THE Carter Mondale Letter

Winter 2015 Vol. 10, Issue 2

A Tribute to Walter F. Mondale

Perhaps the most remarkable and satisfying partnership of any president and vice president was that of Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale. This edition of the Carter-Mondale Letter will focus on Vice President Walter Mondale and his many contributions to our nation.

Special thanks to the Jimmy Carter Library and Museum, the estate of Charles Rafshoon, Sam Levitan and the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, and the Mims Collection for the images used in this issue of the newsletter.

Former U.S. Vice President Walter Mondale and former U.S. President Jimmy Carter meet on the White House lawn.

The Making of the Modern Vice Presidency

By Richard Moe

In an otherwise masterful document, the Founding Fathers created the vice presidency with almost no thought as to how it would fit into the structure of the new federal government. The office was, in fact, a constitutional afterthought designed solely to provide a president-in-reserve, and for 200 years, it languished in obscurity, derision, and irrelevance. This is the story of how Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale changed all that.

By 1976, I had known Walter Mondale for 15 years. Although we were separated in age by nearly a decade, we shared a Norwegian heritage, a love of politics in the progressive Minnesota tradition, and an appreciation for dry humor. In 1972, Mondale had sensed that I was ready to move on after three years as chairman of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party. He asked me to come to Washington to head his Senate office and, not incidentally, help him prepare for a possible run for the presidency. I gladly accepted, and it turned out to be a good fit. We worked together well, and I became more convinced than ever that he had, and deserved, a future in national politics.

In the late spring of 1976, I was not alone in concluding that he might be well positioned to become that year's Democratic vice-presidential nominee. Jimmy Carter had just come from nowhere to the brink of securing the party's presidential nomination. Hubert H. Humphrey, Minnesota's

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other U.S. senator, who had narrowly lost the presidency in 1968 but never fully lost his presidential ambitions, had just announced that he would not enter the late 1976 primaries, as he had been sorely tempted to do. Humphrey's decision meant that Mondale, his close friend and protégé, was now free to think about a position on the ticket for himself. It was not an implausible idea. Carter was a pro-civil rights, moderate governor from the South who had never served in Washington; Mondale was a Northern liberal who had spent more than a decade in the U.S. Senate. National tickets traditionally had been constructed to "balance" such factors, so if Carter wanted to continue that practice, he would be hard pressed to find a better balance than Mondale could provide.

There was only one problem with this seemingly compelling idea: Mondale was totally uninterested. In fact, he wanted no part of it. He recently had concluded an unhappy, year-long presidential "exploratory" effort, which he ended for a variety of personal and political reasons, including, famously, his lack of affection for Holiday Inns. He was well into the process of re-engaging in the business of the Senate, and he was finding particular satisfaction in the work of the Select Committee on Intelligence, which was then immersed in an unprecedented examination of the FBI and the CIA.

Why, he argued, should he consider giving up an institution he loved (and, he didn't need to add, a very safe seat in that institution) for an office that had been the subject of derision and bad jokes for nearly two centuries? Most pointedly, he noted the slights, humiliations, and generally bad treatment that Humphrey had suffered in the Johnson White House, the same kind of treatment then being visited on Vice President Nelson Rockefeller in Gerald Ford's White House. Why, he asked me, should he trade his independence as a senator for an office of total dependency and no prescribed

Hubert Humphrey was Mondale's longtime mentor.

Mondale meets with key staff members Jim Johnson, Mike Berman, and Dick Moe.

duties except presiding over the Senate, where he could only vote to break ties?

A good deal of history in addition to this logic was on Mondale's side of the argument. Going all the way back to John Adams, the nation's first vice president, it was difficult, if not impossible, to come up with an occupant of the office who had anything approaching a happy experience. After many hours of discussion, it was fair to say that Mondale's position on the matter was becoming entrenched and showed no visible signs of softening.

Unable to persuade him of the idea's merits that were so obvious to me, I decided to seek help. "Let's go see what Hubert thinks," I suggested. I had no idea what Humphrey would say, but I did know that whatever he said, Mondale would pay attention. The two of them went way back and were very close. Humphrey had been his mentor in the early days of the DFL Party, much as Mondale went on to mentor me and another generation of Minnesotans coming behind. But the Humphrey-Mondale relationship was unlike any other, shaped as it was by the shared experience of building the DFL into one of the most formidable political instruments of its time. Humphrey had supported Mondale's appointments as Minnesota attorney general in 1960 and senator in 1964, and Mondale, in turn, had helped broker a critical civil rights compromise at the 1964 Atlantic City convention that greatly enhanced Humphrey's chances of being selected as Lyndon Johnson's running mate that year. Most important, the relationship was rooted in deep mutual respect and genuine affection. So it would matter what Hubert said.

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Mondale Legacy Examined at October Event in Washington

In Washington, D.C., on Oct. 20, 2015, the Hubert Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota held a series of panel discussions on Vice President Walter Mondale and his policies. Overviews of the presentations are provided below but can be supplemented by viewing the entire videos of the forum at http://hhh.umn.edu/news/humphrey-school-hosts-two-washington-dc-events-honor-life-and-legacy-walter-f-mondale.

The Mondale Vice Presidency and Its Legacy

In the opening session, Vice President Mondale discussed how his conversations with former Vice Presidents Hubert Humphrey and Nelson Rockefeller, with support from his staff, led him to explore with President-elect Jimmy Carter a new role for the vice president, which included being a principal adviser with complete access to information and having early input into important situations. They also discussed a merging of staffs and an office located in the West Wing.

These ideas were compatible with Jimmy Carter's own views. He felt the vice president should be given a greatly enhanced role from previous administrations, including unfettered access to discuss issues with anyone in Congress and support in foreign policy with world leaders. Carter directed his staff to respond to Vice President Mondale's inquiries as if they were coming from him. He also cautioned staff not to undercut the vice president, at the risk of losing their positions in his administration.

Dick Moe, former Vice President Mondale, and Vice President Biden lead opening session discussions.

Mondale and Biden enjoy an easy friendship.

Current Vice President Joe Biden discussed how he consulted with both Fritz and Joan Mondale and followed their advice in setting up the function of his office to mirror that of Mondale's. Biden stressed the importance of a strong personal relationship with the president and his assurance with President Obama that they could disagree candidly in private but that he never would undercut the president's public position. He also said he asked of President Obama that at the end of meetings, he literally be the last person left in the room.

Opportunity and Social Justice—Quality Education for All

Gail Harrison, Mondale's chief domestic policy assistant in the White House, moderated this review that examined Mondale's Senate and White House efforts on poverty and discrimination. This began with Marion Wright Edelman's discussion of the 1971 Sen. Mondale-sponsored bill on childhood development, which did not pass but laid down standards for Head Start and other programs. Elements in the concepts from 1971 have been added to the federal efforts to improve opportunities for the disadvantaged, with continued support from Walter Mondale.

Stu Eizenstat discussed the success in balancing fiscal

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Marion Wright Edelman discusses Mondale's role in childhood development.

Gail Harrison moderates.

restraints against progressive policies, with the help of his deputy and former Mondale staffer Bert Carp.

Early in the administration, Mondale had a whirlwind fight to support the Supreme Court Bakke case that distinguished between affirmative action and quotas, with the result of opening higher education opportunities for many minority students. Significant was the move to establish the Department of Education, backed by Mondale's leadership and considerable lobbying of Congress.

Stu Eizenstat discusses balancing fiscal restraints with progressive policies.

Eizenstat reviewed the decisions to both control excess spending and fund priorities resulting in expanded budgets that doubled for employment and training, doubled for Head Start, increased by 70 percent for elementary and secondary education, and increased by 50 percent for childhood nutrition. Progress also was made during the 1970s to improve the roles of women in the workforce.

The creation of the Legal Services Corporation, which passed with bipartisan support, provided the poor and minorities with access to local advice. During the Carter-Mondale administration, Hillary Rodham Clinton became the first female chair of the organization.

Mondale reflected on his actions as senator and vice president to support these and other progressive causes, coming from faith-based motivation to help "the least of these."

Reconciling National Security and the U.S. Constitution

A panel that included Sens. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) was moderated by David Cole, George Mitchell Professor of Law and Public Policy at Georgetown Law, with comments by Walter Mondale. They shared an overview of the analysis of the U.S role in security and information, starting with the Church committee (U.S. Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities), of which Mondale was a member and provided significant leadership. The committee exposed the abuse of the rights of U.S. citizens and foreign intelligence oversight by the CIA, FBI, and other information-gathering organizations in the United States.

