

Jimmy Carter

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Jimmy Carter

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- *Carter is considered a key figure in the Habitat for Humanity charity.*
- *After his presidency, Carter has remained active in the private sector; in 2002, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in co-founding the Carter Center.*
- *Carter remained as governor until 1975.*

James Earl Carter Jr. (born October 1, 1924) is an American politician and philanthropist who served as the 39th president of the United States from 1977 to 1981. A Democrat, he previously served as a Georgia state senator from 1963 to 1967 and as the 76th governor of Georgia from 1971 to 1975. After his presidency, Carter has remained active in the private sector; in 2002, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in co-founding the Carter Center.

Raised in Plains, Georgia, Carter graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1946 with a Bachelor of Science degree and joined the United States Navy, where he served on submarines. After the death of his father in 1953, Carter left his naval career and returned home to Georgia to take up the reins of his family's peanut-growing business. Carter inherited comparatively little due to his father's forgiveness of debts and the division of the estate among the children. Nevertheless, his ambition to expand and grow the Carters' peanut business was fulfilled. During this period, Carter was motivated to oppose the political climate of racial segregation and support the growing civil rights movement. He became an activist within the Democratic Party. From 1963 to 1967, Carter served in the Georgia State Senate, and in 1970, he was elected as Governor of Georgia, defeating former Governor Carl Sanders in the Democratic primary on an anti-segregation platform advocating affirmative action for ethnic minorities. Carter remained as governor until 1975. Despite being a dark-horse candidate who was little known outside of Georgia at the start of the campaign, Carter won the 1976 Democratic presidential nomination. In the general

election, Carter ran as an outsider and narrowly defeated incumbent Republican President Gerald Ford.

On his second day in office, Carter pardoned all the Vietnam War draft evaders. During Carter's term as president, two new cabinet-level departments, the Department of Energy and the Department of Education, were established. He established a national energy policy that included conservation, price control, and new technology. In foreign affairs, Carter pursued the Camp David Accords, the Panama Canal Treaties, the second round of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II), and the unpopular[citation needed] return of the Panama Canal Zone to Panama. On the economic front, he confronted persistent stagflation, a combination of high inflation, high unemployment and slow growth. The end of his presidential tenure was marked by the 1979–1981 Iran hostage crisis, the 1979 energy crisis, the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In response to the invasion, Carter escalated the Cold War when he ended détente, imposed a grain embargo against the Soviets, enunciated the Carter doctrine, and led an international boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. In 1980, Carter faced a challenge from Senator Ted Kennedy in the primaries, but he won re-nomination at the 1980 Democratic National Convention. Carter lost the general election to Republican nominee Ronald Reagan in an electoral landslide. Polls of historians and political scientists usually rank Carter as an average president; he often receives more positive evaluations for his post-presidential work.

In 2012, Carter surpassed Herbert Hoover as the longest-retired president in U.S. history, and in 2017 became the first president to live to the 40th anniversary of his inauguration. He is currently the oldest and earliest-serving of all living U.S. presidents. In 2019, Carter surpassed George H. W. Bush as the longest-lived American president in U.S. history. In 1982, he established the Carter Center to promote and expand human rights. He has traveled extensively to conduct peace negotiations, monitor elections, and advance disease prevention and eradication in developing nations. Carter is considered a key figure in the Habitat for Humanity charity. He has written over 30 books ranging from memoirs and politics to poetry and inspiration. He also has criticized some of Israel's actions and policies in regards to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and has advocated for a two-state solution.

Early life

- *Plains was a boomtown of 600 people at the time of Carter's birth.*
- *Carter was the first U.S. president to be born in a hospital.*
- *He was the eldest son of Bessie Lillian (née Gordy) and James Earl Carter Sr. Carter is a descendant of English immigrant Thomas Carter, who settled in Virginia in 1635.*
- *The family moved several times during Carter Jr.'s infancy.*

James Earl Carter Jr. was born on October 1, 1924, at the Wise Sanitarium (now the Lillian G. Carter Nursing Center) in Plains, Georgia, a hospital where his mother was employed as a registered nurse. Carter was the first U.S. president to be born in a hospital. He was the

eldest son of Bessie Lillian (née Gordy) and James Earl Carter Sr. Carter is a descendant of English immigrant Thomas Carter, who settled in Virginia in 1635. Numerous generations of Carters lived as cotton farmers in Georgia. Carter is also a descendant of Thomas Cornell, an ancestor of Cornell University's founder, and is distantly related to Richard Nixon and Bill Gates.

Plains was a boomtown of 600 people at the time of Carter's birth. Carter's father was a successful local businessman, who ran a general store, and was an investor in farmland. He previously served as a reserve second lieutenant in the U.S. Army's Quartermaster Corps during World War I.

The family moved several times during Carter Jr.'s infancy. The Carters settled on a dirt road in nearby Archery, which was almost entirely populated by impoverished African American families. They eventually had three more children: Gloria, Ruth, and Billy. Carter got along well with his parents, although his mother worked long hours and was often absent in his childhood. Although Earl was staunchly pro-segregation, he allowed his son to befriend the black farmhands' children. Carter was an enterprising teenager who was given his own acre of Earl's farmland where he grew, packaged, and sold peanuts. He also rented out a section of tenant housing that he had purchased.

Education

- *Carter's teacher, Julia Coleman, was an especially strong influence.*
- *Carter's truancy was mentioned in a local newspaper, although it is not clear he would have been valedictorian anyway.*
- *As an adolescent, Carter played on the Plains High School basketball team; he also joined the Future Farmers of America and developed a lifelong interest in woodworking.*
- *Carter attended the Plains High School from 1937 to 1941.*

Carter attended the Plains High School from 1937 to 1941. By that time, Archery and Plains had been impoverished by the Great Depression, but the family benefited from New Deal farming subsidies, and Earl took a position as a community leader. Young Jimmy was a diligent student with a fondness for reading. A popular anecdote holds that he was passed over for valedictorian after he and his friends skipped school to venture downtown in a hot rod. Carter's truancy was mentioned in a local newspaper, although it is not clear he would have been valedictorian anyway. Carter's teacher, Julia Coleman, was an especially strong influence. As an adolescent, Carter played on the Plains High School basketball team; he also joined the Future Farmers of America and developed a lifelong interest in woodworking.



President Jimmy Carter and Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, USN (far right) aboard the submarine USS Los Angeles in 1977

Naval career

- *Carter had long dreamed of attending the U.S.*
- *On the other hand, Carter felt restricted by the rigidity of the military and yearned to assume a path more like his father's.*
- *Carter left active duty on October 9, 1953.*
- *However, Carter's father died two months before construction of Seawolf began, and Carter sought and obtained a release from active duty to enable him to take over the family peanut business.*

Carter had long dreamed of attending the U.S. Naval Academy. In 1941, he started undergraduate coursework in engineering at Georgia Southwestern College in nearby Americus. The following year, he transferred to the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, and he achieved admission to the Naval Academy in 1943. He was a good student but was seen as reserved and quiet, in contrast to the academy's culture of aggressive hazing of freshmen. While at the academy, Carter fell in love with his sister Ruth's friend Rosalynn Smith, who he married shortly after his graduation in 1946. He was a sprint football player for the Navy Midshipmen. Carter graduated 60th out of 820 midshipmen in the class of 1946 with a Bachelor of Science degree and was commissioned as an ensign. From 1946 to 1953, Carter and Rosalynn lived in Virginia, Hawaii, Connecticut, New York and California, during his deployments in the Atlantic and Pacific fleets. In 1948, he began officers' training for submarine duty and served aboard USS Pomfret. He was promoted to

lieutenant junior grade in 1949. In 1951 he became attached to the diesel/electric USS K-1, (a.k.a. USS Barracuda), qualified for command, and served in several duties including Executive Officer.

In 1952, Carter began an association with the US Navy's fledgling nuclear submarine program, then-led by Captain Hyman G. Rickover. Rickover's demands on his men and machines were legendary, and Carter later said that, next to his parents, Rickover was the greatest influence on his life. He was sent to the Naval Reactors Branch of the Atomic Energy Commission in Washington, D.C. for three month temporary duty, while Rosalynn moved with their children to Schenectady, New York. On December 12, 1952, an accident with the experimental NRX reactor at Atomic Energy of Canada's Chalk River Laboratories caused a partial meltdown resulting in millions of liters of radioactive water flooding the reactor building's basement and leaving the reactor's core ruined. Carter was ordered to Chalk River to lead a U.S. maintenance crew that joined other American and Canadian service personnel to assist in the shutdown of the reactor. The painstaking process required each team member to don protective gear and be lowered individually into the reactor for a few minutes at a time, limiting their exposure to radioactivity while they disassembled the crippled reactor. During and after his presidency, Carter said that his experience at Chalk River had shaped his views on atomic energy and led him to cease development of a neutron bomb.

In March 1953 Carter began nuclear power school, a six-month non-credit course covering nuclear power plant operation at Union College in Schenectady, with the intent to eventually work aboard USS Seawolf, which was planned to be one of the first two U.S. nuclear submarines. However, Carter's father died two months before construction of Seawolf began, and Carter sought and obtained a release from active duty to enable him to take over the family peanut business. Deciding to leave Schenectady proved difficult. Settling after moving so much, Rosalynn had grown comfortable with their life. Returning to small-town life in Plains seemed "a monumental step backward," she said later. On the other hand, Carter felt restricted by the rigidity of the military and yearned to assume a path more like his father's. Carter left active duty on October 9, 1953. He served in the inactive Navy Reserve until 1961, and left the service with the rank of lieutenant.

His awards included the American Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, China Service Medal, and National Defense Service Medal.

Farming

- *Carter was knowledgeable in scientific and technological subjects, and he set out to expand the family's peanut-growing business.*
- *For a year, Jimmy, Rosalynn, and their three sons lived in public housing in Plains; Carter is the only U.S. president to have lived in subsidized housing before he took office.*

Earl Carter died a relatively wealthy man, having also recently been elected to the Georgia House of Representatives. However, between his forgiveness of debts and the division of his

wealth among heirs, his son Jimmy inherited comparatively little. For a year, Jimmy, Rosalynn, and their three sons lived in public housing in Plains; Carter is the only U.S. president to have lived in subsidized housing before he took office. Carter was knowledgeable in scientific and technological subjects, and he set out to expand the family's peanut-growing business. The transition from Navy to agribusinessman was difficult because his first-year harvest failed due to drought; Carter was compelled to open several bank lines of credit to keep the farm afloat. Meanwhile, he also took classes and read up on agriculture while Rosalynn learned accounting to manage the business's books. Though they barely broke even the first year, the Carters grew the business and became quite successful.

Early political career, 1962–1971

Georgia State Senator (1963–1967)

- *Carter challenged the results; when fraud was confirmed, a new election was held, which he won.*
- *At the time of President Kennedy's assassination, Carter was informed by a customer of his peanut business of the killing, prompting Carter to remove himself from work and sit alone.*
- *Carter was re-elected in 1964 to serve a second two-year term.*

Racial tension was inflamed in Plains by the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court's anti-segregation ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Carter was in favor of racial tolerance and integration—at one point, the local White Citizens' Council boycotted his peanut warehouse when he refused to join them—but he often kept those feelings to himself to avoid making enemies. By 1961 he was a prominent member of the community and the Baptist Church as well as chairman of the Sumter County school board, where he began to speak more loudly in favor of school integration. A state Senate seat was opened by the dissolution of Georgia's County Unit System in 1962; Carter announced his run for the seat 15 days before the election. Rosalynn, who had an instinct for politics and organization, was instrumental to his campaign. The initial results showed Carter losing, but this was the result of fraudulent voting orchestrated by Joe Hurst, the Democratic Party chairman in Quitman County, with the aid of the Quitman County sheriff. Carter challenged the results; when fraud was confirmed, a new election was held, which he won.

