

ST. SIMONS ISLAND, Ga. (AP) — President-elect Carter says those who think "we have automatic answers or easy answers to tough questions would be misleading themselves," and several of his key advisers are beginning to offer statements that seem geared to lower Americans expectations

In a television interview taped earlier for broadcast today, Carter expressed confidence that "the things that we have promised during the campaign can be delivered."

But his key aides and advisers, gathered

at this island retreat for preinaugural discussions, were offering statements that would sound cautious to any who had anticipated quick changes from the new administration.

Carter's press secretary, Jody Powell, told reporters Tuesday that it would be unrealistic to expect promised defense budget savings of \$5 billion to \$7 billion prior to the 1979 year that begins Oct. 1, 1978.

Defense Secretary-designate Harold Brown also said he saw no chance of such a defense reduction "from this year's

budget to next year's budget, for example.

Joseph A. Califano Jr., Carter's choice to be secretary of health, education and welfare, almost simultaneously was warning that full implementation of promised welfare reform may have to await a healthier economy that would provide tax dollars to pay for it.

During his long 1976 campaign, Carter repeatedly spoke of saving \$5 billion to \$7 billion in defense spending by cutting waste and inefficiency. But he never said when such a savings could be realized.

He talked at least once about being ready to move toward welfare reform soon after taking office.

But in convening the unusual, if not unique, preinaugural cabinet meeting here Tuesday, Carter stressed his determination to deliver on his campaign promises and to impress his cabinet nominees with what he sees as their responsibility to help him keep his word.

Carter said, "Because my word of honor is at stake ... if we should default on them it would be a very serious thing for me personally, and I think for the respect and confidence of the American people in their own government."

He said he does not anticipate that happening, however.

He also said Vice President-elect Walter F. Mondale will enjoy unprecedented authority and will serve as his "chief staff person." That means, Carter said, that everyone on the White House staff has been informed that Mondale as well as Carter will be their boss.

Mondale participated in the TV interview and said he told Carter that "we ought to realize that the history of (the vice presidency) is nothing short of grim, and hope it won't happen here."