This led to a discussion of disclosures in the 6,000-page report by the bipartisan U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence about the CIA's Detention and Interrogation Program, with revelations from U.S. government communiqués of the use of various forms of torture ("enhanced interrogation techniques") on detainees between 2001 and 2006, during the War on Terror. The senators pointed out that the detention and torture did not result in significant information

Harrison, Edelman, Eizenstat, and Mondale participate in panel discussion.

Sen. Leahy and Vice President Mondale share the stage.

The panel included Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Patrick Leahy, with moderator David Cole and Vice President Mondale.

and in fact was a catalyst for terrorist recruitment and damage to the U.S. reputation abroad.

Mondale raised concerns over the lack of accountability, the need for checks and balances, and the need for court-approved investigation and surveillance to ensure the balance of intelligence needs and the rights of individuals. Feinstein recounted recent CIA abuses in international areas and noted that the FBI pulled out of the process and that efforts were made to intimidate congressional staff from oversight information gathering.

Mondale agreed on the need for better Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC) rules, so that the court could not exceed its authority. The FISC panel reviews the release of volumes of material illegally obtained by Edward Snowden and its implications that have led to control of data by telecommunications companies.

The Fight for Civil Rights

The discussion of civil rights covered over 50 years of efforts in the struggle characterized by Ambassador Andrew Young as one that should focus on substance over

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Carter, Mondale Recall Campaigns, Administration, Friendship

After a day of policy discussions, President Carter joined Walter Mondale and Dick Moe on stage in the evening to reminisce about the administration. They discussed the enhanced role of the vice president in the Carter-Mondale administration and their deep personal friendship, the campaigns, and some of the key issues of the administration.

The ambassador of Norway attended as a nod to Mondale's heritage. Carter joked that while as president he often wished to go to Norway, it seemed that the vice president was always just returning from there, so he never had the opportunity to go during their administration. Vice President Joe Biden commented on how the Mondale role affected him and on his friendship with and affection for Jimmy Carter, which led him to campaign heavily for the ticket in 1976.

The audience was filled with Carter-Mondale alumni as well as Minnesota friends and officeholders, including Gov. Mark Dayton and Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken.

Following is only a small portion of the Carter-Mondale alumni in attendance:

David Aaron, Bess Abell, Bernard Aronson, Brian Atwood, Elizabeth Bagley, Jay Beck, Michael Berman, Raymond Calamaro, Charles Campion, Bert Carp, Michael Chanin, Joan Claybrook, Jim Copeland, William Daley, Mark Dayton, Joseph Duffey, James Dyke, Stu Eizenstat, Dianne Feinstein, Les and Shari Francis, Jim Free, William Galston, Gail Harrison, Karl Indurfurth, Jim Johnson, Mickey Kantor, Marty Kaplan, Richard King, Dale Leibach, Bev Lindsey, Patti Maloomian, Margaret McKenna, Sharon Metcalf, Richard Moe, Ted Mondale, William Mondale, Gerald Rafshoon, Patricia Sarcone, Greg Schneiders, Alicia Smith, Ann Stock, Terrence Straub, and Carol Tucker-Foreman.

Mondale, Carter, and Moe reminisce onstage prior to dinner.

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Ambassador Andrew Young discusses progress made in civil rights during the Carter-Mondale administration.

symbolism. He thought that the greatest progress occurred behind the scenes in education, fair housing, integration, private-sector investments, and in international areas.

There was remembrance of Mondale's meeting with South Africa leader B.J. Vorster on May 22, 1977, in Vienna, when the Carter-Mondale administration's opposition to and desire to remove apartheid was stated, and a transition to one-person-one-vote democracy was begun. Mondale recalled the conversation in which he stated that the old games with black Africa were over; this led to more black African leaders visiting the White House during the Carter-Mondale administration than in any other administration before or since.

Young recalled in the campaign and in the White House a natural process of hiring those with abilities and mutual interests and not using an artificial, quota-based contrivance. He called the Carter-Mondale campaign the most substantively integrated campaign he had ever seen. Young also postulated that the civil rights campaign has over time translated into a human rights campaign.

Taylor Branch saw a parallel between the nonviolence of civil rights and the Carter-Mondale outreach to everyone internationally to achieve peace and human rights.

The group also discussed President Carter's plan to appoint an African-American federal judge to every Southern state as a way to dramatically realign the influence of the KKK. He achieved that goal.

Myron Orfield, professor at the University of Minnesota Law School, commented on the efforts of Sen. Mondale and Sen. Edward W. Brooke (R-MA) to pass the Fair Housing Act of 1965. That act was instrumental in desegregating housing, and as a result, one-half of black and Latino families now live in the suburbs.

Carter-Mondale Breakthroughs on Domestic and Foreign Policy

Another significant panel, including David Aaron, Landon Butler, Tom Donilon, and Stuart Eizenstat, moderated by Bert Carp, reviewed domestic and foreign policy with an emphasis on offshore events.

Bert Carp moderates a panel reviewing domestic and foreign policy.

Tom Donilon, a young staffer on the Carter-Mondale campaign, recently was the national security adviser to President Obama. He reviewed the legacy of the Carter-Mondale administration in the Middle East, China, and Russia.

The Camp David Accords have remained the cornerstone of American plans for Middle East peace. The agreements made at Camp David have remained the guide for all future negotiations and the structure for area security. The Carter Doctrine of Mideast protection from foreign intrusion has largely remained intact. The problems incurred during the hostage rescue attempt resulted in the formation of the Joint Special Operations Command with a mission to ensure interoperability and equipment standardization, plan and conduct special operations exercises and training, develop joint special operations tactics, and execute special operations missions worldwide.

David Aaron discusses Mondale's involvement in resettling displaced refugees during the Vietnam War.

The Carter-Mondale administration overcame great opposition in the

Stu Eizenstat presents an overview of the day's policy discussions.

Tom Donilon reviews the administration's legacy in the Middle East, China, and Russia.

late 1970s to set up a foundation for eventual normalization of relations with China. This has resulted in $500 billion a year in trade with China and made it one of our more strategic relationships.

Quoting Obama Defense Secretary Robert Gates about the importance of the Carter-Mondale years, Donilon called for a full reassessment of the administration's record and its role in the end of the Cold War in relation to the Soviet Union. Carter's was the first Cold War presidency to challenge the legitimacy of Russia's rule over its people with an aggressive human rights policy. Additionally, it was the first administration to contest Soviet legitimacy; support dissidents; provide practical support such as increased radio traffic, books, and other materials smuggled into Russia; implement sanctions because of dissident abuse of Natan Sharansky, Alexander Ginsburg, and others and because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; and fund some practical weapons systems that countered the Soviet threat.

David Aaron, a Mondale staffer who became the deputy national security adviser, reflected on Mondale's inclusion in our foreign policy and particularly with regard to hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese who were being shipped away from Vietnam on leaky boats following the Vietnam War. Mondale was heavily involved in reshaping policy to allow for more U.S. inclusion of these refugees and helping them find homes in other nations.

Aaron also reviewed Mondale's role in support of Soviet dissident Sharansky, in preparation for Camp David and with regard to human rights.

Landon Butler reviewed the efforts leading to the success of the Panama Canal Treaty and Mondale's successful lobbying in the effort. He gave an overview of how the White House used that lobbying effort as a model for future congressional efforts.

In an overview of the day, Stu Eizenstat reviewed the key areas of Mondale's domestic activities, including education, energy, and the environment. In summarizing the administration and Mondale's contributions, he asserted that thanks to the new model of integrated operations with the president and his staff, the Mondale vice presidency was the most consequential and impactful vice presidency in modern American history.

Walter Mondale's sons, William and Ted Mondale, attended the Oct. 20 events in Washington, D.C.

Fritz Mondale Was Jimmy Carter's MVP on Capitol Hill

By Les Francis

Candid and personal discussions were part of the chemistry in the Carter-Mondale White House.

On March 16, 1978, in one of those moments of high drama that occur occasionally in American politics, the U.S. Senate ratified—with only one vote to spare (68–32)—the first of two Panama Canal treaties, which guaranteed the neutral operations of the canal. The second treaty, which turned control of the canal over to the Panamanians effective at midnight, Dec. 31, 1999, was ratified by the same razor-thin margin a month later. The victories were critically important for the Carter administration, for they represented an essential step in "resetting the table" in terms of future relations between the United States and the nations of Central and South America.

As the closeness of the votes indicates, the wins did not come easily. They were only made possible by an administration-wide, full-court lobbying effort directed at members of the Senate, bolstered significantly by an extensive public outreach campaign orchestrated by the White House. Hamilton Jordan provided overall and daily direction of the campaign.

To summarize briefly, between the summer of 1977 and the following spring, senators and relevant staffers were briefed by members of the national security team (civilian and military) and had their questions answered by the president, vice president, and White House officials. Constituent groups and opinion leaders from key states were invited to the White House for high-level briefings (often featuring the president) and were then deployed to make the case for ratification to their respective senators. The pressure was constant, the content substantive, and the discussions deliberative and constructive.