The civil rights movement was well underway when Carter took office. He and his family had become staunch John F. Kennedy supporters. Beginning in 1962, the town of Americus was the site of mass beatings and incarcerations of black protesters, echoing similar unrest throughout the country. Carter remained relatively quiet on the issue at first, even as it polarized much of the county, to avoid alienating his segregationist colleagues. He did speak up on a few divisive issues, giving speeches against literacy tests and against a change to the Georgia Constitution which, he felt, implied a compulsion to practice religion. At the time of

President Kennedy's assassination, Carter was informed by a customer of his peanut business of the killing, prompting Carter to remove himself from work and sit alone. Carter later called the assassination "the greatest blow that I had suffered since my father died."

Carter was a diligent legislator who took speed-reading courses to keep up with the workload. Within two years, his connections landed him on the state Democratic Executive Committee, where he helped rewrite the state party's rules. He became chairman of the West Central Georgia Planning and Development Commission, which oversaw the disbursement of federal and state grants for projects such as historic site restoration.
[citation needed]

When Bo Callaway was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in November 1964, Carter immediately began planning to unseat him. The two had previously clashed over which two-year college would be expanded to a four-year college program by the state; Carter wanted it to go to his alma mater, Georgia Southwestern College, but Callaway wanted the funding to go to downtown Columbus. Carter saw Callaway, a Republican, as a rival who represented the inherited wealth and selfishness he despised in politics.

Carter was re-elected in 1964 to serve a second two-year term. For a time in the State Senate, he chaired its Education Committee; he also sat on the Appropriations Committee toward the end of his second term. Before his term ended he contributed to a bill expanding statewide education funding and getting Georgia Southwestern a four-year program. He leveraged his regional planning work, giving speeches around the district to make himself more visible to potential voters. The last day of the term, he announced his run for Congress.

1966 and 1970 campaigns for governor

- *Once he was elected, Carter changed his tone, and began to speak against Georgia's racist politics.*
- *The result was a sharp blow to Carter, who was left deeply in debt.*
- *Responding to poll data, Carter leaned more conservative than before.*
- *Carter soon decided to follow Callaway and run for governor himself.*

The congressional race of 1966 was shaken up in mid-May when the Republican incumbent, Bo Callaway, dropped out and decided to run for Governor of Georgia instead. Callaway was a very strong candidate, and state Democrats panicked over the prospect of losing the governorship they had held since Reconstruction. Carter soon decided to follow Callaway and run for governor himself. In the Democratic primary he ran as a moderate alternative to both the liberal former governor Ellis Arnall and the conservative Lester Maddox. In a press conference he described his ideology as "Conservative, moderate, liberal and middle-of-the-road. ... I believe I am a more complicated person than that." He lost the Democratic primary, but drew enough votes as a third-place candidate to force Arnall into a runoff election with Maddox. A chain of events then resulted in Maddox, the dark horse candidate, being elected governor. The result was a sharp blow to Carter, who was left deeply in debt.

His attempt to rescue the race from Callaway had resulted in the unlikely election of the segregationist Maddox, which he considered an even worse outcome.

Carter returned to his agriculture business and, during the next four years, carefully planned his next campaign for governor in 1970. This period was a spiritual turning point for Carter; he grew increasingly evangelical, undertaking several religious missions in other states. Inspired by his sister Ruth and liberal theologians such as Reinhold Niebuhr, he declared himself Born again, a growing movement in 1960s America. His last child Amy was born during this time, on October 19, 1967.

The liberal former governor, Carl Sanders, was Carter's main opponent in the 1970 Democratic primary. Carter ran a more modern campaign this time around, employing printed graphics and statistical analysis. Responding to poll data, Carter leaned more conservative than before. He positioned himself as a populist, quickly going negative against Sanders for his wealth (labeling him "Cufflinks Carl") and associating him with the national Democratic Party. He accused Sanders of corruption, but when pressed by the media, could come up with no evidence. Throughout the campaign Carter sought both the black vote and the "Wallace vote," after the prominent segregationist George Wallace of Alabama. While he met with black figures such as Martin Luther King Sr. and Andrew Young, and visited many black-owned businesses, he also praised Wallace and promised to invite him to give a speech in Georgia. He implied support or dislike of private schools, depending on the audience. The appeal to racism became more blatant over time; Carter's senior campaign aides handed out a photograph of his opponent Sanders celebrating with black basketball players.

That September, Carter came ahead of Sanders in the first ballot by 49 to 38 percent, leading to a runoff. The subsequent campaign grew even more bitter; despite his early support for civil rights, Carter's campaign criticized Sanders for supporting Martin Luther King Jr. Carter won the runoff election with 60 percent of the vote—winning 7 percent of the black vote—and went on to win the general election easily over the Republican Hal Suit, a local news anchor. Once he was elected, Carter changed his tone, and began to speak against Georgia's racist politics. Leroy Johnson, a black state Senator, voiced his support for Carter, saying, "I understand why he ran that kind of ultra-conservative campaign. ... I don't believe you can win this state without being a racist."



Carter's official portrait as Governor of Georgia

Governor of Georgia (1971-1975)

- *Civil rights were a heartfelt priority for Carter.*
- *The many segregationists who had supported Carter during the race felt betrayed.*
- *Carter had endorsed Maddox, although the two did not campaign as a ticket.*
- *Still, Carter tried to keep his conservative allies comfortable.*
- *Carter was sworn in as the 76th Governor of Georgia on January 12, 1971.*

Carter was sworn in as the 76th Governor of Georgia on January 12, 1971. He declared in his inaugural speech that "the time of racial discrimination is over. ... No poor, rural, weak, or black person should ever have to bear the additional burden of being deprived of the opportunity for an education, a job or simple justice." The crowd was reportedly shocked by this message, contrasting starkly with Georgia's political culture and particularly Carter's campaign. The many segregationists who had supported Carter during the race felt

betrayed. Time magazine ran a story on the progressive "New South" governors elected that year in a May 1971 issue, featuring a cover illustration of Carter.

Lester Maddox, Carter's predecessor as governor, became lieutenant governor. Carter had endorsed Maddox, although the two did not campaign as a ticket. The two found little common ground during their four years of service, often publicly feuding. Richard Russell Jr., then President pro tempore of the United States Senate, died in office during Carter's second week in office; the newly inaugurated governor appointed David H. Gambrell, state Democratic Party chair, to fill Russell's unexpired term in the Senate a week after Russell's death on February 1.

Carter was reluctant to engage in back-slapping and political favors, and the legislature found him frustrating to work with. He looked to aggressively expand the governor's authority while reducing the complexity of the state government. Therefore, he negotiated a bill allowing him to propose executive restructuring and to force a vote on it. He implemented zero-based budgeting within state departments and added a Judicial Selection Commission to verify the credentials of judges appointed by the governor. The reorganization plan was submitted in January 1972, but had a cool reception in the legislature. But after two weeks of negotiations, it was passed at midnight on the last day of the session. Ultimately he merged about 300 state agencies into 22—a fact he would emphasize in his presidential run—although it is disputed that there were any overall cost savings from doing so.

In an April 3, 1971 televised appearance, Carter was asked if he was in favor of a requirement that candidates for Governor and Lieutenant Governor of Georgia would have to run on the same ticket. He replied, "I've never really thought we needed a lieutenant governor in Georgia. The lieutenant governor is part of the executive branch of government and I've always felt - ever since I was in the state Senate - that the executive branches should be separate." Carter later clarified he would not introduce an amendment to put such a restriction in place.

On July 8, 1971, during an appearance in Columbus, Georgia, Carter stated his intent to establish a Georgia Human Rights Council that would work toward solving issues within the state ahead of any potential violence.

In a July 13, 1971 news conference, Carter announced his ordering of department heads to reduce spending for the aid of preventing a 57 million deficit by the end of the 1972 fiscal year, specifying that each state department would be impacted and estimating that 5% more than revenue being taken in by the government would be lost if state departments continued full using allocated funds.

On January 13, 1972, Carter requested the state legislature provide funding for an Early Childhood Development Program along with prison reform programs and 48 million in pay taxes for nearly all state employees.

On March 1, 1972, Carter stated a possible usage of a special session of the General Assembly could take place in the event that the Justice Department opted to turn down any reapportionment plans by either the House or Senate. On April 20, Carter issued the call for a special session for consideration of advisement for the usage of a three person judge federal panel for performance on four judicial reform measures.

In April 1972, Carter traveled to Latin and South America for a potential trade deal with Georgia. Carter stated that he had met with President of Brazil Emílio Garrastazu Médici and been compared by some to the late President Kennedy.

Civil rights were a heartfelt priority for Carter. He expanded the number of black state employees, judges, and board members. He hired Rita Jackson Samuels, a black woman, to advise him on potential appointments. He placed portraits of Martin Luther King Jr. and two other prominent black Georgians in the capitol building, even as the Ku Klux Klan picketed the unveiling ceremony. Still, Carter tried to keep his conservative allies comfortable.

During a televised joint appearance with Governor of Florida Reubin Askew on January 31, 1973, Carter stated he favored a constitutional amendment to ban busing for the purpose of expediting integration in schools. He co-sponsored an anti-busing resolution with George Wallace at the 1971 National Governors Conference, which Carter also hosted. After the U.S. Supreme Court threw out Georgia's death penalty statute in *Furman v. Georgia* (1972), Carter signed a revised death penalty statute which addressed the court's objections, thus re-introducing the practice in the state. Carter later regretted endorsing the death penalty, saying, "I didn't see the injustice of it as I do now."

Carter pushed reforms through the legislature that provided equal state aid to schools in the wealthy and poor areas of Georgia, set up community centers for mentally handicapped children, and increased educational programs for convicts. He took pride in his program for the appointment of judges and state government officials. Under this program, all such appointments were based on merit, rather than political influence.

In one of his more controversial decisions, he vetoed a plan to build a dam on Georgia's Flint River. After surveying the river and the literature himself, he argued that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was underestimating both the project's cost and its impact on the region. The veto won the attention of environmentalists nationwide. When Lieutenant William Calley was convicted in a military trial and sentenced to life for his role in the My Lai Massacre in South Vietnam, a politically polarizing issue, Carter avoided paying direct tribute to Calley. He instead instituted "American Fighting Man's Day" and asked Georgians to drive for a week with their lights on in support of the military.

