

# THE Carter Mondale *Letter*

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## Getting a Seat at the Table

### Why and How Education Became a Federal Cabinet Department

By Les Francis

In a stirring presentation to a gathering of supporters and benefactors at the 2018 Carter Center Weekend at the spectacular Skamania Lodge on the Columbia River last summer, Jim Dyke, special assistant for domestic policy in the Carter administration, opened his comments with these lines from Lin-Manuel Miranda’s hit Broadway musical “Hamilton”: “No one really knows how the game is played. The art of the trade. How the sausage is made.... You need to be in the room where it happens.”

Pat McGinnis, a senior member of the reorganization staff at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), was the chief architect of the 1979 creation of the U.S.

Department of Education. She struck a similar note in her remarks when she recalled her time as a graduate student at Harvard’s Kennedy School, saying: “The book I enjoyed the most and still remember vividly was called ‘The Dance of Legislation,’ which was written by a young staffer in the Senate about the creation of the National Health Service Corps. The author described the legislative process as having many steps forward and backward, and a number of surprising twists and turns—much more complicated than the description of the 10 simple steps in textbook diagrams of How a Bill Becomes a Law.”

Dyke and McGinnis were helping the Carter Weekend audience gain a more vivid—and realistic—picture of just



**President Carter signs the bill creating the U.S. Department of Education on Oct. 17, 1979. Standing with him are, from left, Vice President Walter Mondale, retired Morehouse College President Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, Rep. Frank Horton (R-New York), Rep. Jack Brooks (D-Texas), Sen. Abraham Ribicoff (D-Connecticut), and Budget Director Jim McIntyre.**

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how complex, intricate, and challenging passing major legislation can be, especially on something so consequential as federal education policy.

President Carter signed the bill that created the Cabinet-level Department of Education on Oct. 17, 1979, but the story of its creation began long before that. The department's website offers a brief overview of the history of federal interest in education, which dates to the mid-19th century (see box below).

Beyond the institutional history of the federal government's involvement in public education, of course, were Jimmy Carter's personal experiences in the field. It should not have surprised anyone that President Carter would invest so much of his time and political capital into passage

of legislation creating the Department of Education. While his presidency is best noted for accomplishments in energy policy, Middle East peace, environmental protection, expansion of our national parks, human rights, the Panama Canal treaties, normalization of relations with China, children's health care, fiscal restraint, and more, education was and remains a passion of his.

Recall that Carter's first elective office was as a member of the Sumter County Board of Education, to which he was elected in 1956, and on which his father had served previously. Recognize, as well, that Carter is a proud product of public education—from elementary school through the Naval Academy. As governor, he pushed the cause of public schools, understanding as he did that Georgia could only flourish—as it has—by investing in its citizens' skills.

Beyond that, it is important to understand that the

## 1867: The First Department of Education

The original Department of Education was created in 1867 to collect information on schools and teaching that would help the states establish effective school systems. While the agency's name and location within the executive branch have changed over the past 130 years, this early emphasis on conceiving information on what works in education to teachers and education policymakers continues to the present day.

The passage of the Second Morrill Act in 1890 gave the then-named Office of Education responsibility for administering support for the original system of land-grant colleges and universities. Vocational education became the next major area of federal aid to schools, with the 1917 Smith-Hughes Act and the 1946 George-Barden Act focusing on agricultural, industrial, and home economics training for high school students. World War II led to a significant expansion of federal support for education. The Lanham Act in 1941 and the Impact Aid laws of 1950 eased the burden on communities affected by the presence of military and other federal installations by making payments to school districts. And in 1944, the "GI Bill" authorized postsecondary education assistance that would ultimately send nearly 8 million World War II veterans to college. The Cold War stimulated the first example of comprehensive federal education legislation when in 1958 Congress passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in response to the Soviet launch of Sputnik.

To help ensure that highly trained individuals would be available to help America compete with the Soviet Union in

scientific and technical fields, the NDEA included support for loans to college students; the improvement of science, mathematics, and foreign language instruction in elementary and secondary schools; graduate fellowships, foreign language, and area studies; and vocational-technical training.

The anti-poverty and civil rights laws of the 1960s and 1970s brought about a dramatic emergence of the department's equal-access mission. The passage of laws such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (which prohibited discrimination based on race, sex, and disability) made civil rights enforcement a fundamental and long-lasting focus of the Department of Education. In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act launched a comprehensive set of programs, including the Title I program, of federal aid to disadvantaged children to address the problems of poor urban and rural areas. And in that same year, the Higher Education Act authorized assistance for postsecondary education, including financial aid programs for needy college students.

