows it was he and not Reagan who looked tired. But mostly he did what he set out to do: He lit the fuse, hoping his campaign ends with a bang and not a whimper.

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## Letters

### Colorado native says Big Red fans are best

I am from Colorado and have been a fan of college football in my home state for years. I am also a big Nebraska fan, but had never seen a game here in Lincoln until this year.

I had seen the Huskers play several games at Colorado, and I noticed what a good time the Nebraska fans had before, during

and after the game, never letting the rude remarks from CU fans faze them. The CU fans would take Nebraska hats and run and throw snowballs, bottles, cans and beer on the fans from Nebraska.

After attending my first four Nebraska games at Memorial Stadium and seeing how Husker fans treat visiting teams and fans,

I truly feel that Nebraska fans deserve the No. 1 rating Sports Illustrated gave them. The CU fans could take a lesson or two from Nebraska on how to have fun without disturbing the visiting fans.

Bob Archibald  
freshman  
marketing

### Instructor denounces unlimited food choices

As an instructor of health science in the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, I am shocked by the possibility of an unlimited food choice policy being adopted at UNL residence halls. An all-you-can-eat-for-one-price approach to food consumption would influence the residence hall culture to move away from, rather than toward, the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

Why? Excessive caloric intake, high intake of fats and sugars, and taking portions that appeal

to the eye rather than actual appetite would be encouraged. With a high prevalence of eating disorders already noticeable or suspected, is this a wise way to present nutrients to a population already besieged by advertising campaigns and peer pressure? I think not. A banquet-style presentation of food is not conducive to forming lifelong eating patterns that promote, rather than destroy, one's health.

I encourage you to become an advocate, for your body's sake, of

creative approaches to residence hall meal planning. I believe that students here deserve and should demand better treatment.

When gluttony is a national problem, is it appropriate to join the crowd? Let's make this university an example to the general culture by adopting a policy that would be enjoyable, as well as healthy.

Deb Evans  
instructor  
HPER



## STUDENT COMMENTS

Why did you decide to enroll in Army ROTC ?



Robert Ott  
Civil Engineering

I have a sense of duty to my country. ROTC builds pride, prestige and respect. Airborne training has really enhanced my self confidence and developed an attitude of professionalism.



Kimberly Mott  
Broadcasting

I discovered a special bond exists between cadets. I have never felt such comradeship or "pulling together" as those times when I am in training with them.



Martin Riley  
Business

My goals are to become an officer capable of organizing and to be prepared for any assignment. I wanted to get skill for leadership in every aspect of life.



Keith Long  
Mech Engineering

Very few organizations on campus give you the chance to learn and practice your leadership skills like ROTC. I was impressed with the confidence that the instructors and cadets display.



Paula Holtus  
Pre-Vet

I recognized it as possibly the nich in college life that has been missing. It's a great change and has been exciting.

Military Science Ad