National ambition

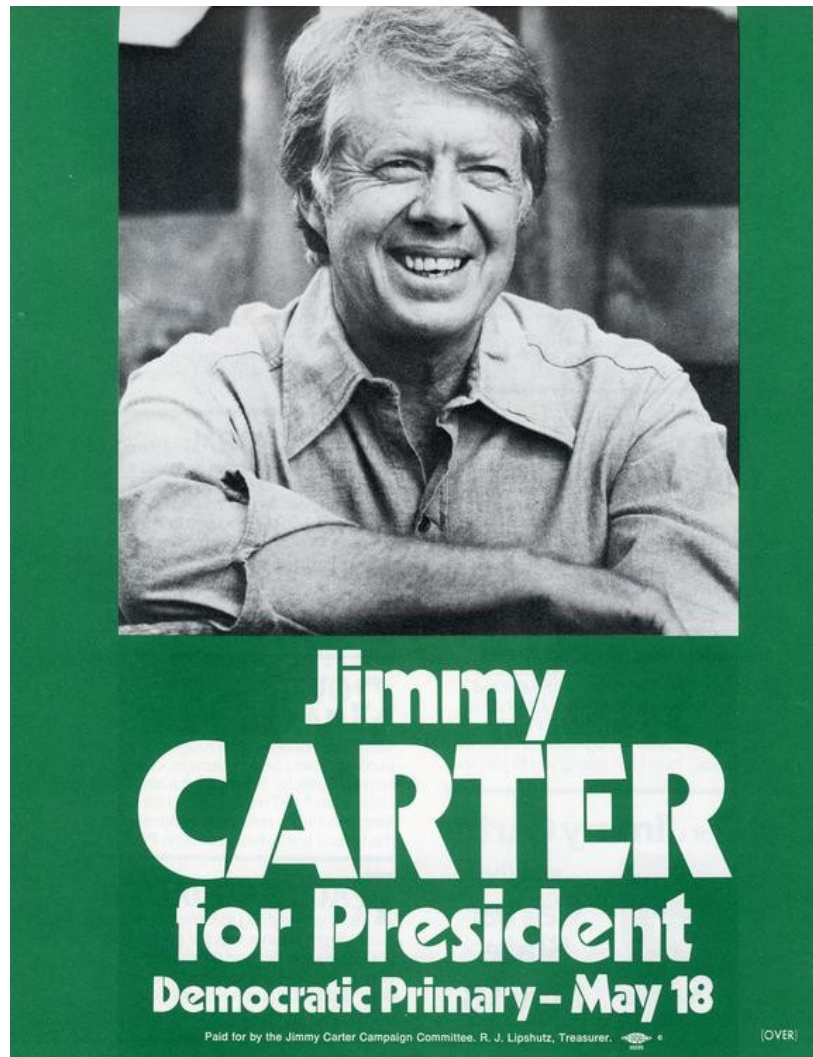
- *On August 3, Carter met with Wallace in Birmingham, Alabama to discuss preventing the Democratic Party from losing in a landslide during the November elections.*
- *After McGovern's loss in November 1972, Carter began meeting regularly with his fledgling campaign staff.*

- *Under Georgia's constitution, Carter was ineligible to run for re-election.*
- *Looking toward a potential presidential run, Carter engaged himself in national politics and public appearances.*

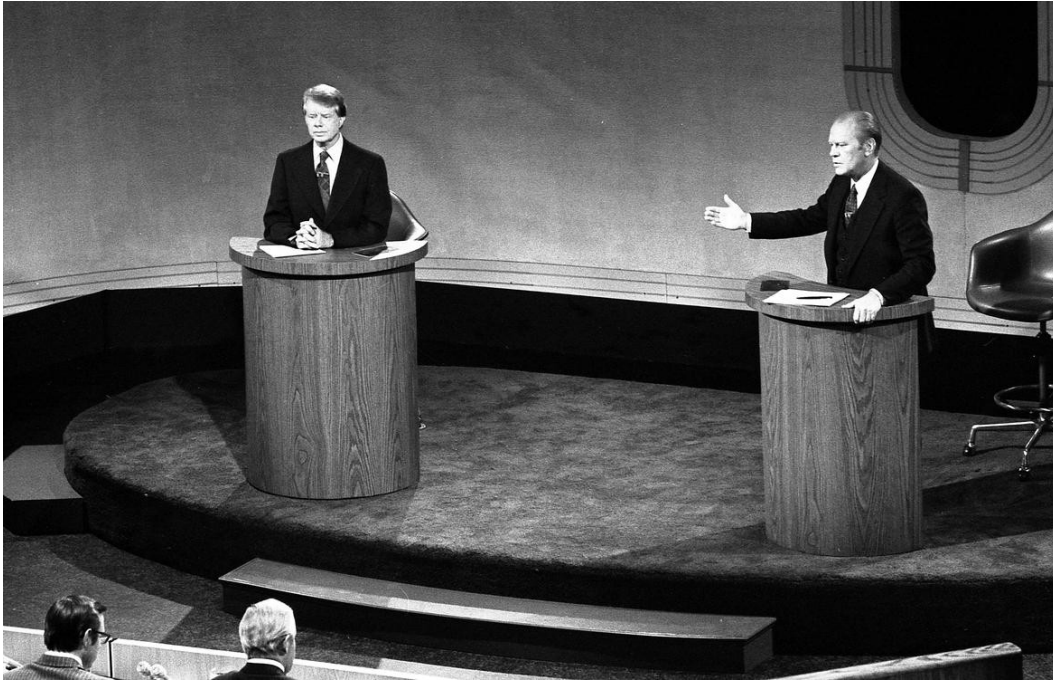
Under Georgia's constitution, Carter was ineligible to run for re-election. Looking toward a potential presidential run, Carter engaged himself in national politics and public appearances. He was named to several southern planning commissions and was a delegate to the 1972 Democratic National Convention, where the liberal U.S. Senator George McGovern was the likely presidential nominee. Carter tried to ingratiate himself with the conservative, anti-McGovern voters, so that the convention would consider him for McGovern's running mate on a compromise ticket. He endorsed Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, in part to distance himself from George Wallace. Carter was still fairly obscure at the time, and his attempt at triangulation failed; the 1972 Democratic ticket went to McGovern and Senator Thomas Eagleton. On August 3, Carter met with Wallace in Birmingham, Alabama to discuss preventing the Democratic Party from losing in a landslide during the November elections.

After McGovern's loss in November 1972, Carter began meeting regularly with his fledgling campaign staff. He had quietly decided to begin putting a presidential bid together. He tried unsuccessfully to become chairman of the National Governors Association to boost his visibility. On David Rockefeller's endorsement he was named to the Trilateral Commission in April 1973. The following year he was named chairman of the Democratic National Committee's congressional, as well as gubernatorial, campaigns. In 1973 he appeared on the game show *What's My Line*, where a group of celebrity panelists would try to guess his occupation. None recognized him and it took several rounds of question-and-answer before movie critic Gene Shalit correctly guessed he was a governor. In May 1973, Carter warned the Democratic Party against politicizing the Watergate scandal, the occurrence of which he attributed to President Richard Nixon exercising isolation from Americans and secrecy in his decision making.

1976 presidential campaign



Campaign flyer from Democratic Party presidential primary



Carter and President Gerald Ford debating at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia

Democratic primary

- *The national news media discovered and promoted Carter, as Lawrence Shoup noted in his 1980 book *The Carter Presidency and Beyond*:*
- *When Wallace proved to be a spent force, Carter swept the region.*
- *Carter became the front-runner early on by winning the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary.*
- *Carter published *Why Not the Best?**

On December 12, 1974, Carter announced his candidacy for President of the United States at National Press Club in Washington, D.C. His speech contained themes of domestic inequality, optimism, and change.

When Carter entered the Democratic Party presidential primaries, he was considered to have little chance against nationally better-known politicians; his name recognition was two percent. As late as January 26, 1976, Carter was the first choice of only four percent of Democratic voters, according to a Gallup poll.[citation needed] Yet "by mid-March 1976 Carter was not only far ahead of the active contenders for the Democratic presidential nomination, he also led President Ford by a few percentage points," according to Shoup. As the Watergate scandal of President Nixon was still fresh in the voters' minds, Carter's position as an outsider, distant from Washington, D.C., became an asset. He promoted government reorganization. Carter published *Why Not the Best?* in June 1976 to help introduce himself to the American public.

Carter became the front-runner early on by winning the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary. He used a two-prong strategy: in the South, which most had tacitly conceded to Alabama's George Wallace, Carter ran as a moderate favorite son. When Wallace proved to be a spent force, Carter swept the region. In the North, Carter appealed largely to conservative Christian and rural voters; he had little chance of winning a majority in most states. He won several Northern states by building the largest single bloc. Carter's strategy involved reaching a region before another candidate could extend influence there. He had traveled over 50,000 miles, visited 37 states, and delivered over 200 speeches before any other candidate entered the race. Initially dismissed as a regional candidate, Carter proved to be the Democrat with the most effective national strategy, and he clinched the nomination.[citation needed]

The national news media discovered and promoted Carter, as Lawrence Shoup noted in his 1980 book *The Carter Presidency and Beyond*:

During his presidential campaign in April 1976, Carter responded to an interviewer and said, "I have nothing against a community that is ... trying to maintain the ethnic purity of their neighborhoods." His remark was intended as supportive of open-housing laws, but specifying opposition to government efforts to "inject black families into a white neighborhood just to create some sort of integration."

Carter's stated positions during his campaign include public financing of congressional campaigns, his support for the creation of a federal consumer protection agency, creating a separate department for education, signing a peace treaty with the Soviet Union against the usage of nuclear weapon, reducing the defense budget, a tax proposal implementing "a substantial increase toward those who have the higher incomes" alongside a levy reduction on taxpayers with lower and middle incomes, making multiple amendments to the Social Security Act, and having a balanced budget by the end of his tenure.

1976 general election

- *Carter carried fewer states than Ford—23 states to the defeated Ford's 27—yet Carter won with the largest percentage of the popular vote (50.1 percent) of any non-incumbent since Dwight Eisenhower.*
- *Carter began the race with a sizable lead over Ford, who narrowed the gap during the campaign, but lost to Carter in a narrow defeat on November 2, 1976.*

On July 15, 1976, Carter chose Minnesota Senator Walter F. Mondale as his running mate. He attacked Washington in his speeches, and offered a religious salve for the nation's wounds.

Carter and Gerald Ford faced off in three televised debates during the 1976 election. The debates were the first presidential debates since 1960.

Carter was interviewed by Robert Scheer of Playboy for the November 1976 issue, which hit the newsstands a couple of weeks before the election. While discussing his religion's view of pride, Carter said: "I've looked on a lot of women with lust. I've committed adultery in my heart many times." This and his admission in another interview that he didn't mind if people uttered the word "fuck" led to a media feeding frenzy and critics lamenting the erosion of boundary between politicians and their private intimate lives.

Carter began the race with a sizable lead over Ford, who narrowed the gap during the campaign, but lost to Carter in a narrow defeat on November 2, 1976. Carter won the popular vote by 50.1 percent to 48.0 percent for Ford, and received 297 electoral votes to Ford's 240. Carter carried fewer states than Ford—23 states to the defeated Ford's 27—yet Carter won with the largest percentage of the popular vote (50.1 percent) of any non-incumbent since Dwight Eisenhower.[citation needed]

Presidency (1977–1981)

- *Carter's tenure was a time of continuing inflation and recession, as well as an energy crisis.*
- *On January 7, 1980, Carter signed Law H.R.*

Carter's tenure was a time of continuing inflation and recession, as well as an energy crisis. Among his first acts was the fulfillment of a campaign promise by issuing an executive order declaring unconditional amnesty for Vietnam War-era draft evaders. On January 7, 1980, Carter signed Law H.R. 5860 aka Public Law 96-185 known as The Chrysler Corporation Loan Guarantee Act of 1979, bailing out Chrysler Corporation with \$3.5 billion (equivalent to \$10.64 billion in 2018) in aid.

Carter attempted to calm various conflicts around the world, most visibly in the Middle East with the signing of the Camp David Accords; giving back the Panama Canal to Panama; and signing the SALT II nuclear arms reduction treaty with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. His final year was marred by the Iran hostage crisis, which contributed to him losing the 1980 election to Ronald Reagan.

Transition

- *On December 20, Carter announced his choice of Juanita M. Kreps for United States Secretary of Commerce, Griffin Bell for United States Attorney General, and Robert Bergland for United States Secretary of Agriculture.*
- *On December 13, Carter's election was confirmed by the Electoral College.*
- *On January 6, Carter requested former Governor of Maine Kenneth M. Curtis as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee.*

On November 22, 1976, Carter conducted his first visit to Washington after being elected, meeting with Director of the Office of Management James Lynn and United States Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld at the Blair House, and holding an afternoon meeting with

President Ford at the White House. The following day, Carter conferred with congressional leaders, expressing that his meetings with cabinet members had been "very helpful" and saying Ford had requested he seek out his assistance if needing anything.