What is not as well known is how the effort began. In the summer of 1977, Congressional Liaison Chief Frank Moore, his wife, Nancy, and their four kids were on their first and sorely needed family vacation since well before the presidential election of 1976. Their quiet time on Florida's Gulf Coast was interrupted by a call from President Carter, who told Moore he had decided after careful consideration to sign the Panama Canal treaties, negotiation of which had been initiated by President Nixon, continued by President Ford, and completed under Carter's leadership.

Despite the treaties' bipartisan lineage, President Carter knew that it was going to be a highly controversial decision, followed by a very tough fight for ratification on Capitol Hill. The right wing of the Republican Party had been organizing around the issue for quite some time. In fact, conservative opposition to the possibility of the treaties had fueled much of the intensity of Ronald Reagan's insurgent challenge to President Ford for the GOP nomination in 1976.

In his phone call to Moore, President Carter said that he, Vice President Mondale, and Moore should call all 100 senators to give them a "heads up" and to urge careful consideration of the documents before announcing their positions, one way or the other. Timing of the notifications was crucial, as word of the accord could leak out in Panama—or in D.C.—at any point, thus compounding the anticipated difficulty on Capitol Hill. The three then divided up the list, with each taking roughly a third of the Senate for calls or

visits, all of which were completed within two or three days. Interestingly, 99 of the 100 agreed to do just what was asked of them—to "hold their fire" and to read and be briefed before taking a public position on the treaties. The only one who didn't agree to that reasonable request? No surprise—Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), who had used the issue to whip up support for Reagan against Ford in the 1976 North Carolina GOP primary.

One Republican senator who required some extra persuasion along the way was the late S.I. (Sam) Hayakawa of California. An accomplished scholar of semantics turned university president, Hayakawa was a bit, shall we say, mercurial. Moreover, he had made opposition to the treaties part of his successful campaign against Democratic Sen. John Tunney in 1976. Obtaining and nailing down a "Yes" vote from him took a lot of work, most of which was borne by the White House Senate liaison staff and the vice president.

At one particularly critical point in the debate, Vice President Mondale was making the case for ratification to Sen. Hayakawa when the latter said that, while he was now inclined to support the treaties, he hadn't yet made a firm decision. He was concerned that the president was not getting the kind of informed, high-quality advice on international matters that he needed and deserved. Hayakawa went on to say that as one who had traveled the world extensively, a scholar, and a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he was well informed on global matters generally and would be happy to meet with the president every couple of weeks or so to offer his knowledge and wisdom.

Mondale, as he recounted the story recently, responded, "Senator, I think you may be onto something here. Let's call the president right now!" And so he did, getting President Carter on a speakerphone and telling him of the senator's offer to brief him every couple of weeks, etc. Jimmy Carter, not missing a beat in the totally unrehearsed conversation, responded by thanking Hayakawa for his offer and then adding, in Mondale's recollection, "Let's not lock in a schedule of the meetings in that way. That may not turn out to be enough." Of course, the diminutive Californian was quite taken and puffed up by the president's response, a meeting was scheduled and held (but only after the president had placed Hayakawa's dense semantics textbook on the corner of his desk in the Oval Office for the senator to see and autograph when he visited). Hayakawa voted "Aye" on both treaties.

The story of the Panama Canal treaties and the ratification fight tells us a lot about the Carter presidency. First, from the very beginning of his administration, Jimmy Carter never once shied away from taking on the truly tough issues that end up in any president's inbox. Second, Vice President Walter Mondale was a key player in every one of the decisions, and in the high-stakes and difficult legislative battles that took place as a result. That experience gives the former vice president license to joke, as he has more than once, "We front-loaded pain and back-loaded pleasure!"

Dick Moe, the vice president's former chief of staff, reminds us that Jimmy Carter and Fritz Mondale completely redefined the vice presidency. From an office in the West Wing, to full and complete access to all documents and meetings, to their weekly private lunches, the relationship between the president and vice president was going to be different from anything seen before. But beyond these substantively and symbolically important factors were less visible but equally significant ones.

From an office in the West Wing, to full and complete access to all documents and meetings, to their weekly private lunches, the relationship between the president and vice president was going to be different from anything seen before.

First among those was the close interaction of the presidential and vice presidential staffs, as Dick notes in his article. This was particularly evident and valuable in the area of congressional relations. For instance, the vice president's only constitutionally mandated responsibility—other than waiting for the top job to open up—is to serve as president of the Senate. There the vice president can and often does preside and, as most students of American government know, occasionally casts a tie-breaking vote. What is less well known is that, in his capacity as president of the Senate, the vice president is entitled to a very nice suite of offices right off the Senate floor. It is a comfortable place for quiet and convivial senatorial chats and a convenient one for direct vice presidential lobbying.

Moreover, Vice President Mondale—in his capacity as president of the Senate—was assisted by a knowledgeable

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and able Hill-based staff, led by Bill Smith, himself a longtime creature of the Senate. Gail Harrison, domestic policy adviser to the vice president, also had superb Hill credentials, which helped inform all discussions of which she was a part. Other White House offices were also "home" to many people with close ties to the vice president, including Domestic Policy (Bert Carp), National Security (David Aaron), and OMB (Bo Cutter and Eliot Cutler), among others.

Every single weekday for the four years of the Carter presidency (first at 8 a.m., eventually moved up to 7:45 a.m.), the entire White House congressional liaison staff met with all of the deputies to the senior staff (press, domestic policy, NSC, public liaison, OMB, Cabinet, intergovernmental affairs, etc.) for the purpose of discussing that day's Hill agenda and issues and policies in the pipeline or anticipated, and to help form the agenda for the daily senior staff meeting that followed. Gail Harrison was at every one of those meetings; Bill Smith often attended, and both were active participants in them, as well as the weekly Friday afternoon meetings of the senior legislative affairs officials from all the Cabinet-level departments and agencies. Moreover, the vice president and/or members of his staff and our White House congressional liaison staff would trade information and intelligence virtually every day.

The fact that Fritz Mondale was well-liked and widely respected on Capitol Hill no doubt played a key role in Jimmy Carter's decision to select him as his running mate in 1976.

While Mondale's natural Senate constituency was composed of the more liberal Democrats, his influence was not limited to that cohort. He had served on various key Senate committees, including aeronautics and space, finance, labor and public welfare, banking, housing and urban affairs, budget, and intelligence; he also served as chairman of the Select Committee on Equal Education Opportunity. He had, therefore, many friendships with senators of all political persuasions and ideological identifications, upon which he relied time and again on behalf of the president's agenda. The fact that Fritz Mondale was well-liked and widely respected on Capitol Hill no doubt played a key role in Jimmy Carter's decision to select him as his running mate in 1976; Carter knew that Mondale could help achieve victory in the November election, but he also knew that once in office, the vice president could help move the administration's agenda in Congress.

Our White House Senate liaison, Dan Tate, put it to me this way: "The vice president was a total team player. Anything the president, Moore, or our team asked him to do, he did fully. Several of the things that he did for us went against the grain of his erstwhile more liberal philosophy, and therefore the views of many of his closest Senate friends. He got many tough votes for us, and few of us realized what it cost him. He soldiered on and was a tremendous asset."

Of course, all the meetings, phone calls, and casual hallway conversations in the world won't stop every single possible problem from cropping up, let alone solve them. But when problems do arise, having close and mutually respectful relationships sure helps. One such issue that illustrates this point was President Carter's decision to propose to Congress that the "E" be removed from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), and that a Cabinet-level Department of Education be created (leaving the still giant Department of Health and Human Services to oversee the many other areas of domestic policy and programs that comprise America's limited notion of a welfare state).

What might seem a pretty simple realignment of boxes on an organizational chart is anything but when it comes to reorganizing anything at the federal level; bureaucracies are inherently tough to change, and more constituency groups than not have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Such was the case with the proposal to create the Department of Education, which was the number-one legislative priority of the National Education Association (NEA); in fact, NEA's first-ever endorsement of a presidential candidate, Jimmy Carter in 1976, was due in part to Carter's embrace of the concept. As I heard the president argue time and time again, education was too important to the nation to be relegated to second-class status in the huge bureaucracy of the former HEW.

But the idea also had vigorous and well-organized opposition, including NEA's rival union, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), as well as many big-city Democratic politicians with ties to the AFT; several of the nation's largest newspapers, including The New York Times and The Washington Post; and not insignificantly, our own secretary of HEW, Joe Califano.

