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CLARK WOULD WELCOME CUBAN REFUGEES

Statement of Ed Clark
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The refusal of the Carter Administration to admit thousands of Cuban refugees into the United States reveals the inconsistency and wrongheadedness of the Carter foreign policy. President Carter seeks the release of the American hostages in Iran--threatening military force when a simple pledge not to intervene in Iran's internal affairs would suffice. But he slams the door in the faces of thousands of hostages just ninety miles from our shores.

The Cuban refugees are hostages in their own country. Ten thousand of them have sought refuge in the Peruvian Embassy in Havana. Their friends and relatives in the United States have promised to transport them at no cost to the taxpayer, to care for them, and to give them jobs when they arrive. In response, President Carter threatens these Cuban-Americans with up to five years in prison for helping their family members and friends escape to freedom.

If President Carter really cared about the freedom of people in other countries--as he professes to care about the Afghanis-- he

would be willing to give them sanctuary. That he isn't doing so indicates that his bluster against the Soviet Union and Cuba is motivated by something else altogether. It is no coincidence that President Carter--the man who promised amnesty and military spending cuts in 1976--has grown increasingly militaristic during election season. Just a few months ago--before the seizure of the American hostages in Iran--President Carter's approval rating in the polls was about that of President Nixon when he left office. After the seizure of the hostages, it soared to new heights. The American people were gravely and genuinely worried and frightened about the fate of their fellow Americans.

But Jimmy Carter cynically chose to manipulate this genuine concern into a campaign ploy. He has refused to campaign or engage in debate over his policies--citing his responsibility for the fate of the hostages, as if his refusal to campaign would release them. He has announced dramatic new military spending increases, at a time when American taxpayers are feeling the pinch of high taxes and inflation like never before. He has announced that he would order mandatory draft registration, despite the overwhelming opposition of the military manpower experts and the Selective Service System itself. He has threatened U.S. military intervention abroad, inviting new Vietnams. He has promised to refuse American citizens the right to leave the United States at the same time that he has refused entry to those attempting to get in--policies one would expect of totalitarian societies like the Soviet Union, not free societies like the United States. The list goes on.

By taking these unnecessary actions, the President has created an atmosphere of crisis--one in which he can avoid public criticism by claiming that criticism of the President is equivalent to denunciation of the Presidency itself, that it is unpatriotic to be critical of a man charged with great responsibilities, regardless of how incompetently he has discharged them.

This is the arrogance of power. Jimmy Carter has shown a taste for power, and he doesn't want to give it up. It is the power to determine the lives and destinies of other people. That sort of power is alien to the American tradition and experience. A high State Department spokesman, commenting on the decision to stop the inflow of Cuban refugees, disparagingly stated, "Private American citizens are substituting their own judgment of who should be allowed into this country for the judgment of the government." But what's wrong with that? It's the independent judgment of free people on which this country was founded.

As President, I would remove the barriers that prevent human beings--regardless of national origin--entry into or exit from the United States. I would remove the many barriers to trade that separate nations and lead to conflict. I would promise an end to U.S. intervention in the affairs of the Iranian people--the only step that can secure the release of the hostages. And I would propose a foreign policy of peaceful coexistence with the other nations of the world, promising the use of force only to defend the United States. The era of adventurism and intervention--and their attendant high taxes and inflation--would end. I would

halt the draft registration President Carter has proposed to begin this summer and totally abolish the Selective Service System. I believe that a free and prosperous America can be a beacon of liberty to the world, and I further believe that a Libertarian foreign policy of non-intervention will do more for human rights around the world than the bankrupt foreign policy of crisis, confrontation, and intervention.