On December 3, 1976, during a news conference, Carter announced his choice of Cyrus R. Vance for United States Secretary of State and Bert Lance as his budget director. On December 9, Carter was presented plans for reform on housing, transportation, and urban development during a meeting with transition advisors at the Blair House. On December 13, Carter's election was confirmed by the Electoral College. On December 20, Carter announced his choice of Juanita M. Kreps for United States Secretary of Commerce, Griffin Bell for United States Attorney General, and Robert Bergland for United States Secretary of Agriculture.

On January 4, 1977, Carter told reporters that he would free himself from potential conflicts of interest by leaving his peanut business in the hands of trustees. On January 6, Carter requested former Governor of Maine Kenneth M. Curtis as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. On January 13, Carter set up an economic summit meeting for non-Communist countries in a call with foreign leaders from Japan, France, Germany, and Great Britain. The conference was set for April. On January 18, Carter named John F. O'Leary for Administrator of the Federal Energy Administration, William Nordhaus and Lyle E. Gramley for membership on the Council of Economic Advisors, Anthony M. Solomon for Undersecretary of the Treasury for Monetary Affairs, C. Fred Bergsten for Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Monetary Affairs, and Kenneth S. Axelson for Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

Domestic policy



Carter (right) meeting Deng Xiaoping, leader of China from 1978 to 1989

U.S. energy crisis

- *During the signing ceremony, Carter cited the "impending crisis of energy shortages" with causing the necessity of the legislation.*
- *On March 1, 1979, Carter submitted a standby gasoline rationing plan per the request of Congress.*
- *The address would be cited as Carter's "malaise" speech, memorable for mixed reactions and his use of rhetoric.*

On April 18, 1977, Carter delivered a televised speech declaring that the U.S. energy crisis during the 1970s was the moral equivalent of war. He encouraged energy conservation by all U.S. citizens and installed solar water heating panels on the White House. He wore sweaters to offset turning down the heat in the White House. On August 4, 1977, Carter signed the Department of Energy Organization Act of 1977, forming the Department of Energy, the first new cabinet position in eleven years. During the signing ceremony, Carter cited the "impending crisis of energy shortages" with causing the necessity of the legislation. At the start of a September 29, 1977 news conference, under the impression he had not come across well in addressing energy during his prior press session, Carter stated that the House of Representatives had "adopted almost all" of the energy proposal he had made five months prior and called the compromise "a turning point in establishing a

comprehensive energy program." The following month, on October 13, Carter stated he believed in the Senate's ability to pass the energy reform bill and identified energy as "the most important domestic issue that we will face while I am in office."

On January 12, 1978, during a press conference, Carter said the continued discussions about his energy reform proposal had "been long and divisive and arduous" as well as hindering to national issues that needed to be addressed with the implementation of the law.

In an April 11, 1978 news conference, Carter said his biggest surprise "in the nature of a disappointment" since becoming president was the difficulty Congress had in passing legislation, citing the energy reform bill in particular: "I never dreamed a year ago in April when I proposed this matter to the Congress that a year later it still would not be resolved."

On March 1, 1979, Carter submitted a standby gasoline rationing plan per the request of Congress. On April 5, he delivered an address in which he stressed the urgency of energy conservation. During an April 30 news conference, Carter said it was "imperative" that the House commerce committee approve the standby gasoline rationing plan and called on Congress to pass the several other standby energy conservation plans he had proposed. On July 15, 1979, Carter delivered a nationally televised address in which he identified what he believed to be a "crisis of confidence" among the American people, under the advisement of pollster Pat Caddell who believed Americans faced a crisis in confidence from events of the 1960s and 1970s prior to Carter taking office. The address would be cited as Carter's "malaise" speech, memorable for mixed reactions and his use of rhetoric. The speech's negative reception came from a view that Carter did not state efforts on his own part to address the energy crisis and was too reliant on Americans.

EPA Love Canal Superfund

- *Carter acknowledged that several more "Love Canals" existed across the country, and that discovering such hazardous dumpsites was "one of the grimmest discoveries of our modern era".*
- *In 1978, Carter declared a federal emergency in the neighborhood of Love Canal in the city of Niagara Falls, New York.*

In 1978, Carter declared a federal emergency in the neighborhood of Love Canal in the city of Niagara Falls, New York. More than 800 families were evacuated from the neighborhood, which was built on top of a toxic waste landfill. The Superfund law was created in response to the situation. Federal disaster money was appropriated to demolish the approximately 500 houses, the 99th Street School, and the 93rd Street School, which were built on top of the dump; and to remediate the dump and construct a containment area for the hazardous wastes. This was the first time that such a process had been undertaken. Carter acknowledged that several more "Love Canals" existed across the country, and that discovering such hazardous dumpsites was "one of the grimmest discoveries of our modern era".

Relations with Congress

- *Carter's remarks were met with criticism by House Republicans who accused his comments of not befitting the formality a president should have in their public remarks.*
- *Carter was also weakened by a signing of bill that contained many of the "hit list" projects.*
- *Carter refused to play by Washington's rules.*

Carter refused to play by Washington's rules. He missed and never returned phone calls on his part. He used verbal insults and had an unwillingness to return political favors, which contributed to his lack of ability to pass legislation through Congress. During a press conference on February 23, 1977, Carter stated that it was "inevitable" that he would come into conflict with Congress and added that he had found "a growing sense of cooperation" with Congress and met in the past with congressional members of both parties. Carter developed a bitter feeling following an unsuccessful attempt at having Congress enact the scrapping of several water projects, which he had requested during his first 100 days in office and received opposition from members of his party. As a rift ensued between the White House and Congress afterward, Carter noted the liberal wing of the Democratic Party was the most ardently against his policies, attributing this to Ted Kennedy wanting the presidency. Carter, thinking he had support from 74 Congressmen, issued a "hit list" of 19 projects that he claimed were "pork barrel" spending that he claimed would result in a veto on his part if included in any legislation. He found himself at odds with Congressional Democrats once more, Speaker of the House of Representatives Tip O'Neill finding it inappropriate for a president to pursue what had traditionally been the role of Congress. Carter was also weakened by a signing of bill that contained many of the "hit list" projects. In a June 23, 1977 address to a fundraising dinner for the Democratic National Committee, Carter said, "I think it's good to point out tonight, too, that we have evolved a good working relationship with the Congress. For 8 years we had government by partisanship. Now we have government by partnership." At a July 28 news conference, assessing the first six months of his presidency, Carter spoke of his improved understanding of Congress: "I have learned to respect the Congress more in an individual basis. I've been favorably impressed at the high degree of concentrated experience and knowledge that individual Members of Congress can bring on a specific subject, where they've been the chairman of a subcommittee or committee for many years and have focused their attention on this particular aspect of government life which I will never be able to do."

On May 10, 1979, the House voted against giving Carter authority to produce a standby gas rationing plan. The following day, Carter delivered remarks in the Oval Office describing himself as shocked and embarrassed for the American government due to the vote and concluding "the majority of the House Members are unwilling to take the responsibility, the political responsibility for dealing with a potential, serious threat to our Nation." He furthered that a majority of House members were placing higher importance on "local or parochial interests" and challenged the lower chamber of Congress with composing their own rationing plan in the next 90 days. Carter's remarks were met with criticism by House Republicans who accused his comments of not befitting the formality a president should have in their public remarks. Others pointed to 106 Democrats voting against his proposal

and the bipartisan criticism potentially coming back to haunt him. At the start of a July 25, 1979 news conference, Carter called on believers in the future of the US and his proposed energy program to speak with Congress as it bore the responsibility to impose his proposals. Amid the energy proposal opposition, The New York Times commented that "as the comments flying up and down Pennsylvania Avenue illustrate, there is also a crisis of confidence between Congress and the President, sense of doubt and distrust that threatens to undermine the President's legislative program and become an important issue in next year's campaign."

Economy

- *Carter's presidency had an economic history of two roughly equal periods, the first two years being a time of continuing recovery from the severe 1973–75 recession, which had left fixed investment at its lowest level since the 1970 recession and unemployment at 9%, and the last two years marked by double-digit inflation, coupled with very high interest rates, oil shortages, and slow economic growth.*

Carter's presidency had an economic history of two roughly equal periods, the first two years being a time of continuing recovery from the severe 1973–75 recession, which had left fixed investment at its lowest level since the 1970 recession and unemployment at 9%, and the last two years marked by double-digit inflation, coupled with very high interest rates, oil shortages, and slow economic growth. Following a period of growth in 1977 and 1978 that saw the creation of million net new jobs and real median household income growth by 5%, the 1979 energy crisis ended this period of growth, however, and as both inflation and interest rates rose, economic growth, job creation, and consumer confidence declined sharply. The relatively loose monetary policy adopted by Federal Reserve Board Chairman G. William Miller, had already contributed to somewhat higher inflation, rising from 5.8% in 1976 to 7.7% in 1978. The sudden doubling of crude oil prices by OPEC, the world's leading oil exporting cartel, forced inflation to double-digit levels, averaging 11.3% in 1979 and 13.5% in 1980. The sudden shortage of gasoline as the 1979 summer vacation season began exacerbated the problem, and would come to symbolize the crisis among the public in general; the acute shortage, originating in the shutdown of Amerada Hess refining facilities, led to a lawsuit against the company that year by the Federal Government.



Carter signing the Airline Deregulation Act, 1978

Deregulation

- *In 1979, Carter deregulated the American beer industry by making it legal to sell malt, hops, and yeast to American home brewers for the first time since the effective 1920 beginning of Prohibition in the United States.*
- *95-504) was signed into law by President Carter on October 24, 1978.*
- *In 1977, Carter appointed Alfred E. Kahn, a professor of economics at Cornell University, to be chair of the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB).*

In 1977, Carter appointed Alfred E. Kahn, a professor of economics at Cornell University, to be chair of the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB). He was part of a push for deregulation of the industry, supported by leading economists, leading 'think tanks' in Washington, a civil society coalition advocating the reform (patterned on a coalition earlier developed for the truck-and-rail-reform efforts), the head of the regulatory agency, Senate leadership, the Carter administration, and even some in the airline industry. This coalition swiftly gained legislative results in 1978.[citation needed]

The Airline Deregulation Act (Pub.L. 95-504) was signed into law by President Carter on October 24, 1978. The main purpose of the act was to remove government control over fares, routes and market entry (of new airlines) from commercial aviation. The Civil Aeronautics Board's powers of regulation were to be phased out, eventually allowing market forces to determine routes and fares. The Act did not remove or diminish the FAA's regulatory powers over all aspects of airline safety.

In 1979, Carter deregulated the American beer industry by making it legal to sell malt, hops, and yeast to American home brewers for the first time since the effective 1920 beginning of Prohibition in the United States. This Carter deregulation led to an increase in home brewing over the 1980s and 1990s that by the 2000s had developed into a strong craft microbrew culture in the United States, with 6,266 micro breweries, brewpubs, and regional craft breweries in the United States by the end of 2017.

Healthcare

- *During his presidential campaign, Carter embraced healthcare reform akin to the Ted Kennedy-sponsored bipartisan universal national health insurance.*
- *Carter would later cite Kennedy's disagreements as having thwarted Carter's efforts to provide a comprehensive health-care system for the country.*
- *During 1978, Carter also conducted meetings with Kennedy for a compromise healthcare law that proved unsuccessful.*

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Carter's proposals on healthcare while in office included an April 1977 mandatory health care cost proposal, and a June 1979 proposal that provided private health insurance coverage. Carter saw the June 1979 proposal as a continuation of progress in American health coverage made by President Harry Truman in the latter's proposed access to quality health care being a basic right to Americans and Medicare and Medicaid being introduced under President Lyndon B. Johnson. The April 1977 mandatory health care cost proposal was passed in the Senate, and later defeated in the House.