Led by one of OMB's lead reorganization specialists, Patricia Gwaltney McGinnis, the research behind and planning

of a new Education Department began early in 1977. Contacts with key members of Congress whose committees had jurisdiction over governmental operations, as well as education, began almost simultaneously with the internal studies and deliberations. Our efforts on Capitol Hill were coordinated and led by Terry Straub (House) and Bob Thomson (Senate). My assignment was to oversee the White House task force established to devise and execute an overall political/legislative strategy and to be the primary link with NEA.

Meanwhile, Secretary Califano made his concerns and objections known early and often. In fact, at one point he dispatched HEW's deputy secretary, Hale Champion, with orders to meet with Vice President Mondale and to make the case against the proposal for a new department. Mondale listened carefully to Champion's plea and detailed argument and then said, as he told me later, "I hear what you're saying, Hale, but you've got a problem. You see, the fellow down the hall (pointing toward the Oval office), the guy who appointed you to your current position…well, he thinks creating a Cabinet-level Department of Education is a good idea. And you'd be well advised to think so, too."

Mondale and Carter meet in front of the Marine One helicopter.

For the four years of the Carter-Mondale administration, the vice president was a very popular and effective spokesperson on behalf of its policies and proposals.

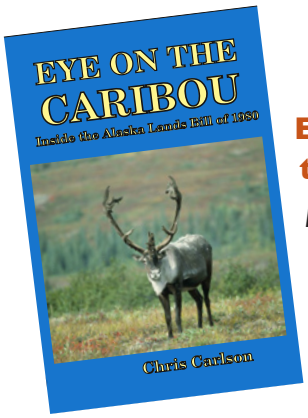
Despite the opposition—external and internal—eventually the bill creating the Department of Education passed, handily in the Senate but by the narrowest of margins—one vote—in the House. The president and the White House staff lobbied hard for the bill, and outside support (primarily from teachers in the NEA) was crucial to its success. But it was Vice President Mondale's steady guidance and personal involvement that made the difference time and again.

For the four years of the Carter-Mondale administration, the vice president was a very popular and effective spokesperson on behalf of its policies and proposals. He traveled widely and frequently making the administration's case and supporting its political allies at hundreds of campaign events—east, west, north, and south. Democratic members of Congress and the party's nominees for Congress were high-priority beneficiaries of the vice president's time and attention, and his schedule reflected that fact. White House congressional liaison staff worked closely with the vice president's office in hammering out that schedule and accompanied him on many of those trips.

As President Carter has noted repeatedly, from the moment he talked with Fritz Mondale about joining the ticket as his running mate in 1976, the two men quickly developed a close bond of friendship and mutual respect. That bond carried over into the administration, and it was reflected in the way their staffs worked and interacted with one another. As one whose job put me in a position to see those inter-staff dynamics daily and up close, I was always impressed with the lack of turf consciousness or tensions—on either end. But more importantly, the easy working relationships between the two staffs, particularly in the area of congressional relations, allowed us to get a lot done for the president, and for the American people.

About the Author: Les Francis worked in both the 1976 and 1980 campaigns and as deputy assistant to the president, serving first on the Congressional Liaison staff and later in the office of the chief of staff. He currently lives and works in Washington, D.C., advising clients on public affairs.

Book Club



Eye on the Caribou: Inside the Alaska Lands Bill of 1980

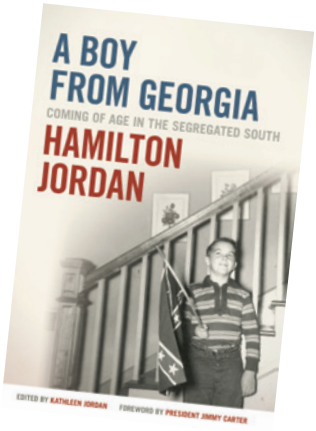
By Chris Carlson

The inside story of how Congress set out to protect and preserve entire ecosystems in Alaska was 80 years in the making, starting with President Theodore Roosevelt and culminating with President Jimmy Carter's signing into law the greatest piece of conservation legislation in history. It is a story of grit as well as greed, of political double-crosses and a secret meeting between an Alaskan governor and an Interior secretary who, with the help of the capably led Alaska Coalition, achieved what many thought unobtainable.

The key to success was President Carter's sticking to the strategy on which he and Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus settled while on a four-day fly-fishing trip on Idaho's Middle Fork of the Salmon River. Fearlessly utilizing his power under the Antiquities Act, the president designated the largest national monuments ever conceived.

A Boy from Georgia: Coming of Age in the Segregated South

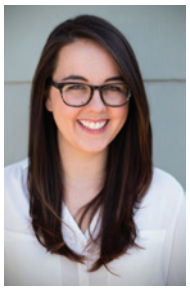
By Hamilton Jordan
Edited by Kathleen Jordan



Hamilton Jordan's third book, and perhaps his best, is an intimate account of his childhood in Albany, Ga., in the segregated 1950s and 1960s. His memoir about Southern identity features stories of nostalgia, shame, and bliss—woven together by his textured realization that when it came to segregation, so many people he loved and respected were on the wrong side of history. His recollections and reflections about race relations in the South are stirring, poignant, and, unfortunately, all too relevant in 2015.

Jordan was writing the book when he passed away in 2008, and his daughter, Kathleen Jordan, has edited the work. Kathleen wrote, "We knew as a family that we needed to finish the book—the manuscript is full of writing that was deeply close to my dad's heart, and it would have been a big mistake to let it sit and collect dust. Finally, that time has come! My dad died when I was 19, and now I'm 27."

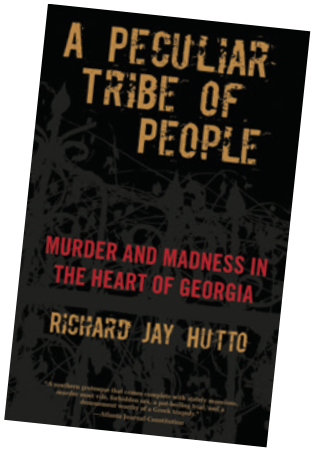

Hamilton Jordan


Kathleen Jordan

Dr. Andrew Young, former Georgia congressional representative and U.S. ambassador to the United Nations commented, "Hamilton witnessed the formation of the civil rights agenda in real time and made it a personal mission to break down racial barriers in hiring staff in the governor's office and the White House. Hamilton's reflections on his Southern heritage are honest, witty, and as important now as ever before."

A Peculiar Tribe of People

By Richard Jay Hutto



On May 12, 1960, as John F. Kennedy campaigned for the presidency, Chester Burge, slumlord, liquor runner, and the black sheep of the proud (and wealthy) Dunlap family of Macon, Ga., lay in a hospital bed, recovering from surgery. He listened to the radio as the news reported that his wife had just been murdered.

Burge was charged with the murder, and when the trial finally began, the sweet Southern town of Macon witnessed a story as fantastical as a Greek tragedy—a tale of white-columned mansions, an insane asylum, real people as "Southern grotesque" as the characters of Flannery O'Connor, and a volatile mix of taboo interracial relationships and homosexuality.

Stories of Chester Burge's deceptions and sexual exploits emerge in riveting detail. While Burge was acquitted of murder, he was convicted of sodomy, and the tale took even more twists and turns before coming to an explosive conclusion. President Carter said the book is "a fascinating tale of murder and deception, providing a sobering glimpse into the prejudices and corruption of pre-civil rights Georgia."

Carter-Mondale Alumni Attend Carter Center Executive Briefing

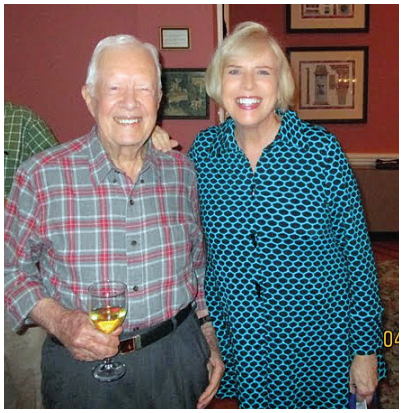
Last April, Carter Center supporters who belong to a group called the Ambassadors Circle went to Georgia for the annual executive briefing and visit to Plains. As has become the tradition, Carter-Mondale alumni joined the event and shared their photos. Here are some of the photos taken by Scott Burnett during the visit.

Phil Wise, Tim Kraft, Molly Kraft, Jay Beck, and Rhonda Burnett

Standing: Mary Prince, Patti Maloomian, Rick Hutchison, Marcia Garrett, Dale Leibach, Tim Kraft, Molly Kraft, Paul Shone, and Scott Burnett; Seated: Rhonda Burnett, Lori Baux, Alicia Smith, and Jane Simpson

Rick Hutchinson and President Carter

Molly Kraft, Rhonda Burnett, and Jane Simpson



President Carter and Marcia Garrett

Dinner group

Tim Kraft with President and Mrs. Carter

Comings & Goings

Bernard (Bernie) Aronson was named U.S. special envoy to the Colombian peace process by President Obama in February. While assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs from 1989 to 1993, Aronson worked closely with former President Carter to promote democracy in Nicaragua and Panama, and he received the State Department's Distinguished Service Medal for his role in ending the wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua in 1993. During the Carter-Mondale administration, Aronson served as executive speechwriter and deputy assistant to President Carter and special assistant and speechwriter to Vice President Mondale.