Today, the Department of Education operates programs that touch on every area and level of education. The department's elementary and secondary programs annually serve nearly 18,200 school districts and over 50 million students attending roughly 98,000 public schools and 32,000 private schools. Department programs also provide grant, loan, and work-study assistance to more than 12 million postsecondary students.

creation of the Department of Education also serves as a textbook example of how things happen at the intersection of policy and politics—part of the “sausage-making” that Jim Dyke highlighted in his remarks.

With the connection of politics and policy in mind, and when discussing the creation of the Department of Education in 1979, one must first go back to the 1976 general election campaign and the significant boost the Carter-Mondale ticket received when the National Education Association (NEA) made its first-ever endorsement in a presidential election. That endorsement came about in part because from the beginning of his campaign, Carter had advocated taking the “E” out of HEW (Health, Education, and Welfare) and creating a separate Department of Education.

As Pat McGinnis pointed out in her presentation to the gathering on the Columbia River: “The story of the creation of the Cabinet-level Department of Education is a story of leadership. It is about President Carter’s commitment to elevate federal education programs to Cabinet status because of the immense role education plays in the economic and cultural development of our country and in the health of our democracy.”

She added, “President Carter was concerned that education rarely came up in Cabinet meetings. In fact, he said that in his first year as president, he spent only 2 or 3 percent of his time on education issues. So, in addition to a 20 percent increase in funding to improve the quality of public education, he wanted to raise its visibility and importance.”

During the two-year fight to pass the enabling legislation, Carter argued in meetings large and small that education was too important to be buried in a huge bureaucracy and deserved its own voice at the Cabinet table. And that was the message put forward by the White House, OMB, and others—everyone, in fact, except for Joe Califano, the secretary of HEW. (More on that later.)

Not long after Carter’s inauguration on Jan. 20, 1977, Pat Gwaltney (later McGinnis) moved from her position on the staff of the Senate Budget Committee to the position of deputy associate director of OMB. Her assignment was to examine how the federal government’s vast array of health, education, and labor services was organized and delivered.

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## Pat McGinnis

*Pat McGinnis walked the Carter Center Weekend guests through the formation of the department. Here are her recollections:*

In Phase I, we looked at relevant research, and we listened



**Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter makes a point during the discussion of the Education Department at Carter Center Weekend.**

to congressional leaders and a wide range of stakeholders and experts, and we paid particular attention to state and local education leaders who were on the receiving end of federal programs. Our Phase I study report outlined three organizational concepts for the president to consider:

- Concept 1 would create a new Cabinet Department of Education by simply transferring the education programs from HEW.
- Concept 2 would have established a more broadly based Department of Education and Human Development. With education at the core, this restructuring was intended to foster a network of services involving families, schools, and other community institutions. The idea was to strengthen the connections between education and related programs such as Head Start, school nutrition programs from the Department of Agriculture, youth job training programs from the Department of Labor, Native American schools from the Department of Interior, and overseas schools from the Defense Department.
- Concept 3 would strengthen the education programs within HEW, as proposed by the secretary of HEW, Joe Califano.

We discussed our Phase I findings and these three concepts at a meeting in the Cabinet Room with the president and his top advisors, including Secretary Califano.

The president decided to move forward to flesh out the structural and programmatic details of a separate department

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and to make it as broad as possible. Establishing the new department would be a presidential priority, and he asked Vice President Mondale to take the lead on this initiative. That was the beginning of Phase 2.

This is where substance collided with politics, and into the sausage factory we went.

Supporting us were Sen. Abe Ribicoff (D-Connecticut), the chair of the Governmental Affairs Committee, and many of his moderate colleagues on both sides of the aisle; the NEA; and a coalition of more than 100 elementary, secondary, and higher education groups. Our Phase 2 analysis was contained in a detailed memo to the president from Jim McIntyre and Stu Eizenstat in early April 1978. At this point, we knew that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to transfer most of the controversial education-related programs, so our recommendation was to establish the department with the core of education programs from HEW, and over time we would work to build confidence in the new department as the right home for other programs that could be transferred later.