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Education

- *Early into his term, Carter collaborated with Congress to assist in fulfilling a campaign promise to create a cabinet level education department.*
- *Carter was complimentary of the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson and the 89th United States Congress for having initiated Head Start.*
- *On October 17, 1979, Carter signed the Department of Education Organization Act into law, establishing the United States Department of Education.*

Early into his term, Carter collaborated with Congress to assist in fulfilling a campaign promise to create a cabinet level education department. In a February 28, 1978 address at the White House, Carter argued, "Education is far too important a matter to be scattered piecemeal among various Government departments and agencies, which are often busy with sometimes dominant concerns." On February 8, 1979, the Carter administration

released an outline of its plan to establish an education department and asserted enough support for the enactment to occur by June. On October 17, 1979, Carter signed the Department of Education Organization Act into law, establishing the United States Department of Education.

Carter expanded the Head Start program with the addition of 43,000 children and families, while the percentage of nondefense dollars spent on education was doubled. Carter was complimentary of the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson and the 89th United States Congress for having initiated Head Start. In a November 1, 1980 speech, Carter stated his administration had extended Head Start to migrant children and was "working hard right now with Senator Bentsen and with Kika de la Garza to make as much as \$45 million available in Federal money in the border districts to help with the increase in school construction for the number of Mexican school children who reside here legally".

Foreign policy

Israel and Egypt

- *Historian Jørgen Jensehaugen argues that by the time Carter left office in January 1981, he:*

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was in an odd position—he had attempted to break with traditional US policy but ended up fulfilling the goals of that tradition, which had been to break up the Arab alliance, side-line the Palestinians, build an alliance with Egypt, weaken the Soviet Union and secure Israel.



First Lady Rosalynn Carter, Tanzanian leader Julius Nyerere, and Carter, 1977



Carter with Nigerian leader Olusegun Obasanjo on April 1, 1978

Africa

- *Carter visited Nigeria from March 31 – April 3, 1978, the trip being an attempt by the Carter administration to improve relations with the country.*
- *Carter reiterated interests in convening a peace conference on the subject of Rhodesia that would involve all parties and reported that the US was moving as it could.*

In an October 4, 1977 address to African officials at the United Nations, Carter stated the U.S.'s interest to "see a strong, vigorous, free, and prosperous Africa with as much of the control of government as possible in the hands of the residents of your countries" and pointed to their unified efforts on "the problem of how to resolve the Rhodesian, Zimbabwe question." At a news conference later that month, Carter outlined the US wanting "to work harmoniously with South Africa in dealing with the threats to peace in Namibia and in Zimbabwe in particular" and to do away with racial issues such as apartheid and for equal opportunities in other facets of society in the region.

Carter visited Nigeria from March 31 – April 3, 1978, the trip being an attempt by the Carter administration to improve relations with the country. He was the first U.S. president to visit Nigeria. Carter reiterated interests in convening a peace conference on the subject of Rhodesia that would involve all parties and reported that the US was moving as it could.

The elections of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and Abel Muzorewa for Prime Minister of Zimbabwe Rhodesia, South Africa turning down a plan for African independence in the southwest, and domestic opposition in Congress were seen as crippling to the Carter administration's policy toward South Africa.

On May 16, 1979, the Senate voted in favor of President Carter lifting economic sanctions against Rhodesia, the vote being seen by both Rhodesia and South Africa "as a potentially fatal blow to the joint diplomacy that the United States and Britain have pursued in the region for three years and to the effort to reach a compromise between the Salisbury leaders and the guerrillas." On December 3, Secretary of State Vance promised Senator Jesse Helms that when "the British governor arrives in Salisbury to implement an agreed Lancaster House settlement and the electoral process begins, the President will take prompt action to lift sanctions" against Zimbabwe Rhodesia.

Indonesia and East Timor

- *During Carter's presidency, the United States continued to support Indonesia as a cold war ally in spite of mass killings and other human rights violations in East Timor.*
- *The Carter administration continued weapon transfers to Indonesia.*
- *Apparently, this viewed carried within the Carter administration.*

During Carter's presidency, the United States continued to support Indonesia as a cold war ally in spite of mass killings and other human rights violations in East Timor. The violations followed a Dec. 1975 invasion and occupation of East Timor that included such specific abuses as forced resettlement, torture, mass arrests, and forced sterilization of women. In

mid-June 1977, an Indonesian foreign minister acknowledged that between 50,000 and 80,000 civilians had probably been killed since the invasion. From the same time period, a memo from a staff member of the U.S. National Security Council stated, "The Indonesian decision [to annex East Timor] is irreversible. The US government has accepted it. Continued congressional hearings are regarded as unwarranted and mischievous interference in their internal affairs." Apparently, this view was carried within the Carter administration.

The Carter administration continued weapon transfers to Indonesia. For example, the American A-4 bomber, as well as the British Hawk, were central to saturation bombing campaigns in East Timor in 1978-79. U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian Affairs Robert Oakley regularly "informed" Congress that reports of genocide had been exaggerated.



Carter with King Hussein of Jordan and Shah of Iran in 1977

Iran

- *On November 15, 1977, Carter pledged that his administration would continue positive relations between the US and Iran, calling its contemporary status "strong, stable and progressive".*

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Iran hostage crisis

- *Fifty-two American diplomats and citizens were held hostage for the next 444 days until they were finally freed immediately after Ronald Reagan succeeded Carter as President on January 20, 1981.*
- *On April 24, 1980, Carter ordered Operation Eagle Claw to try to free the hostages.*
- *During the crisis, Carter remained in isolation in the White House for more than 100 days, until he left to participate in the lighting of the National Menorah on the Ellipse.*

On November 4, 1979, a group of Iranian students took over the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. The students belonged to the Muslim Student Followers of the Imam's Line and were in support of the Iranian Revolution. Fifty-two American diplomats and citizens were held hostage for the next 444 days until they were finally freed immediately after Ronald Reagan succeeded Carter as President on January 20, 1981. During the crisis, Carter remained in isolation in the White House for more than 100 days, until he left to participate in the lighting of the National Menorah on the Ellipse. A month into the affair, Carter stated his commitment to resolving the dispute without "any military action that would cause bloodshed or arouse the unstable captors of our hostages to attack them or to punish them". On April 7, 1980, Carter issued Executive Order 12205, imposing economic sanctions against Iran and announced further measures being taken by members of his cabinet and the American government that he deemed necessary to ensure a safe release. On April 24, 1980, Carter ordered Operation Eagle Claw to try to free the hostages. The mission failed, leaving eight American servicemen dead and causing the destruction of two aircraft. The ill-fated rescue attempt led to the self-imposed resignation of U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, who had been opposed to the mission from the beginning.



Carter and Leonid Brezhnev signing the SALT II treaty at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna, June 18, 1979

Soviet Union

- *The talk of a comprehensive test ban treaty materialized with the signing of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II by Carter and Leonid Brezhnev on June 18, 1979.*
- *In the 1980 State of the Union Address, Carter emphasized the significance of relations between the two regions: "Now, as during the last 3 1/2 decades, the relationship between our country, the United States of America, and the Soviet Union is the most critical factor in determining whether the world will live at peace or be engulfed in global conflict."*

On February 8, 1977, Carter stated he had urged the Soviet Union to align with the US in forming "a comprehensive test ban to stop all nuclear testing for at least an extended period of time" and that he was in favor of the Soviet Union ceasing deployment of the RSD-10 Pioneer. During a June 13 conference, Carter reported that the US would "beginning this week to work closely with the Soviet Union on a comprehensive test ban treaty to prohibit all testing of nuclear devices underground or in the atmosphere" and Paul Warnke would negotiate demilitarization of the Indian Ocean with the Soviet Union beginning the following week. At a news conference on December 30, Carter said throughout the period of "the last few months, the United States and the Soviet Union have made great progress in dealing with a long list of important issues, the most important of which is to control the deployment of strategic nuclear weapons" and that the two countries sought to conclude SALT II talks by the spring of the following year. The talk of a comprehensive test ban treaty materialized with the signing of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II by Carter and Leonid Brezhnev on June 18, 1979.

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Carter, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Zbigniew Brzezinski in September 1978



King Khalid of Saudi Arabia and Carter, October 1978

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

- *Carter also called for a boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow.*
- *The thrust of U.S. policy for the duration of the war was determined by Carter in early 1980: Carter initiated a program to arm the mujahideen through Pakistan's ISI and secured a pledge from Saudi Arabia to match U.S. funding for this purpose.*
- *In the aftermath of the invasion, Carter was determined to respond vigorously to what he considered a dangerous provocation.*

Communists under the leadership of Nur Muhammad Taraki seized power in Afghanistan on April 27, 1978. The new regime—which was divided between Taraki's extremist Khalq faction and the more moderate Parcham—signed a treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union in December of that year. Taraki's efforts to improve secular education and redistribute land were accompanied by mass executions (including of many conservative religious leaders) and political oppression unprecedented in Afghan history, igniting a

revolt by mujahideen rebels. Following a general uprising in April 1979, Taraki was deposed by Khalq rival Hafizullah Amin in September. Amin was considered a "brutal psychopath" by foreign observers; even the Soviets were alarmed by the brutality of the Afghan communists, and suspected Amin of being an agent of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), although that was not the case. By December, Amin's government had lost control of much of the country, prompting the Soviet Union to invade Afghanistan, execute Amin, and install Parcham leader Babrak Karmal as president.

Carter was surprised by the invasion, as the consensus of the U.S. intelligence community during 1978 and 1979—reiterated as late as September 29, 1979—was that "Moscow would not intervene in force even if it appeared likely that the Khalq government was about to collapse." Indeed, Carter's diary entries from November 1979 until the Soviet invasion in late December contain only two short references to Afghanistan, and are instead preoccupied with the ongoing hostage crisis in Iran. In the West, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was considered a threat to global security and the oil supplies of the Persian Gulf. Moreover, the failure to accurately predict Soviet intentions caused American officials to reappraise the Soviet threat to both Iran and Pakistan, although it is now known that those fears were overblown. For example, U.S. intelligence closely followed Soviet exercises for an invasion of Iran throughout 1980, while an earlier warning from Carter's national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski that "if the Soviets came to dominate Afghanistan, they could promote a separate Baluchistan ... [thus] dismembering Pakistan and Iran" took on new urgency. These concerns were a major factor in the unrequited efforts of both the Carter and Reagan administrations to improve relations with Iran, and resulted in massive aid to Pakistan's Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq. Zia's ties with the U.S. had been strained during Carter's presidency due to Pakistan's nuclear program and the execution of Ali Bhutto in April 1979, but Carter told Brzezinski and secretary of state Cyrus Vance as early as January 1979 that it was vital to "repair our relationships with Pakistan" in light of the unrest in Iran. One initiative Carter authorized to achieve this goal was a collaboration between the CIA and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI); through the ISI, the CIA began providing some \$500,000 worth of non-lethal assistance to the mujahideen on July 3, 1979—several months prior to the Soviet invasion. The modest scope of this early collaboration was likely influenced by the understanding, later recounted by CIA official Robert Gates, "that a substantial U.S. covert aid program" might have "raise[d] the stakes" thereby causing "the Soviets to intervene more directly and vigorously than otherwise intended."