Aronson can be reached at ACON Investments LLC, baronson@aconinvestments.com.

Kathleen Matthews, wife of **Chris Matthews**, is running for Congress in Maryland's 8th Congressional District. She has worked in the Washington, D.C., market in local television news and as chief communications and public affairs officer for Marriott International.

As co-chair of Marriott's Green Council and Global Diversity and Inclusion Council, Matthews created and led a sustainability strategy to bring equality and opportunity for women, LGBT, and minorities. In these roles, she developed partnerships with women-owned businesses worldwide and programs to train and mentor women and youth for hotel careers in the United States, Rwanda, Haiti, India, and other countries.

For more information: www.kathleenmatthewsforcongress.com.

Kathleen Matthews

The **Rev. Deacon Jim Purks** received the Walter L. Cronkite Jr. Congressional Award from Chi Phi. His collegiate fraternity's lifetime achievement award, it is given for humanitarian, social, or political achievement that benefits the country, our educational system, or society at large. Purks accepted the award June 20 at Chi Phi's 150th Congress in San Francisco.

A former Associated Press reporter, Purks covered major events of the civil rights era in Alabama, including the 1963 bombing at Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church, where four young black girls were killed in one of the country's worst hate crimes. Born in Atlanta in 1936, Purks served as press secretary for former Florida Secretary of State Richard Stone. He later served in a similar capacity for President Jimmy Carter, for whom he had managed a Florida press campaign prior to working for Jody Powell in the White House press office. He also spent 12 years in Americus, Ga., with Habitat for Humanity, where he worked on two books with the late founder Millard Fuller.

For over 30 years, Carter-Mondale alumni and brothers **Rick and John Rendon** have capitalized on their political campaign acumen, running The Rendon Group (TRG). With offices in Boston and Washington, D.C., TRG is a strategic communications firm with public relations, event management, and video production departments.

For more information, contact TRG Vice President Tricia Raynard at traynard@therendongroup.com.

Based in Washington, D.C., **Mary Dixon (Trullinger)** is senior adviser for government relations for Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. In the Carter-Mondale White House, she set up and managed a project on energy conservation and renewable energy and assisted with presidential speechwriting.

In the 1976 campaign, she was the first person to pre-file as a Carter delegate in Hampton, Va., in January of 1976 and worked press advance during the fall 1976 campaign for then-Gov. Carter, Mrs. Carter, and Jack Carter in the Hampton/Norfolk/Newport News area around Tidewater, Va.

About This Newsletter

The Carter/Mondale Letter is sent to individuals who were associated with the campaign and administration of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and Vice President Walter Mondale. Please send us news, photos, and other items that will interest your fellow alumni and let us know of others who need to be added to the mailing list. Contact Jay Beck, The Carter Center, One Copenhill, 453 Freedom Parkway, Atlanta, GA 30307; Fax (404) 420-3816; Email jay.beck@cartercenter.org.

Receive this newsletter via email: The Carter/Mondale Letter can be sent to you electronically rather than in the mail. Let us know if this is your preference.

Passages

Charles William Benton, a film distributor, businessman, and philanthropist, helped reinstitute presidential debates and pursued a vision of empowering people to use the latest communications tools to improve the lives of all. During a long career in the media, education, and entertainment businesses, Benton became president of Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Corp. and created the nonprofit Fund for Media Research to study educational uses of new media.

President Carter appointed Benton chairman of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science and chairman of the first White House Conference on Library and Information Services, and he appointed Benton's wife, Marjorie, U.S. representative to UNICEF.

Nicholas R. Carbone loved his community of Hartford, Conn. As city council president, he was a relentless political fighter, and his efforts made Hartford and cities like it better for its people. He remained engaged throughout his life, serving many nonprofits and churches in the Hartford area.

Carbone was very active in the 1976 Carter-Mondale campaign and continued to be a strong voice in urban policy thereafter. In 1976 and 1980, he played a leading role in writing the urban policy platforms of the Democratic National Committee.

Anna Moraitakas Cheokas, along with her late husband, Arthur, was an active Peanut Brigader in the 1976 election and a family friend of the Carters. The Cheokases have been leaders in the Americus, Ga., community for many years and lifelong supporters of Carter family initiatives—with particular interest in the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving at Georgia Southwestern State University.

Mario Cooper was a popular staff member of the Carter-Mondale White House advance office and maintained contact with many in the administration. From a politically active family, he helped his brother A. J. Cooper in his successful campaign to be the first black mayor of the city of Prichard, Ala., in 1972. He ran a weekly campaign newsletter, organized a phone bank, and met civil rights figures like Julian Bond, who later headed the NAACP. "He was one of those people who seemed to know everyone, and if he didn't know them, he made it his business to find out who they were," Bond wrote in an email.

After the Carter-Mondale administration, Cooper remained in Washington, where he earned a law degree from Georgetown University. He became prominent in the 1990s by pressing leaders in Washington and the black community to address the disproportionate effect of AIDS on minorities, serving as a rare nexus among politicians, AIDS-prevention and gay-rights advocates, and civil rights leaders.

Luck Gambrell lived a long life of kindness, generosity, faith, and service and was beloved by her family, friends, and community. Her interesting life was often revealed in the many stories she enjoyed telling as her health and age kept her from continuing the myriad activities that filled her first 75 years.

Gambrell had a keen interest in government and politics. She embraced the role of a U.S. "Senate wife" after Gov. Jimmy Carter appointed her husband to serve out the unexpired term of Sen. Richard B. Russell after his death in January 1971. She campaigned tirelessly for her husband in his bids for the U.S. Senate in 1972 and governor in 1974, and she canvassed door to door with the Peanut Brigade in New Hampshire in 1976.

Gambrell was elected in the 5th District as a Georgia delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1980 and was privileged to spend three nights in the White House as Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter's guest. Gov. George Busbee appointed her the first woman on the Georgia Board of Public Safety (1981–1990). She was a lifelong friend of Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter's and a life member of the Carter Center Board of Councilors.

Retired **Navy Lt. Cmdr. George Edward Goodwin** ran as a Democrat for several area offices in a heavily Republican district, served as a Democratic precinct chair and on the Democratic National Committee, and was a delegate to several Democratic National Conventions.

Goodwin received a presidential appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy, where he was a member of the glee club and a cheerleader and graduated in the class of 1948. In 1975, he invited fellow Annapolis alumnus Jimmy Carter to speak at an alumni luncheon in Dallas, Texas, which led to a series of introductions and campaigning on behalf of the future president.

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In addition to his political work, Goodwin was widely known for providing pro bono services to various causes and many people in need. He was a longtime champion and defender of gay and lesbian rights, having defended against their persecution in the military.

Jess Hay of Texas, an active participant in the nation's political process beginning in 1950, served as national finance chairman of the Democratic National Committee in 1977 and 1978. At various times since 1970, he served as chairman or co-chairman of the campaign finance committees of Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, Gov. Dolph Briscoe, Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby, Gov. Mark White, and a variety of other Democratic candidates in Texas. He also served as Texas finance chairman or co-chairman for President Jimmy Carter, Vice President Albert Gore, Vice President Walter Mondale, and Sen. John Glenn. Vice President Walter Mondale once said, "If you are running for office in Texas, first visit the Alamo, then meet with Jess Hay." He remained a lifelong friend and adviser of President Carter's and a supporter of The Carter Center.

During his career, Hay served on the boards of directors of 14 public companies listed on the New York Stock Exchange and was a member and chairman of the finance and policy committee of the World War II Memorial advisory board. He served for 10 years on the governing board of Southern Methodist University, and over the past 50 years, he also served on numerous boards of universities and hospitals as well as many civic, business, arts, and charitable interests.

Rudolph (Rudy) Lamar Hayes, a lifelong journalist and 40-year editor at the Americus Times-Recorder, was on the frontline of every development in Sumter County for decades. From the civil rights movement to the election of a U.S. president from rural Georgia, Hayes brought the news to local citizens and the world.

He was an early supporter of Jimmy Carter for governor and president and chaired the first fundraising event for the presidential campaign in Sumter County. Gov. Carter appointed Hayes to serve as co-chair of a committee with former U.S. Rep. Jack Brinkley to commission the only Southern state statue for American prisoners of war at Andersonville National Cemetery.