OMB Director Jim McIntyre and I were scheduled to testify before Sen. Ribicoff's committee on April 14 to present the president's proposal, which we were confident would reflect our recommendations. At 7 a.m. that day, I received a call from the president's office saying that I could pick up the memo. No email then, so I ran to the West Wing to pick up the memo and then ran to

McIntyre's office to discuss how to handle the testimony we were to present in two hours.

As it turned out, we did not get the anticipated green light. Instead, the president chose to propose a new department that included a number of the controversial program transfers, most of which were also included in Sen. Ribicoff's bill. So, we scrambled to change the testimony while the senators, staffs, and constituency groups on both sides waited anxiously for us to show up for unveiling.

The hearing room was packed. I gave my copy of the testimony to Chairman Ribicoff, and McIntyre proceeded to outline the president's proposal, which included Head Start to be transferred from HEW, Native American Education programs to be transferred from the Department of Interior, and the overseas military schools to be transferred from the Defense Department. The hearing room exploded with gasps, and journalists rushed out to file their stories.

To make a long story short, after very vocal opposition by various constituency groups, Sen. Ribicoff streamlined his proposal, and the more narrowly focused legislation passed the Senate with overwhelming support.

Then, on to the House of Representatives. The president asked Rep. Jack Brooks (D-Texas), chair of the House Government Operations Committee, to take the lead, and he agreed. We worked very closely with his staff and the staff of the ranking minority member, Frank Horton (R-New York), as they drafted the House bill. The draft House bill did not include the controversial transfers, and we proposed a significant office for research and innovation, an Intergovernmental Advisory Council, and an Interagency Coordinating Council.

Opposition in the House was much more intense, and unlike in the Senate, our most persuasive argument was not about the need to elevate education to Cabinet status; it was about the management of the programs in HEW. As we looked closely at the education review process in HEW, we found that it took more than 365 days, on average, to issue a routine regulation. Moving the education programs from HEW to a new department would eliminate 15 offices from the clearance process, thus reducing both time and costs.

Regardless of the policy or management issues, most of the committee members' votes were determined by the positions of the constituency groups that supported them. And the situation was tight; going into the final vote in committee we weren't sure how it would turn out. In fact, the bill was reported out of the committee by a one-vote margin [see "Sausage Factory" on p. 7 for one anecdote from that episode]. Later, it passed the full House by four votes!

Jumping to Sept. 27, 1979, the final conference report



***During Carter Center Weekend in June 2018, Jim Dyke, Pat McGinnis, and Les Francis recall the process of creating the U.S. Department of Education.***

(reconciling the differences between the House and Senate bills) passed the House with a 14-vote margin. I remember this number because I received 14 roses (from the White House and OMB staff) after my son was born that day.

President Carter signed the Department of Education Organization Act on Oct. 17, 1979.

*This concludes Pat McGinnis's remarks.*

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## Jim Dyke

*In his wrap-up presentation to the Carter Center Weekend guests, Jim Dyke, who served on Vice President Mondale's staff and was the former secretary of education for Virginia, managed to both personalize and contextualize the fight for—and the establishment of—the U.S. Department of Education. His firsthand account follows.*

Education is personal to me. My mother was a teacher. My grandfather taught for four decades in a segregated school in Virginia. I attended a segregated school in Prince George's County, Maryland.

In the era of slavery, one of the worst crimes anyone could commit was to teach a slave to read.

When I was a kid, while my mother gave me a choice in my life's pursuits, she was clear and precise as to what the choices were and what her preference was. She put it this way: 'You will become educated, or I will kill you!'

I was standing on the shoulders of others who gave me the opportunity to learn, to grow, to succeed. I knew, too, that I had an obligation to keep the door of opportunity open to those who would come behind me.

And that is why I am so grateful that President Carter and Vice President Mondale had the vision to recognize the importance of education and that they took the difficult steps to make it a federal priority.

When I talk about the federal government's role in education, I prefer to start with the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case in which the Supreme Court ruled against "separate but equal" schools. In so doing, the court declared that education is the most important responsibility of state and local governments.

The Supreme Court under Chief Justice Earl Warren, and as persuaded by counsel and future Associate Justice Thurgood Marshall, understood that education allows people to become well-rounded citizens, to have a better quality of life, to enjoy the wonders of the world and its various cultures, and to be productive members

of society and its workforce.