In the aftermath of the invasion, Carter was determined to respond vigorously to what he considered a dangerous provocation. In a televised speech, he announced sanctions on the Soviet Union, promised renewed aid to Pakistan, initiated renewed registration for the Selective Service System, and committed the U.S. to the Persian Gulf's defense. He imposed an embargo on grain shipments to the USSR, tabled consideration of SALT II, and requested a 5% annual increase in defense spending. Carter also called for a boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. British prime minister Margaret Thatcher enthusiastically backed Carter's tough stance, although British intelligence believed "the CIA was being too alarmist about the Soviet threat to Pakistan." The thrust of U.S. policy for the duration of the

war was determined by Carter in early 1980: Carter initiated a program to arm the mujahideen through Pakistan's ISI and secured a pledge from Saudi Arabia to match U.S. funding for this purpose. U.S. support for the mujahideen accelerated under Carter's successor, Ronald Reagan, at a final cost to U.S. taxpayers of some \$3 billion. The Soviets were unable to quell the insurgency and withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, precipitating the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself. However, the decision to route U.S. aid through Pakistan led to massive fraud, as weapons sent to Karachi were frequently sold on the local market rather than delivered to the Afghan rebels; Karachi soon "became one of the most violent cities in the world." Pakistan also controlled which rebels received assistance: Of the seven mujahideen groups supported by Zia's government, four espoused Islamic fundamentalist beliefs—and these fundamentalists received most of the funding. Despite this, Carter has expressed no regrets over his decision to support what he still considers the "freedom fighters" in Afghanistan.

South Korea

- *Carter relieved Singlaub of his duties two days later on May 21 following a meeting between the two.*
- *From June 30 to July 1, 1977, Carter held meetings with President of South Korea Park Chung-hee at the Blue House for a discussion on relations between the US and Korea as well as Carter's interest in preserving his policy of worldwide tension reduction.*

During a March 9, 1977 news conference, Carter reaffirmed his interest in having a gradual withdrawal of American troops from South Korea and stated he wanted South Korea to eventually have "adequate ground forces owned by and controlled by the South Korean Government to protect themselves against any intrusion from North Korea." On May 19, The Washington Post quoted Chief of Staff of U.S. forces in South Korea John K. Singlaub as criticizing Carter's withdrawal of troops from the Korean peninsula. Later that day, Press Secretary Rex Granum announced Singlaub had been summoned to the White House by Carter, who he also confirmed had seen the article in The Washington Post. Carter relieved Singlaub of his duties two days later on May 21 following a meeting between the two. On May 26, during a news conference, Carter said he believed South Korea would be able to defend themselves despite reduced American troops in the event of conflict. From June 30 to July 1, 1977, Carter held meetings with President of South Korea Park Chung-hee at the Blue House for a discussion on relations between the US and Korea as well as Carter's interest in preserving his policy of worldwide tension reduction.

On April 21, 1978, Carter announced a reduction in American troops in South Korea scheduled to be released by the end of the year by two-thirds, citing a lack of action by Congress in regards to a compensatory aid package for the Seoul Government.

Carter by a bank controlled by Bert Lance and Curran's position as special counsel not allowing him to file charges on his own. Curran announced in October 1979 that no evidence had been found to support allegations that funds loaned from the National Bank of Georgia had been diverted to Carter's 1976 presidential campaign, ending the investigation.

1980 presidential campaign

- *Carter's campaign for re-election in 1980 was one of the most difficult and least successful in history.*
- *On October 28, Carter and Reagan participated in the sole presidential debate of the election cycle.*
- *Carter and Vice President Mondale were formally nominated at the Democratic National Convention in New York City.*

Carter later wrote that the most intense and mounting opposition to his policies came from the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, which he attributed to Ted Kennedy's ambition to replace him as president. After Kennedy announced his candidacy in November 1979, questions regarding his activities during his presidential bid were a frequent subject of Carter's press conferences held during the Democratic presidential primary. Kennedy surprised his supporters by running a weak campaign, and Carter won most of the primaries and secured renomination. However, Kennedy had mobilized the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, which gave Carter weak support in the fall election. Carter and Vice President Mondale were formally nominated at the Democratic National Convention in New York City. Carter delivered a speech notable for its tribute to the late Hubert Humphrey, who he initially called "Hubert Horatio Hornblower."

Carter's campaign for re-election in 1980 was one of the most difficult and least successful in history. He faced strong challenges from the right (Republican Ronald Reagan), the center (independent John B. Anderson), and the left (Democrat Ted Kennedy). He had to run against his own "stagflation"-ridden economy, while the hostage crisis in Iran dominated the news every week. He alienated liberal college students, who were expected to be his base, by re-instating registration for the military draft. His campaign manager and former appointments secretary, Timothy Kraft, stepped down some five weeks before the general election amid what turned out to have been an uncorroborated allegation of cocaine use. On October 28, Carter and Reagan participated in the sole presidential debate of the election cycle. Though initially trailing Carter by several points, Reagan experienced a surge in polling following the debate. Carter was defeated by Ronald Reagan in a landslide, and the Senate went Republican for the first time since 1952. In his concession speech, Carter admitted that he was hurt by the outcome of the election but pledged "a very fine transition period" with President-elect Reagan.

Post-presidency (1981–present)

- *Shortly after losing his re-election bid, Carter told the White House press corps of his intent to emulate the retirement of Harry S. Truman and not use his subsequent public life to enrich himself.*

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Carter Center

- *In 1982, Carter founded the Carter Center, a non-governmental and non-profit organization with the purpose of advancing human rights and alleviating human suffering, including helping improve the quality of life for people in more than 80 countries.*

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Diplomacy

- *Carter toured Cuba again for three days in March 2011.*
- *In 1994, President Bill Clinton sought Carter's assistance in a North Korea peace mission, during which Carter negotiated an understanding with Kim Il-sung, who he went on to outline a treaty with that he announced to CNN without the consent of the Clinton administration to spur American action.*
- *Carter attempted traveling to Zimbabwe in November 2008, but was stopped by President Robert Mugabe's government.*

In 1994, President Bill Clinton sought Carter's assistance in a North Korea peace mission, during which Carter negotiated an understanding with Kim Il-sung, who he went on to outline a treaty with that he announced to CNN without the consent of the Clinton administration to spur American action. Carter traveled to North Korea to secure the release of Aijalon Gomes in August 2010, successfully negotiating his release. Throughout the latter part of 2017, as tensions between the US and North Korea persisted, Carter recommended a peace treaty between the two nations, and confirmed he had offered himself to the Trump administration as a willing candidate to serve as diplomatic envoy to North Korea.

In October 1984, Carter was named an honorary citizen of Peru by Mayor of Cusco Daniel Estrada after traveling to Machu Picchu, Carter endorsing the country's elections in 2001, and offering support to the Peruvian government following a meeting with President of Peru Alan García at Government Palace in Lima in April 2009.

In his February 1986 talks with Tomás Borge, Carter secured the release of journalist Luis Mora and labor leader Jose Altamirano, while touring Nicaragua for three days.

Carter conducted a tour of Cuba in May 2002 that included meeting with Fidel Castro and meeting political dissidents such as the AIDS sanitarium, a medical school, a biotech facility, an agricultural production cooperative, and a school for disabled children. Carter toured Cuba again for three days in March 2011.

Carter's diplomatic efforts in the Middle East included a September 1981 meeting with Prime Minister of Israel Menachem Begin, a March 1983 tour of Egypt that included meeting with members of the Palestine Liberation Organization, a December 2008 meeting with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, and a June 2012 call with Jeffery Brown in which Carter stressed Egyptian military generals could be granted full power executively and legislatively in addition to being able to form a new constitution in favor of themselves in the event their announced intentions went through. In 2006, Carter stated his disagreements with the domestic and foreign policies of Israel while saying he was in favor of the country, extending his criticisms to Israel's policies in Lebanon, the West Bank, and Gaza. Carter traveled to Syria in April 2008, laying a wreath at the grave of Yasser Arafat in Ramallah and denying he had been contacted by the Bush administration in relation to meeting with Hamas leaders.

In July 2007, Carter joined Nelson Mandela in Johannesburg, South Africa, to announce his participation in The Elders, a group of independent global leaders who work together on peace and human rights issues. Following the announcement, Carter participated in visits to Darfur, Sudan, Cyprus, the Korean Peninsula, and the Middle East, among others. Carter attempted traveling to Zimbabwe in November 2008, but was stopped by President Robert Mugabe's government.

Carter held summits in Egypt and Tunisia in 1995–1996 to address violence in the Great Lakes region of Africa, and played a key role in negotiation of the Nairobi Agreement in 1999 between Sudan and Uganda.

Criticism of American policy

- *Carter began his first year out of office with a pledge not to critique the new Reagan administration.*
- *Carter's insistence that Reagan was not preserving peace in the Middle East continued in 1987, Carter during the year also criticizing Reagan for adhering to terrorist demands, nomination of Robert Bork for the Supreme Court, and handling of the Persian Gulf.*
- *Carter's comments received a response from the Bush administration in the form of Tony Fratto saying Carter was increasing his irrelevance with his commentary.*

Carter began his first year out of office with a pledge not to critique the new Reagan administration. He spoke out after the assassination attempt on Reagan, and voiced his agreement with Reagan on building neutron arms in the wake of the Soviet invasion of

Afghanistan. He later disagreed with Reagan's handling of the Middle East. The following year, Carter called for bipartisanship to fix American economic issues, and criticized the Reagan administration's handling of the Sabra and Shatila massacre. Carter responded favorably to Reagan choosing to remain within the Camp David agreement, with distaste toward what he felt was Reagan blaming his tenure for continued difficulties in policy. In 1983, Carter judged the Reagan campaign with having falsified simplicity in solving issues, and criticized Reagan for a lack of attention to human rights violations. In 1984, Carter stated he had been wrongly presented as weak by Reagan due to a commitment to human rights during the previous presidential election, and condemned Reagan for not making rescue efforts to retrieve four American businessmen from West Beirut. In 1985, Carter rebuked Reagan over his handling of peace within the Middle East, his support of the Strategic Defense Initiative, and Reagan's claim of an international conspiracy on terrorism. Carter's insistence that Reagan was not preserving peace in the Middle East continued in 1987, Carter during the year also criticizing Reagan for adhering to terrorist demands, nomination of Robert Bork for the Supreme Court, and handling of the Persian Gulf.

During the presidency of George W. Bush, Carter stated his opposition to the Iraq War, and what he considered an attempt on the part of Bush and Tony Blair to oust Saddam Hussein through the usage of "lies and misinterpretations". In May 2007, Carter stated the Bush administration "has been the worst in history" in terms of its impact in foreign affairs, and later stated he was just comparing Bush's tenure to that of Richard Nixon. Carter's comments received a response from the Bush administration in the form of Tony Fratto saying Carter was increasing his irrelevance with his commentary. By the end of Bush's second term, Carter considered Bush's tenure disappointing, which he disclosed in comments to Forward Magazine of Syria.

Though he praised President Obama in the early part of his tenure, Carter stated his disagreements with the use of drone strikes against suspected terrorists, Obama's choice to keep Guantanamo Bay detention camp open, and the current federal surveillance programs as disclosed by Edward Snowden indicating that "America has no functioning democracy at this moment."

During the Trump presidency, Carter spoke favorably of the chance for immigration reform through Congress, and criticized Trump for his handling of the U.S. national anthem protests.



The state funeral of George H. W. Bush in December 2018. Carter and his wife Rosalynn can be seen on the far right of the photograph.

