

The national scene . . .

Mondale woos Church for SALT II support

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BOISE — When such an important personage as Vice President Walter Mondale came to Boise Saturday it was obvious he came on a more important mission than to help U. S. Sen. Frank Church. It was actually to get Church's crucial support for faltering SALT II.

Mondale and everyone with any political savvy knows that outsiders coming into a state do very little to help the hometown candidate. It's fine political dressing, but it doesn't sway voters, as has been proven time and time again.

The stark fact remains that without Church's backing, SALT II has virtually no chance of passage. Mondale knows that, and so does President Carter.

It must be remembered that Church was originally scheduled to spearhead debate for the treaty. After finding about the Soviet combat troops in Cuba, he linked their removal to the treaty's ratification.

Mondale delivered two short talks while at Boise, one to the newsmen at a press conference shortly after landing at the Boise Airport and then again to a record 1,500 attending the evening reception honoring Church.

At both occasions, he emphasized the need to ratify SALT II, minimizing any differences between Church and the Carter administration.

In an apparent effort to smooth feelings, he told the newsmen that the Carter Administration and Church share the same objectives, if not

method, of linking ratification of SALT II with the removal of the Russian troops in Cuba. This appears to be a change in Carter's original position.

Mondale even went so far as to say that Church's disclosure of the Russian soldiers in Cuba was proper, which is not exactly what Carter felt at first.

Mondale insisted the disclosure was done "with our (the Carter administration's) full knowledge. It was the business of all Americans and what he did was perfectly proper."

News reports, however, said the White House and supporters of the treaty were angered that Church had linked the Soviet troop withdrawal with SALT II ratification.

In the evening address, both Mondale and Church expressed hope a treaty can be hammered out and ratified that would help avoid a nuclear holocaust. In Mondale's own words, the U. S. and USSR both have enough nuclear power to blow up this world several times over.

What Church does will likely swing a half dozen senators, and that's why it's important how Church decides. As the influential chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee,

many senators and foreign nations closely watch his action.

It's no wonder that Mondale took time out to fly across the country for just this one appearance, using the occasion to also praise Church's abilities and plead for his re-election.

Church analyzes the situation as getting the approval of four groups.

There is one group, and that includes the hardline conservatives — Sens. James McClure and Utah's Jake Garn and Orrin Hatch among them — who likely will oppose the treaty under virtually any circumstances.

The crucial group is one that won't support the treaty unless the U. S. steps up military spending and goes ahead with the Trident submarine missile system, and the MX and cruise missile systems.

Another batch of senators believes the treaty is too weak and wants guarantees it will lead to mutual reduction of existing missile systems. Some senators, like Church, are upset by presence of Soviet troops in Cuba.

The other group, which is dwindling in numbers, believes the U. S. cannot adequately verify compliance with the treaty.

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