As a chief state school officer in the early 1990s, I saw the federal role from the receiving end. Thus, I appreciated the federal government's obligation to assist state and local educational agencies in providing high-quality educational opportunities for the American people, and to hold states and localities accountable for achieving those goals.

The role of the federal Department of Education, as envisioned by the Carter-Mondale team, was to assure a level playing field for every child. As a state secretary of education, I was comforted to know I could look to the federal Department of Education to have my back on matters of equity and enhancing student achievement.

Jimmy Carter's wisdom in creating the federal Department of Education was confirmed by two separate reports, the first of which, ironically enough, came about during the Reagan administration. I say "ironically" because as a presidential candidate Ronald Reagan had vowed to abolish the department.

The first report, produced under Reagan's Education Secretary Terrell Bell, titled "A Nation at Risk," was issued in 1983. Thirty-five years later, publication of "A Nation at Risk" is still considered a landmark event in modern American educational history. It turned out to be a veritable call to educational arms when it concluded with these urgent and memorable sentences: "The educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people. ...If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war."

That report focused the country on the need to improve our educational system. It simply would not have happened without a federal secretary of education.

And one can easily draw a straight line from "A Nation at Risk" to Goals 2000 in the administration of George H.W. Bush, the pursuit of excellence and equity under Education Secretary Dick Riley in the Clinton administration, and President George W. Bush's No Child Left Behind Act.

Nearly 30 years after the publication of "A Nation at Risk," the nonprofit, nonpartisan and highly respected Council on Foreign Relations published a 2012 report that underscored the earlier report's conclusion. Co-authored by Julia Levy, former New York City schools Chancellor Joel Klein, and former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, "U.S. Education Reform and National Security" declared:

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“Educational failure puts the United States’ future economic prosperity, global position, and physical safety at risk.... The country will not be able to keep pace—much less lead—globally unless it moves to fix the problems it has allowed to fester for too long.”

The message from these two reports was clear to those of us at the state and local levels: The competition for educating our children was no longer with our neighboring states, instead it was with the world. States have the awesome responsibility of providing education at the state and local level because their policies play out in the classroom. However, there is a key leadership role the federal government can play in focusing the nation’s attention and supporting those efforts. States look to the federal Department of Education for support in the following:

- Equity—providing support to close opportunity and skills gaps that currently exist
- Research on how to improve teaching, learning, and student achievement
- Standards for what students need to learn to be fully prepared to compete in a global economy

And, perhaps sad but true, only the federal government has an interest in establishing national expectations as to what our educational systems should produce; only the U.S. Department of Education can push the states and local districts to establish standards of learning and to adopt means of ensuring acceptable accountability systems. Accordingly, the department takes the lead in providing states with suggested performance standards that, if met, would make our students competitive with their global counterparts.

*Looking to the future for the Department of Education, and educational policy more generally, Dyke stressed the need for the American business community to increase its efforts on behalf of world-class workforce development and for states to ramp up programs that better prepare people for careers in technical and trade fields, those occupations that require well-honed “middle skills” and “soft skills,” which are critical to our economy.*

*He also made an eloquent appeal for a greater national commitment to early childhood education and to doing much more to enhance the teaching profession, saying:*

Today, we realize that early childhood education must be an integral part of the educational pipeline. If I could only invest in one education program, it would be early childhood education, for it prepares children, especially those

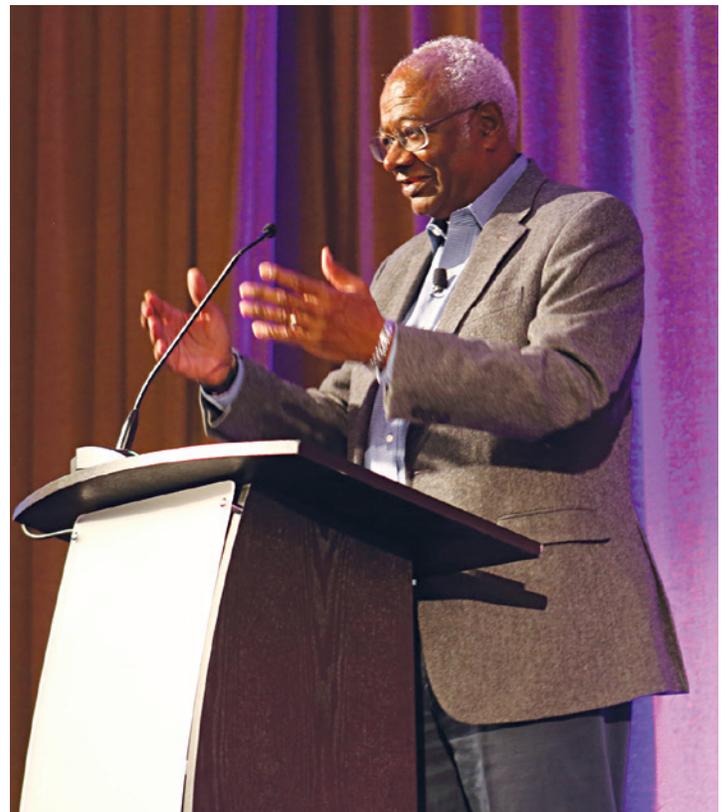
from disadvantaged circumstances, to enter the educational pipeline ready to learn and perform better as they proceed through elementary grades and beyond.