Presidential politics

- *Leading up to the general election, Carter criticized John McCain, who responded to Carter's comments, and warned Obama against selecting Clinton as his running mate.*
- *After the interview, Trump himself praised Carter's comments and thanked him over Twitter, writing "Just read the nice remarks by President Jimmy Carter about me and how badly I am treated by the press (Fake News)."*

Carter was considered a potential candidate in the 1984 presidential election, but did not run and instead endorsed Walter Mondale for the Democratic nomination. After Mondale secured the nomination, Carter critiqued the Reagan campaign, spoke at the 1984 Democratic National Convention, and advised Mondale. Following the election, in which President Reagan defeated Mondale, Carter stated the loss was predictable due to the latter's platform that included raising taxes.

In the 1988 presidential election cycle, Carter ruled himself out as a candidate once more and predicted Vice President George H. W. Bush as the Republican nominee in the general election. Carter foresaw unity at the 1988 Democratic National Convention, where he delivered an address. Following the election, a failed attempt by the Democrats in regaining the White House, Carter said Bush would have a more difficult presidency than Reagan due to not having the same level of popularity.

During the 1992 presidential election, Carter met with Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas who sought out his advice. Carter spoke favorably of former Governor of Arkansas Bill Clinton, and criticized Ross Perot. As the primary concluded, Carter spoke of the need for the 1992 Democratic National Convention to address certain issues not focused on in the past, and campaigned for Clinton after he became the Democratic nominee in the general election, publicly stating his expectation to be consulted during the latter's presidency.

Carter endorsed Vice President Al Gore days before the 2000 presidential election, and in the years following voiced his opinion that the election was won by Gore, despite the Supreme Court handing the election to Bush in the controversial Bush v. Gore ruling.

In the 2004 election cycle, Carter endorsed John Kerry and spoke at the 2004 Democratic National Convention. Carter also voiced concerns of another voting mishap in the state of Florida.

Amid the Democratic presidential primary in 2008, Carter was speculated to endorse Senator Barack Obama over his main primary rival Hillary Clinton amid his speaking favorably of the candidate, as well as remarks from the Carter family that showed their support for Obama. Carter also commented on Clinton ending her bid when superdelegates voted after the June 3 primary. Leading up to the general election, Carter criticized John McCain, who responded to Carter's comments, and warned Obama against selecting Clinton as his running mate.

Carter endorsed Republican Mitt Romney for the Republican nomination during the primary season of the 2012 election cycle, though he clarified his backing of Romney was due to him considering the former Massachusetts governor the candidate that could best assure a victory for President Obama. Carter delivered a videotape address at the 2012 Democratic National Convention.

Carter was critical of Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump shortly after the latter entered the primary and predicted he would lose, noting the differing circumstances of the political climate from when he was still an active politician. As the primary continued, Carter stated he would prefer Trump over his main rival Ted Cruz, though rebuked the Trump campaign in remarks during the primary, and in his address to the 2016 Democratic National Convention. In the Democratic primary, Carter voted for Senator Bernie Sanders, and in the general election, voted for Hillary Clinton.

In October 2017, however, Carter defended President Trump in an interview with The New York Times, criticizing the media's coverage of him. "I think the media have been harder on Trump than any other president certainly that I've known about," Carter stated. "I think they feel free to claim that Trump is mentally deranged and everything else without hesitation." He further stated that he did not believe that Russia was involved in changing votes during the presidential election or primaries. "I don't think there's any evidence that what the Russians did changed enough votes, or any votes," he told the Times. He also praised Trump for reaching out to Saudi Arabia and stated that the President has been

under a stricter spotlight than his predecessors. After the interview, Trump himself praised Carter's comments and thanked him over Twitter, writing "Just read the nice remarks by President Jimmy Carter about me and how badly I am treated by the press (Fake News). Thank you Mr. President!"

Hurricane relief

- *Carter criticized the Bush administration's handling of Hurricane Katrina, built homes in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, and partnered with former presidents to work with One America Appeal to help the victims of Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma in the Gulf Coast and Texas communities, in addition to writing op-eds about the goodness seen in Americans who assist each other during natural disasters.*

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Other activities

- *Carter serves as an Honorary Chair for the World Justice Project, and formerly served as one on the Continuity of Government Commission from 2003 to 2011.*
- *Carter also teaches at Emory University in Atlanta, and in June 2019 was awarded tenure for 37 years of service.*
- *Carter attended the dedication of his presidential library and those of Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush.*

Carter attended the dedication of his presidential library and those of Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush. He delivered eulogies at the funerals of Coretta Scott King and Gerald Ford, and Theodore Hesburgh.

Carter serves as an Honorary Chair for the World Justice Project, and formerly served as one on the Continuity of Government Commission from 2003 to 2011.[citation needed] He continues to occasionally teach Sunday school at Maranatha Baptist Church. Carter also teaches at Emory University in Atlanta, and in June 2019 was awarded tenure for 37 years of service.

Political views

Abortion

- *Although Carter was "personally opposed" to abortion, he supported legalized abortion after the landmark US Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*, 410 US 113 (1973).*

- *In a March 29, 2012 interview with Laura Ingraham, Carter expressed his current view of abortion and his wish to see the Democratic Party becoming more pro-life:*

Although Carter was "personally opposed" to abortion, he supported legalized abortion after the landmark US Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*, 410 US 113 (1973). As president, he did not support increased federal funding for abortion services. He was criticized by the American Civil Liberties Union for not doing enough to find alternatives.

In a March 29, 2012 interview with Laura Ingraham, Carter expressed his current view of abortion and his wish to see the Democratic Party becoming more pro-life:

Death penalty

- *In his Nobel Prize lecture, Carter urged "prohibition of the death penalty".*
- *In 2012, Carter wrote an op-ed in the LA Times supporting passage of a state referendum which would have ended the death penalty.*
- *Carter is known for his strong opposition to the death penalty, which he expressed during his presidential campaigns.*

Carter is known for his strong opposition to the death penalty, which he expressed during his presidential campaigns. In his Nobel Prize lecture, Carter urged "prohibition of the death penalty". He has continued to speak out against the death penalty in the US and abroad.

In a letter to the Governor of New Mexico, Bill Richardson, Carter urged the governor to sign a bill to eliminate the death penalty and institute life in prison without parole instead. New Mexico abolished the death penalty in 2009. Carter wrote: "As you know, the United States is one of the few countries, along with nations such as Saudi Arabia, China, and Cuba, which still carry out the death penalty despite the ongoing tragedy of wrongful conviction and gross racial and class-based disparities that make impossible the fair implementation of this ultimate punishment." In 2012, Carter wrote an op-ed in the LA Times supporting passage of a state referendum which would have ended the death penalty. He opened the article: "The process for administering the death penalty in the United States is broken beyond repair, and it is time to choose a more effective and moral alternative. California voters will have the opportunity to do this on election day."

Carter has also called for commutations of death sentences for many death-row inmates, including Brian K. Baldwin (executed in 1999 in Alabama), Kenneth Foster (sentence in Texas commuted in 2007) and Troy Davis (executed in Georgia in 2011).

Equality for women

- *Carter stated:*
- *The New York Times called Carter's action "the highest-profile defection yet from the Southern Baptist Convention."*

In October 2000, Carter, a third-generation Southern Baptist, severed connections to the Southern Baptist Convention over its opposition to women as pastors. What led Carter to take this action was a doctrinal statement by the Convention, adopted in June 2000, advocating a literal interpretation of the Bible. This statement followed a position of the Convention two years previously advocating the submission of wives to their husbands. Carter described the reason for his decision as due to: "an increasing inclination on the part of Southern Baptist Convention leaders to be more rigid on what is a Southern Baptist and exclusionary of accommodating those who differ from them." The New York Times called Carter's action "the highest-profile defection yet from the Southern Baptist Convention."

On July 15, 2009, Carter wrote an opinion piece about equality for women in which he stated that he chooses equality for women over the dictates of the leadership of what has been a lifetime religious commitment. He said that the view that women are inferior is not confined to one faith, "nor, tragically does its influence stop at the walls of the church, mosque, synagogue or temple." Carter stated:

In 2014, he published *A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power*.

Gun control

- *In a February 2013 appearance on Piers Morgan Tonight, Carter agreed that if the assault weapons ban did not pass it would be mainly due to lobbying by the National Rifle Association and its pressure on "weak-kneed" politicians.*
- *Carter has publicly expressed support for a ban on assault weapons and background checks of gun buyers.*
- *In May 1994, Carter and former presidents Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan wrote to the U.S. House of Representatives in support of banning "semi-automatic assault guns."*

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Same-sex marriage

- *In October 2014, Carter argued ahead of a Supreme Court ruling that legalization of same-sex marriage should be left up to the states and not mandated by federal law.*
- *Carter has stated that he supports same-sex marriage in civil ceremonies.*

Carter has stated that he supports same-sex marriage in civil ceremonies. He has also stated that he believes Jesus would also support it, saying "I believe Jesus would. I don't have any verse in scripture. ... I believe Jesus would approve gay marriage, but that's just my own personal belief. I think Jesus would encourage any love affair if it was honest and sincere

and was not damaging to anyone else, and I don't see that gay marriage damages anyone else." Evangelist Franklin Graham criticized the assertion as "absolutely wrong." In October 2014, Carter argued ahead of a Supreme Court ruling that legalization of same-sex marriage should be left up to the states and not mandated by federal law.

Race in politics

- *Obama disagreed with Carter's assessment.*

Carter ignited debate in September 2009 when he stated, "I think an overwhelming portion of the intensely demonstrated animosity toward President Barack Obama is based on the fact that he is a black man, that he is African-American." Obama disagreed with Carter's assessment. On CNN Obama stated, "Are there people out there who don't like me because of race? I'm sure there are ... that's not the overriding issue here."

Torture

- *In a 2008 interview with Amnesty International, Carter criticized the use of torture at Guantánamo Bay, saying that it "contravenes the basic principles on which this nation was founded."*
- *He stated that the next president should make the promise that the United States will "never again torture a prisoner."*

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Healthcare

- *In an October 2013 interview, Carter labeled the Affordable Care Act President Obama's major accomplishment and said "the implementation of it now is questionable at best".*
- *In July 2017, Carter concluded the US would eventually see the implementation of a single-payer healthcare system.*

In an October 2013 interview, Carter labeled the Affordable Care Act President Obama's major accomplishment and said "the implementation of it now is questionable at best". In July 2017, Carter concluded the US would eventually see the implementation of a single-payer healthcare system.

Campaign finance laws

- *Carter vigorously opposed the Supreme Court decision in Citizens United v. FEC that struck down limits on campaign spending by corporations and unions, going so far as to saying*

that the U.S. is "no longer a functioning democracy" and now has a system of "unlimited political bribery".

Carter vigorously opposed the Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. FEC* that struck down limits on campaign spending by corporations and unions, going so far as to saying that the U.S. is "no longer a functioning democracy" and now has a system of "unlimited political bribery".

Personal life

- *Carter's hobbies include painting, fly-fishing, woodworking, cycling, tennis, and skiing.*
- *Carter was also a personal friend of Elvis Presley.*
- *According to Carter, he was almost incoherent and cited barbiturate abuse as the cause of this; although Presley phoned the White House several times again, this would be the last time Carter would speak to Elvis Presley.*

Carter and his wife Rosalynn are well known for their work as volunteers with Habitat for Humanity, a Georgia-based philanthropy that helps low-income working people around the world to build and buy their own homes and access clean water.

Carter's hobbies include painting, fly-fishing, woodworking, cycling, tennis, and skiing. He also has an interest in poetry, particularly the works of Dylan Thomas. During a state visit to the UK in 1977, Carter suggested that Thomas should have a memorial in Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey; this was an idea that came to fruition in 1982.