Committed to issues relating to mental health, Hayes directed the 1,000-mile walk from Americus to the headquarters of the American Medical Association in Chicago to present petitions collected along the way from supporters requesting that physicians screen patients for mental illnesses.

Richard M. Moose, a leader in ending apartheid in South Africa and Rhodesia and uncovering facts and developing arguments that led Americans toward new ideas for ending the Vietnam War, was a courageous contributor to America's foreign policy debates throughout his more than 50-year career in public service. His foreign service posts included ambassador's assistant in Mexico City; Yaounde, Cameroon, where he recognized the need for the continuing independence of African nations and the abolishment of apartheid; and first executive secretariat in the U.S. State Department, where he was posted to the Pentagon as a State Department liaison during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

President Carter named Moose assistant secretary for African affairs. He was in the forefront of U.S. policy initiatives, notably those fostering South Africa's peaceful transition from apartheid to a democratic government, which opened the door to the election of Nelson Mandela as president. He also took the lead in formulating the strategy to secure Zimbabwe's independence, working tirelessly to ensure a settlement based on democratic elections, not on a power-sharing arrangement imposed from the outside.

In the Clinton administration, Moose became undersecretary of state for management, where he was designated chief operating officer of the department and represented all foreign affairs agencies on the President's Management Council. His ultimate accomplishment was co-founding At Home in Alexandria, an organization that enables older people to stay longer in their homes.

William Frank Newton served as the southeast regional director for the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the Carter-Mondale administration. A legend in the community development field, Newton's company, WFN, Inc., managed U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant portfolios in Georgia for Cobb and Gwinnett counties since the 1980s. Frank was instrumental in forming public/private partnerships and strengthening social infrastructures in both counties. On the national level, he frequently lobbied on behalf of his county clients on Capitol Hill to secure additional grant funding.

Johnsie Crawford Setzer of Claremont, N.C., was active in politics since she was old enough to vote. She was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention five times and worked on the Convention Site Selection Committee twice. She traveled to Plains, Georgia, several times to see the Carters and attended the Carter-Mondale inauguration.


Paul Tipps

Paul Tipps was a delegate at nine Democratic National Conventions and partnered with Republican Neil Clark in a powerhouse lobbying firm that dominated politics in Columbus, Ohio, for two decades. His first delegate role was the tumultuous Chicago convention in 1968, and the last was in 2000 in Los Angeles. He represented President Carter in Cairo, Egypt, as a delegate at the Mount Sinai Celebration in 1979 when lands captured by Israel were returned to Egypt.

Tipps was head of the Ohio Democratic Party from 1975 to 1983. When he resigned as chairman, the party controlled all five statewide nonjudicial offices and both houses of the General Assembly, had a majority on the Ohio Supreme Court, held both U.S. Senate seats, and held a majority of the U.S. House delegation. He called it a "Hall of Fame Ticket."

Dan Weiser was active in the 1976 presidential campaign to gather signatures to place Jimmy Carter's name on the ballot in every Texas state senate district, using a team of mostly volunteers. Social activism was central to his life. With others, he successfully fought against the poll tax that prevented African-Americans from voting and supported civil rights initiatives that eventually were enacted by Congress as the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. These were unpopular stances in Dallas in the early 1960s, but Weiser and his friends adopted the view "If not now, when?"

Weiser's mathematical know-how led to his role as redistricting guru. From the 1960s forward, he was among the foremost experts in the country with respect to statistical analysis of political districts. Often the expert witness for Texas civil rights groups seeking to ensure equitable representation pursuant to the Voting Rights Act and the U.S. Constitution, he was the lead plaintiff in the key case of "White v. Weiser," which was decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973. Because of his central role as redistricting expert, along with his clear-headed analytical approach, he became a mentor and informal counselor to countless public servants.

Robert E. White, U.S. ambassador to El Salvador during the volatile 1980s, became a controversial and outspoken critic of assassinations and massacres carried out by American-trained military units and private right-wing death squads during an era of ideological conflicts in Central America.

Saying he was inspired to join the foreign service by a "quotient of idealism," White worked to promote human rights, economic reforms, and political negotiations between leftist rebels and El Salvador's civil-military junta. He accused the Salvadoran National Guard of murdering four American churchwomen—two of whom he had dined with the night before their disappearance.


Robert M. White

Robert M. White, a meteorologist who served as the nation's top weatherman under five U.S. presidents, oversaw the launch of pioneering weather satellites and sounded early warnings about the threat of climate change. Brother of the Pulitzer Prize–winning author and political journalist Theodore H. White, he devoted nearly his entire adult life to advancing scientific understanding of the atmosphere. His career coincided with the space age, which opened new possibilities for the study of the earth's environment, and took him to the highest ranks of government service.

Jesse H. Ausubel, director of the program for the human environment at Rockefeller University in New York, called Dr. White "a bridge between science and government and the world of politics" and credited him with building the "institutions for environmental monitoring and management that we just take for granted today." He led the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration under Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter before stepping down in 1977.

Among the first scientists to speak publicly about the dangers of greenhouse gases and climate change, he chaired the First World Climate Conference in Geneva while leading the climate research board of the National Academy of Sciences in 1979.

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The three of us met for coffee in the Senate dining room on a quiet May afternoon. The conversation went something like this: "Dick thinks I should be interested in the vice presidency," Mondale began, "but I love the Senate, I cherish my independence, and I saw up close what the experience did to you. Why should I be interested?" Humphrey reflected thoughtfully before he responded, "Fritz, if you have the chance to be vice president, you shouldn't hesitate to take it. For all that I went through, I would gladly do it again. Because, my friend, if you care about influencing public policy, and I know that you do, you can get more done down there in a single day as vice president than you can up here in the Senate in an entire year. What's more," he went on, "being vice president allowed me to learn about this country, and the world, in ways that I never could have otherwise. It was the most broadening experience of my life."

After this measured beginning, Humphrey expounded on these themes and became voluble as only he could. For his part, Mondale was transfixed by this man he admired so much. His eyes wide open and his attention rapt, he heard the words he was not particularly eager—or expecting—to hear. "Thank you, Hubert," I mumbled to myself.

There is no question that this was a seminal moment—indeed, the critical moment—when Mondale changed his mind about the vice presidency. After hearing his friend make such an impassioned and yet reasoned case, he was now open to the idea. And being open to the idea, he decided to prepare himself for the possibility that Carter might consider it as well.

Mondale asked his staff for everything we could find written on the vice presidency (amazingly, there was then and still is very little serious literature on the office) as well as background on Carter and his views. He had met Carter briefly but didn't know him. It was essential that he determine whether they could be compatible, both personally and politically. So he voraciously read everything he could put his hands on regarding the man and the office. As events were to prove, it was worth the effort.

Once Carter had secured the presidential nomination, he began the formal process of selecting a running mate. Mondale made it onto the short list of six finalists largely on the basis of his record and reputation in the Senate. It wasn't until his personal interview with Carter in the latter's hometown of Plains, Ga., that, by all accounts, the two concluded they were not only comfortable with each other's policy positions but, even more important, they were comfortable with each other. The chemistry appeared to work.

Perhaps the most significant revelation in the Plains meeting was the very pleasant surprise that each of them had thought a great deal about the potential of the vice presidency. Carter talked at length about how he saw the office as a wasted national asset. He was determined to use his vice president in a way that no president had done previously. He realized that the importance of the office depended entirely on the degree of empowerment and authority that the president was willing to delegate to its occupant. Carter was looking for a "partner" on whom he could confer real authority in order to help him pursue the goals of his presidency.

Mondale, not surprisingly, had come to see the potential of the office in much the same way. He simply wasn't interested in a "traditional" vice presidency, a "fifth wheel" model that had no real purpose except to check occasionally on the health of the president. He made it clear to Carter that he did not want to be considered if it was to be a strictly ceremonial office; he was only interested in a truly substantive role.

Carter and Mondale talk policy in Plains.

Only Carter, of course, knows precisely why he selected Mondale, but it is clear that their conversation on the vice presidency had much to do with it. The president said later that he was impressed with the homework Mondale had done on him and the campaign and added, "More important, he had excellent ideas about how to make the vice presidency a full-time and productive job. He was from a small town, as I was, a preacher's son, and shared a lot of my concerns about our nation. We were personally compatible and laughed a lot, even as we discussed some of the most serious issues of the time."

In any case, Mondale was selected, and his friends were euphoric. The Carter people said we could run our vice-presidential campaign from wherever we wanted—Minneapolis, Washington, or Atlanta, where the Carter campaign was ensconced. Being relatively new to national politics but not total fools, we opted for Atlanta. And a wise decision it was, because it not only allowed us to run a more coordinated campaign but also allowed us to get to know the Carter staff with whom we were destined to spend four years in the White House.