The next major area where the federal department must demonstrate leadership is to help states provide more support for the most important element of the education process, our teachers. Countries that outperform the United States in education put teachers on a pedestal. We need to pay our teachers better, provide more professional development and career ladder opportunities, and offer incentives to get more top students to become teachers. We’re facing a national teacher shortage, and the federal government needs to sound the alarm and help states deal with that crisis. The message should be that teachers need to be armed with more resources, support, and respect, not with guns.

And the federal Department of Education should be providing states with best practices and incentives to address the growing school safety issue.

*This concludes Jim Dyke’s remarks.*

As a group, the panel was unanimous in its view that the creation of the Cabinet-level Department of Education was



***Jim Dyke, who served as special assistant for domestic policy in the Carter administration, discusses the Department of Education.***

one of the Carter-Mondale administration's most significant achievements and one of the most important developments in the history of educational policy in America. Of note, secretaries of education, with a few exceptions, in both Democratic and Republican administrations, have used the position as a bully pulpit on behalf of education reform, equity and excellence—precisely what President Carter had in mind

when he proposed the department in the first place. Getting to this point wasn't always easy—and sausage making isn't pretty. But it was very much worth the effort, and we all should work to ensure its survival and its success.

*Les Francis compiled this article. He was deputy assistant to the president from 1977 to 1979 and an official in the re-election campaign/DNC, from 1979 to 1980.*

*Focus on the Department of Education*

## I Was Foreman in a Sausage Factory

By Les Francis

**A**s Frank Moore's deputy in the Congressional Liaison Office, one of my jobs was to establish and oversee the various White House task forces set up to develop and implement strategies in support of priority presidential initiatives. As such, I was sort of the plant foreman in a sausage factory. As both Pat McGinnis and Jim Dyke mentioned on previous pages, and as in Lin-Manuel Miranda's lyrics, creation of the Cabinet-level U.S. Department of Education was legislative sausage making and, therefore, was part of my responsibility.

Also, and coincidentally, because I had once worked for NEA and its state affiliate in California, Hamilton Jordan had given me the unofficial assignment of being NEA's key point of contact within the White House. The substantive work on the reorganization was led by Pat McGinnis, working from her post at OMB. The congressional lobbying piece was led by Terry Straub in the House and Bob Thomson in the Senate.

It was also my job to help keep Vice President Mondale informed and very much in the loop, as President Carter had designated him the lead spokesperson for the administration on the proposal. As has been described elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter, creation of the Department of Education proved to be a difficult challenge, as opposition to it was diverse and intense.

Political calculations were made when it came to whether to include various programs within the new agency (e.g., Head Start, Department of Defense schools and Indian schools, school lunches). On the merits, they should have been, but politics dictated that they couldn't be. It is easy, in hindsight, to say, "Tsk! Tsk!" about such compromises, but remember that the bill passed out of committee in the House by one vote and won on the floor by only four.

The outcome was close because the opposition to the

Education Department included many big-city Democrats who were close to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), some labor and civil rights leaders who didn't want HEW changed, many of the nation's newspapers (including The Washington Post and The New York Times), and conservative Republicans (who argued against any expanded federal role in K-12 public education).

Never one to shy away from tough fights, Jimmy Carter pushed for the creation of the new department. The first step in the process was to assign the issue to that part of OMB charged with leading all his many reorganization plans. Harrison Wellford, associate director of OMB for Management, was the senior official in that arena; he assigned lead responsibility for the education reorganization to a smart, savvy, and relentless deputy, Patricia McGinnis (née Gwaltney). She knew her way around the bureaucracy, and she knew how the various boxes on an organization chart were supposed to work and interact. She was perfect for this assignment.