Carter was also a personal friend of Elvis Presley. Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, met him on June 30, 1973, before Presley was to perform onstage in Atlanta. They remained in contact by telephone two months before Presley's sudden death in August 1977. Carter later recalled an abrupt phone call received by Presley in June 1977, who sought a presidential pardon from Carter, in order to help George Klein's criminal case; Klein had only been indicted at the time for fraud. According to Carter, he was almost incoherent and cited barbiturate abuse as the cause of this; although Presley phoned the White House several times again, this would be the last time Carter would speak to Elvis Presley. The day after Presley's death, Carter issued a statement and explained how he had "changed the face of American popular culture."

Religion

- *From a young age, Carter showed a deep commitment to Christianity.*
- *Carter had been greatly influenced by a sermon he had heard as a young man.*
- *As president, Carter prayed several times a day, and professed that Jesus was the driving force in his life.*
- *The New York Times noted that Carter had been instrumental in moving evangelical Christianity closer to the American mainstream during and after his presidency.*

From a young age, Carter showed a deep commitment to Christianity. He teaches Sunday school and is a deacon at the Maranatha Baptist Church in his hometown of Plains. As president, Carter prayed several times a day, and professed that Jesus was the driving force in his life. Carter had been greatly influenced by a sermon he had heard as a young man. It asked, "If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?" The New York Times noted that Carter had been instrumental in moving evangelical Christianity closer to the American mainstream during and after his presidency.

In 2000, Carter severed his membership with the Southern Baptist Convention, saying the group's doctrines did not align with his Christian beliefs. In April 2006, Carter, former President Bill Clinton, and Mercer University President Bill Underwood initiated the New Baptist Covenant. The broadly inclusive movement seeks to unite Baptists of all races, cultures and convention affiliations. Eighteen Baptist leaders representing more than 20 million Baptists across North America backed the group as an alternative to the Southern Baptist Convention. The group held its first meeting in Atlanta, January 30 through February 1, 2008.



Farah Pahlavi, Empress of Iran, holds Jimmy Carter IV while Rosalynn Carter, Caron Carter and Chip Carter watch, January 1978.

Family

- On December 20, 2015, while teaching a Sunday school class, Carter announced that his 28-year-old grandson Jeremy Carter had died from an unspecified illness.

- *Carter's grandson Jason Carter is a former Georgia State Senator and in 2014 was the Democratic candidate for governor of Georgia, losing to the Republican incumbent, Nathan Deal.*
- *He was first cousin to politician Hugh Carter and a distant cousin to the Carter family of musicians.*

Carter had three younger siblings, all of whom died of pancreatic cancer: sisters Gloria Spann (1926–1990) and Ruth Stapleton (1929–1983), and brother Billy Carter (1937–1988). He was first cousin to politician Hugh Carter and a distant cousin to the Carter family of musicians.

Carter and Rosalynn Smith were married on July 7, 1946 in the Plains Methodist Church, the church of Rosalynn's family. They have three sons, one daughter, eight grandsons, three granddaughters, and two great-grandsons. Mary Prince (an African American woman wrongly convicted of murder, and later pardoned) was their daughter Amy's nanny for most of the period from 1971 until Jimmy Carter's presidency ended. Carter had asked to be designated as her parole officer, thus helping to enable her to work in the White House. The Carters celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in July 2016, making them the second-longest wed presidential couple after George and Barbara Bush. Their eldest son Jack Carter was the 2006 Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in Nevada before losing to the Republican incumbent, John Ensign. Carter's grandson Jason Carter is a former Georgia State Senator and in 2014 was the Democratic candidate for governor of Georgia, losing to the Republican incumbent, Nathan Deal. On December 20, 2015, while teaching a Sunday school class, Carter announced that his 28-year-old grandson Jeremy Carter had died from an unspecified illness.

Cancer diagnosis

- *On August 12, however, Carter announced he had been diagnosed with cancer that had metastasized, without specifying where the cancer had originated.*
- *On December 6, 2015, Carter issued a statement that his medical scans no longer showed any cancer.*
- *On August 3, 2015, Carter underwent elective surgery to remove "a small mass" on his liver, and his prognosis for a full recovery was initially said to be "excellent".*

On August 3, 2015, Carter underwent elective surgery to remove "a small mass" on his liver, and his prognosis for a full recovery was initially said to be "excellent". On August 12, however, Carter announced he had been diagnosed with cancer that had metastasized, without specifying where the cancer had originated. On August 20, he disclosed that melanoma had been found in his brain and liver, and that he had begun treatment with the immunotherapy drug pembrolizumab and was about to start radiation therapy. His healthcare is being managed by Emory Healthcare of Atlanta. The former president has an extensive family history of cancer, including both of his parents and all three of his siblings.

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Longevity

- *On January 20, 2017, at age 92, Carter became the oldest living former president to attend a presidential inauguration (40 years after his own).*

On January 20, 2017, at age 92, Carter became the oldest living former president to attend a presidential inauguration (40 years after his own). Two years later, on March 22, 2019, he gained the distinction of being the nation's longest-lived president, when he surpassed the lifespan of George H. W. Bush, who was 94 years, 171 days of age when he died in November 2018; both men were born in 1924.

Funeral and burial plans

- *Carter noted in 2006 that a funeral in Washington, D.C., with visitation at the Carter Center was planned as well.*
- *Carter has made arrangements to be buried in front of his home in Plains, Georgia.*

Carter has made arrangements to be buried in front of his home in Plains, Georgia. Carter noted in 2006 that a funeral in Washington, D.C., with visitation at the Carter Center was planned as well.

Public image and legacy

Public opinion

- *The Independent wrote, "Carter is widely considered a better man than he was a president."*
- *By comparison, Carter was viewed as a sincere, honest, and well-meaning Southerner.*
- *Carter and Gerald Ford were compared in exit polls from the 1976 presidential election, which Carter won.*
- *Carter's post-presidency activities have been favorably received.*

Carter and Gerald Ford were compared in exit polls from the 1976 presidential election, which Carter won. Many voters still held Gerald Ford's pardon of Nixon against him. By comparison, Carter was viewed as a sincere, honest, and well-meaning Southerner. Carter began his term with a 66 percent approval rating, which had dropped to 34 percent approval by the time he left office, with 55 percent disapproving.

In the 1980 campaign, former California Governor Ronald Reagan projected an easy self-confidence, in contrast to Carter's serious and introspective temperament. What many people believed to be Carter's personal attention to detail, his pessimistic attitude, his

seeming indecisiveness and weakness with people were accentuated in contrast to what many saw as Reagan's charismatic charm and delegation of tasks to subordinates. Reagan used the economic problems, Iran hostage crisis, and lack of Washington cooperation to portray Carter as a weak and ineffectual leader. Like his immediate predecessor, Gerald Ford, Carter did not serve a second term as president. Among those who were elected as president, Carter was the first since Hoover in 1932 to lose a reelection bid.

Carter's post-presidency activities have been favorably received. The Independent wrote, "Carter is widely considered a better man than he was a president." His presidential approval rating was just 31 percent immediately before the 1980 election, but 64 percent approved of his performance as president in a 2009 poll.

Legacy

- *In historical rankings of U.S. presidents, the Carter presidency has ranged from No.*
- *Carter's presidency was initially viewed by some as a failure.*

Carter's presidency was initially viewed by some as a failure. In historical rankings of U.S. presidents, the Carter presidency has ranged from No. 19 to No. 34. Although his presidency received mixed reception, his peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts since he left office have made Carter renowned as one of the most successful ex-presidents in American history.

The documentary *Back Door Channels: The Price of Peace* (2009) credits Carter's efforts at Camp David, which brought peace between Israel and Egypt, with bringing the only meaningful peace to the Middle East. The film opened the 2009 Monte-Carlo Television Festival in an invitation-only royal screening on June 7, 2009, at the Grimaldi Forum in the presence of Albert II, Prince of Monaco.

Honors and awards

- *His presidential library, Jimmy Carter Library and Museum was opened in 1986.*
- *Jimmy Carter Library and Museum located in Atlanta, Georgia*
- *The Souther Field Airport in Americus, Georgia was renamed Jimmy Carter Regional Airport in 2009.*
- *Carter (left) with a replica of the USS Jimmy Carter with Secretary of the Navy John H. Dalton (right) at a naming ceremony, April 28, 1998*

Carter has received numerous awards and accolades since his presidency, and several institutions and locations have been named in his honor. His presidential library, Jimmy Carter Library and Museum was opened in 1986. In 1998, the U.S. Navy named the third and last Seawolf-class submarine honoring former President Carter and his service as a submariner officer. It became one of the few Navy vessels to be named for a person living at the time of naming. That year he also received the United Nations Human Rights Prize, given in honor of human rights achievements, and the Hoover Medal, recognizing engineers who

have contributed to global causes. He won the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize, which was partially a response to President George W. Bush's threats of war against Iraq and Carter's criticism of the Bush administration.

Carter has been nominated nine times for the Grammy Award for Best Spoken Word Album for audio recordings of his books, and has won three times—for *Our Endangered Values: America's Moral Crisis* (2007), *A Full Life: Reflections at 90* (2016) and *Faith: A Journey For All* (2019).

The Souther Field Airport in Americus, Georgia was renamed Jimmy Carter Regional Airport in 2009.

Carter received the American Academy of Achievement's Golden Plate Award in 1984.

Carter (right), walks with, from left, George H. W. Bush, George W. Bush, and Bill Clinton during the dedication of the William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park in Little Rock, Arkansas on November 18, 2004

Carter during a Google Hangout session held during the LBJ Presidential Library Civil Rights Summit in 2014

Carter (right) with President Barack Obama (center) and Bill Clinton (left) on August 28, 2013, the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington

Carter (left) with a replica of the USS Jimmy Carter with Secretary of the Navy John H. Dalton (right) at a naming ceremony, April 28, 1998

Jimmy Carter Library and Museum located in Atlanta, Georgia

See also

- *Electoral history of Jimmy Carter*
- *Jimmy Carter rabbit incident*

Americo Makk portrait Hawaii Gift of State.

Electoral history of Jimmy Carter

History of the United States (1964–1980)

History of the United States (1980–1988)

List of peace activists

Jimmy Carter rabbit incident

"Mush from the Wimp" incident

List of Presidents of the United States

List of Presidents of the United States, sortable by previous experience

Raymond Lee Harvey, assassination conspirator

Notes

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Further reading

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Lance, Bert (1991). *The Truth of the Matter: My Life in and out of Politics*. Summit. ISBN 978-0-671-69027-4.

External links

- *Jimmy Carter National Historic Site*
- *Works by Jimmy Carter at Open Library*
- *The Carter Center*
- *Jimmy Carter on IMDb*
- *"Jimmy Carter collected news and commentary".*
- *Works by Jimmy Carter at Project Gutenberg*
- *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library & Museum*

Official

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site

Jimmy Carter Presidential Library & Museum

White House biography

Organizations

The Carter Center

Books and movies

Works by Jimmy Carter at Open Library

Works by Jimmy Carter at Project Gutenberg

Works by Jimmy Carter at LibriVox (public domain audiobooks)

Works by or about Jimmy Carter at Internet Archive

Interviews, speeches and statements

Full audio of a number of Carter speeches at the Miller Center of Public Affairs

Oral History Interview with Jimmy Carter (1974) at the Southern Oral History Program

Carter Nobel lecture, Oslo, Norway (December 10, 2002)

Appearances on C-SPAN

Jimmy Carter at TED

"Life Portrait of Jimmy Carter", from C-SPAN's American Presidents: Life Portraits, December 3, 1999

Media coverage

"Jimmy Carter collected news and commentary". The Guardian.

"Jimmy Carter collected news and commentary". The New York Times.

Other

Essays and information on Jimmy Carter, each member of his cabinet and the First Lady – Miller Center of Public Affairs

Jimmy Carter on IMDb

The Presidents: Jimmy Carter (2011), an American Experience documentary