Mondale performed effectively as the vice-presidential nominee, faithfully supporting Carter's positions but confident enough to carve out his own, as when he severely criticized President Ford's pardon of Richard Nixon, which Carter himself had declined to do. He campaigned tirelessly, especially in the battleground states of Ohio and Wisconsin, where he had important followings and which, together with Minnesota, fell onto Carter's column on election day. His strong performance in the first-ever vice-presidential debate, against Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas, and the reassurance he gave to Northern liberals in the Democratic Party, some of whom were skeptical of Carter, contributed importantly to the ticket's close victory in November.

It wasn't until after the election that the two men spent large amounts of time together. Virtually every week, and usually several times a week, Mondale would fly to Plains—not an easy place to reach—to talk policy with Carter and to shuttle potential Cabinet choices to interviews with the president-elect. Although at times running this "bus service," as Mondale came to call it, proved tiresome, Carter's inclusion of his vice president-elect in the early decision-making processes of his administration was, as far as we could tell, unprecedented. It was a very promising indicator of the relationship that we hoped would ensue.

More than a month after the election, the two men began their first conversations about Mondale's specific responsibilities as vice president. There had been some early discussion that he might be the de facto White House chief of staff, but Mondale's reaction to that idea was so negative that it quickly died. About the same time, someone floated the notion of a "shared" staff between the president and vice president. Mondale, very much a traditionalist when it came to staff, effectively killed that idea as well.

In December, I again was privileged to participate in a meeting that played a defining role in Mondale's vice presidency. On a cold winter evening, he and I met with Carter in his suite at Blair House, the historic residence across the street from the White House. Having given the matter a great deal of thought by this time and having heard the views and experiences of others who had been in or close to other White Houses, Mondale outlined, at Carter's invitation, his concept of the duties of the office he was about to occupy.

Mondale was Minnesota's 23rd attorney general, from 1960 to 1964.

His core recommendation was that he be an across-the-board adviser to the president on whatever issues were current or on whatever issues about which the president wanted advice. The vice president, Mondale observed, was the only senior member of the administration who did not have a departmental responsibility, and thus he was free to advise without institutional baggage or bias. His only responsibility would be to give the president his very best advice, unencumbered.

In order for this advisory role to be truly workable, Mondale said, he would need unfettered access to both the president and to the White House paper flow, particularly in the area of national security. This constituted a very bold request; no vice president had ever had this kind of access. On the contrary, virtually every vice president throughout American history had been kept, to one degree or another, at arm's length from the Oval Office and its secrets.

Mondale also proposed that he could be an all-purpose troubleshooter for the president, whether in Congress, where he had good relationships; in foreign policy, where he had a growing interest; or in working out disputes between Cabinet or other officials within the administration. He could also serve as the president's liaison to important political constituencies such as governors and mayors, organized labor, and key elements of the Democratic Party. He made it clear that he did not want operational authority in any area, as he saw that route as a clear invitation to conflict with department or agency heads on whose turf he would be treading.

Carter agreed to all of this. Mondale's ideas coincided perfectly with his own. It was apparent that the days of the "fifth wheel" vice presidency were about to end. At the close of the meeting, Carter asked Mondale to write a memorandum incorporating his suggestions for the duties of the office. As we left Blair House, Mondale asked me to begin drafting the document that would prescribe his role for the next four years.

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We didn't realize it at the time, but the 11-page, double-spaced memo that followed would define what has become the modern vice presidency. Mondale began it by quoting historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s conclusion that "history has shown the American vice presidency to be a job of spectacular and, I believe, incurable frustration." Mondale said his research had revealed that the "particular problems" of the office appeared to be "competition with the president, conflict with White House staff, lack of meaningful assignments, lack of authority, and inadequate access to vital information."

The memorandum's recommendations focused heavily on the across-the-board adviser role that Mondale saw as the centerpiece of his vice presidency and the need for access to information as well as to the president himself. It also fleshed out the troubleshooting, liaison, and political functions that both men agreed could be useful, as well as several policy areas in which Mondale had a special interest, such as campaign reform. He also specifically requested a role in the arts for his wife, Joan, who had devoted a lifetime to the subject, particularly public art.

It didn't take long to get the memo to Carter, nor did it take long for Carter to respond. He agreed unequivocally to everything Mondale suggested. Whatever else happened in the next four years, it was clear that we were going to break very new ground in the nation's second-highest office.

But Carter wasn't content simply to react to Mondale's suggestions. He had a few ideas of his own to make this new relationship work. The first, and one that proved to be enormously important, was to offer Mondale an office in the West Wing of the White House. Previous vice presidents had been housed next door in the Old Executive Office Building (which Mondale came to refer to as "Baltimore," saying, "If you're over there, you might as well be in Baltimore."). Not being familiar with the physical layout of the West Wing, it hadn't occurred to us to request an office there. Even if it had occurred to us, it undoubtedly would have seemed presumptuous to ask. But Carter clearly saw the value of physical proximity to the Oval Office and to senior White House staff, and this turned out to have been a fortuitous insight. To be just a few steps down the hall from the president and in the traffic pattern of the West Wing was to have profound consequences, putting Mondale "in the loop" of the Carter White House. "Nothing propinques like propinquity," Mondale would say after a few weeks in his new office.

Mondale's wife, Joan, played an important role in the White House as a national advocate for the arts.

Carter's other idea was to integrate staffs as closely as possible. If the president and vice president were not to share staff, he wanted them to be closely coordinated. Thus, after Mondale asked me to be his chief of staff, Carter made me a member of his own senior staff, the first vice-presidential aide ever so designated. Unexpectedly but happily, with that designation came, over the next four years, a number of special assignments directly from Carter, as well as senior-staff privileges such as the use of Camp David. Other senior members of Mondale's staff, including Mike Berman, Jim Johnson, Al Eisele, Dennis Clift, and Gail Harrison, were similarly integrated with their counterparts on Carter's staff. Significantly, Carter had agreed to Mondale's request in the memo that he be given senior-staff positions on both the National Security Council and the Domestic Policy Council. As a result, David Aaron and Bert Carp, Mondale's top national security and domestic policy advisers in the Senate, were appointed to deputy positions on the two councils.

But perhaps the most significant thing Carter did to make it absolutely clear that he wanted this relationship to work was based on historical observation. Both he and Mondale had concluded that the primary reason previous vice presidencies had floundered was that strong, assertive vice presidents tended to threaten senior White House staff, or at least, so it appeared in the cases of Humphrey and Rockefeller. Some previous senior staffers had effectively used their ability, with or without the knowledge of the president, to keep the vice president in his traditional place—out of the loop.

To forestall its happening in his own administration, Carter made very clear to his staff and Cabinet at the outset that he wanted them to respond to a request from the vice president as if it had come from the president, and anyone attempting to undercut the vice president in any way could not expect a long tenure in his administration. The effect of these two admonitions was immediate and profound. They went further toward cementing Mondale's role in the administration than the memorandum, the West Wing office,

and everything else combined. Carter was serious about the matter of his vice president, and no one doubted it.

The first public manifestation of Carter's seriousness came on Jan. 21, 1977, the day after the inauguration, when he saw Mondale off from the South Lawn of the White House for an extended visit to the world's major capitals to introduce the new administration and its policies. Mondale had first suggested this trip in his December memo. To send the vice president on a mission of this importance was unprecedented, and Mondale threw himself into it with typically thorough preparation and gusto. But for the president to allow his vice president's helicopter to take off from the South Lawn, which had never happened before, sent an unmistakable message to the world, as Carter had intended, that this man spoke for him.

Humphrey, who had come down from the Senate to see his friend off on this trip around the world, could not believe it. He recalled how as vice president he had to beg for an airplane and, if he was lucky enough to get it, he would have to take off in the dark of night. It was apparent that Humphrey, who by now had discovered the bladder cancer that would take his life within a year, was enormously proud of and pleased for Mondale.

This was the first of many important trips Mondale would take for Carter, including ones to the People's Republic of China after Carter normalized relations with that country, South Africa, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere. One of his most consequential missions abroad was to the Middle East, where he helped persuade Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin to participate in the Camp David talks that led to a formal peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. Mondale immersed himself in meetings with the president and others in the administration, leading up to and at Camp David; there were few issues during the four years that energized him as much or that gave him greater satisfaction.

During the transition of administrations, Mondale had learned from Rockefeller that he and President Ford had initiated a practice of having lunch privately—just the two of them—once a week. The idea appealed greatly to Mondale, who was reluctant to speak out forcefully in Cabinet or other meetings where policy was being debated, because he feared that doing so might signal to others where the president might stand on the issue and thus inhibit candid discussion. At the same time, he very much wanted to be totally open and frank with the president on a host of policy, political, and even personnel issues. Thus, he had requested in the December memo that the two of them meet weekly for up to an hour.

Mondale meets with Deng Xiaoping and the Chinese delegation in the Oval Office.

Carter proposed that they have a private lunch every Monday that they were both in town. This meeting quickly became a sacrosanct event in their schedules, and during the entire four years, it served as the primary vehicle for Mondale to perform his role as the president's principal adviser. It was also an opportunity for Carter to give his vice president special assignments and to try out ideas on someone who had no agenda other than trying to help the president succeed. Here was the place where the two could talk about literally anything, where they could let their hair down in complete confidence.

Mondale asked me to prepare a suggested agenda for each of these Monday lunches. After surveying our staff for ideas and issues, I drafted a single page of bullet points for him, which, it was understood, he might or might not choose to use. A few of us would usually chat with him immediately before the lunch to expand on the agenda's points, and Mondale would typically scribble a few notes of his own regarding other matters that he wanted to discuss. Following the lunches, we were eager to get debriefed, and Mondale would share with us matters that he wanted us to follow up on or that we otherwise needed to know. But there were many instances when he would not disclose the substance of the conversation, particularly when it related to sensitive national security matters. It was clear that Carter expected Mondale to respect the confidentiality of their conversations, and of course, we respected Mondale's commitment to the president. To my knowledge, nothing of a sensitive nature ever leaked from these lunches, and they remained the most valued means of communication between the two men.

After six months in the White House, we undertook a staff review of Mondale's vice presidency. Happily, we were

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able to conclude that the most important original goals—access, the adviser role, full participation in the decision-making process, establishing good relationships in the White House and throughout the administration—had been achieved. But we urged Mondale to reconsider how he was using his time. We determined that when in Washington Mondale was spending one-third of his time with the president. While that was probably desirable in the first months of the administration, we suggested it might not be as necessary going forward. We also discovered that he was spending twice as much time on foreign policy as on domestic policy and recommended a more even allocation. We had other suggestions of specific issues for him to concentrate on, but essentially, this amounted to fine-tuning a model that was working. Mondale's vice presidency was already different from anything that preceded it, and that fact was increasingly recognized in the press and throughout the political community.

Mondale takes part in national security discussions with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, President Carter, and National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski.

As Mondale's role was taking form, I was struggling to shape my own. Being both Mondale's chief of staff and a member of Carter's senior staff, I had no job description or prior experience to guide me, and so just as Mondale himself was doing, I did my best to make it up as I went along. I obviously had loyalties and obligations to both men, and I worked hard to sort through them and make them coincide. I was constantly attending meetings with Hamilton Jordan, Carter's chief of staff, press secretary Jody Powell, and other senior White House staff to facilitate communication and coordination between the two principals. Halfway through the first year, Jordan asked me to help him draft a memo for the president, assessing the early months of the administration and suggesting an agenda for a Camp David retreat, for Cabinet members and senior staff, on the subject. One way or another, I figured I was spending up to 80 percent of my time helping to make the Carter-Mondale relationship work. It was by far my most important responsibility, and I found it both exciting and fulfilling.

Eventually Carter and his staff asked me to take on tasks that had less to do with the relationship and more to do with the specific goals of the administration. The first of these was leading an effort to prevent the required number of states from calling for a federal constitutional convention for the purpose of adopting a balanced-budget amendment. The problem was that once such a convention was convened, anything could happen; it was an invitation to serious constitutional mischief, and we were successful in preventing it from occurring. On another occasion, I was asked to head a task force aimed at sustaining Carter's unprecedented and controversial veto of a defense-appropriations bill. It, too, was successful and was typical of other special assignments that would occasionally come my way.

Remarkably, the Carter-Mondale relationship during the entire four years worked very much as the two men had designed it to work. There were bumps in the road, to be sure, and even occasionally some serious tensions, but there was always an opportunity and an eagerness to work them out. Mondale had a standing invitation to attend any meeting on the president's schedule, as well as the right to walk down the hall and see him privately any time he wanted. Mondale used these privileges judiciously but effectively. Usually working with Carter's chief domestic policy adviser, Stuart Eizenstat, Mondale would weigh in with the president on issues he felt strongly about, ranging from education funding to the administration's Supreme Court brief in the Bakke affirmative action case. He would similarly work closely with Frank Moore and his congressional relations team to help push Carter's programs in Congress, where he retained considerable goodwill and credibility, on such matters as energy policy and the Panama Canal treaties.

Carter put Mondale in the chain of command, and the vice president religiously attended the Friday morning breakfasts of the president's top national security advisers. He used his Senate experience in these sessions to press for reforms in the intelligence agencies, and on one occasion, he was successful in reversing the policy of the U.S. Navy, which had refused to pick up Vietnamese "boat people" on the high seas.

The White House staff was fully respectful of Mondale and frequently sought him out for advice on political or

policy matters or simply on the ways of Washington. He spent a great deal of time, for example, in rallying traditional Democrats in the successful effort to thwart Sen. Edward M. Kennedy's bid for the 1980 Democratic presidential nomination.

Most important in cementing the relationship, Carter and Mondale came to share a deep respect and affection for each other. Those mutual feelings have only deepened in the years since they left office.

Carter made it clear in his memoirs that he was fully satisfied with his vice president: "From our first meeting, Fritz Mondale had impressed me as a good and decent man, honest and intelligent, and I have always been thankful that we formed this partnership. He has sound judgment and strong beliefs and has never been timid about presenting them forcefully to me. But whenever I made a final decision, even when it was contrary to his own original recommendation, he gave me his full support. He never abused his position by overstepping the appropriate bounds of advocacy when he pursued his own ideas. Our staffs cooperated without dissension, even in the most difficult times. During our four and a half years together, I never had reason to doubt his competence, his loyalty, or his friendship."

For his part, Mondale told me recently, he believes that he and Carter "helped shape a relationship of trust and partnership that was unique, productive, and lasting." He rightly gives Carter primary credit for it, but it was clear at the time and even clearer today that it took both of them to conceive of this new vice presidency and then make it happen.

From an institutional perspective, the Mondale vice presidency represented the culmination of a transition that had begun long before. Since the Founding Fathers had given the vice president only the single duty of presiding over the Senate, the office was viewed for most of its history as part of the legislative, not the executive, branch of government. The vice president's office was originally located in the Senate, not in the White House complex, and the vice president himself was seldom seen downtown. It wasn't until well into the 20th century, after presidential nominees supplanted party conventions in selecting running mates, that the vice president had a presence at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. Even then, however, the office was seen as having a foot in both branches of government, and neither seemed to want it very much.

Carter's decision to make his vice president an integral part of his administration completed the "executivization" of the office. No one today seriously doubts that the office is an adjunct of the presidency itself and not of the Senate. Nor does anyone doubt that the institutional changes Carter and Mondale made possible in the office are as permanent as any can be in our form of government. Every vice president since Mondale—George H. W. Bush, Dan Quayle, Al Gore, Dick Cheney, and Joe Biden—has had an office in the West Wing, and it is hard to imagine that a future vice president would be relegated to "Baltimore." Every subsequent vice president has had a working relationship with his president based roughly on the Mondale model and sometimes has been given more specific responsibilities, as was Gore, or even broader authority, as with Cheney, than Mondale had. The key point about the office is that every relationship has to be designed for the needs, interests, and capabilities of the two principals. There's not a one-size-fits-all model, but rather a general model that needs to be modified every four or eight years.

Given that the change is permanent and that its effect is so consequential, it is astounding that little academic or other interest has been paid to the office. It is also unfortunate that Carter has never received the great credit he is due for transforming a poorly conceived and neglected office into a national asset that not only serves the president better but that also serves the country better by assuring that a vice president is prepared to assume the duties of the presidency if called upon.

Mondale was fond of saying that what Carter did for him was the most generous act of any president in American history. That it was, but it was also a gift to the nation.

Mondale was tireless—and effective—on the campaign trail.

About the Author: Richard Moe was administrative assistant to Sen. Walter F. Mondale from 1973 to 1977 and chief of staff to Vice President Mondale from 1977 to 1981. From 1993 to 2009 Moe led the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This article was written for the Minnesota Historical Society and is reprinted here with permission.

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THE CARTER CENTER

Carter Center Weekend Set for June 2016 in Annapolis

Carter-Mondale alumni are invited to join President and Mrs. Carter for a weekend retreat that offers briefings about the work of The Carter Center and fun activities for the whole family. The 2016 Carter Center Weekend will be held in Annapolis, Maryland, at the Westin Annapolis, June 22–26. Invitations with additional details are coming soon.

Note that Carter Center staff will be making oral history videos at this event. Please let us know if you would like to participate.

For more information, contact Story Evans at story.evans@cartercenter.org, or (404) 420-3811.

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