I mentioned earlier that politics and policy intersected in this issue, and I have cited a few specific examples of that. But there were some situations that had more to do with politics than policy. I will mention a few:

First, of course, was Secretary Califano's opposition to the proposal. At one point, Califano dispatched his deputy, Hale Champion, to the White House to meet with the vice president and plead their case against the proposal. As the vice president recounted the story to me later, Champion came in, made his pitch, and awaited Mondale's response, which went something like this: "Well, Hale, I hear what you're saying. But you've got a problem. You see, the guy down the hall [pointing toward the Oval Office], the fellow who appointed you to your current job, well, he thinks creating a separate Department of Education is a good idea.

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And you know what? You probably should think so, too.”

But Califano didn't give up. Despite repeated warnings, he continued making his case to key members of Congress. And they, in turn, let the White House know exactly what was going on. In mid-July of 1979, as part of a major restructuring of his White House staff and Cabinet, President Carter named Hamilton Jordan chief of staff, and I moved from Frank Moore's operation over to Jordan's shop.

One day during that tumultuous week, Jordan came into my office and reported the president had just told him he was ready to accept Califano's resignation, and then he ordered me “to write up” the case for doing so. With the help of two colleagues from the congressional liaison operation, Bill Cable and Terry Straub, I did. The next thing I knew, Califano met with the president and was sent packing.

Later that summer, as Congress was dealing with a full agenda of presidential legislative initiatives, progress on the Department of Education bill began to stall. Our allies at the NEA grew more and more anxious and concerned that the proposal might suffocate as a result. Coincidentally, our 1980 re-election effort was beginning to take shape, and Jordan asked me to step in and serve as a link between him, the White House staff, and the campaign.

I was invited to NEA headquarters for a meeting with the union's top brass to discuss the Department of Education and the possibility of an early endorsement of the Carter-Mondale ticket. Although not mentioned directly, there was no doubt in my mind that the two matters were linked. They

wanted our assurance that the bill would continue to be a high priority. I assured them it would, and in September, months before the 1980 primary elections, NEA became one of the first unions to endorse Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale for re-election.

To illustrate the nature of legislative sausage-making frequently at work but not often discussed, I will cite one more story from that battle. Going into the final day of the House Government Operations Committee markup of the bill, we knew the outcome was uncertain. A single member's vote remained in doubt; the member, who hailed from a Midwest industrial state, had been pushing for an economic development grant for his district. While this was not expressed as a quid pro quo, we knew that in his mind his vote and the interests of his district were intertwined.

So when Chairman Jack Brooks called the roll the vote was tied 19 to 19, with our hoped-for ally abstaining. He looked to the back of the room and spotted a White House lobbyist standing against the rear wall. They made eye contact, and the staffer reached inside his suitcoat's breast pocket and pulled out just the corner of a white envelope—hoping to send a signal of commitment to the grant. The member saw the gesture, smiled, and said to Chairman Brooks, “Aye!” We won 20 to 19. What the congressman didn't know was that the envelope contained the lobbyist's White House mess bill, not a grant announcement!

*About the author: Les Francis was deputy assistant to the president from 1977 to 1979 and official in the re-election campaign/DNC, 1979 to 1980.*

### *Focus on the Department of Education*

## Secretary Critical to Department's Effectiveness

**W**hen asked to comment on the current U.S. Department of Education in the fall of 2018, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said: “The historic federal role in education has been to promote equality of opportunity, equity, and excellence. We have a crucial national interest in educating all our citizens, especially our children, so they can reach their full potential. I wish the current administration and secretary of education would take steps to make this a priority.”

Pat McGinnis, who more than any other single staff person during the Carter-Mondale administration was the driving force behind the creation of the U.S. Department of Education, put it this way:

Although the creation of the department gave education a national voice, the quality of leadership is a critical determinant of any institution's effectiveness, especially in a representative democracy. Rather than leading the nation and aspiring to higher levels of educational achievement and greater access to excellent public educational opportunities, the actions of the current secretary of education often seem to minimize the role of public education in building the most successful democracy in history. At this pivotal point in the life of our country, we need leaders with an expansive vision of future possibilities and educated citizens whose achievements will take us to

even higher levels of the freedom and quality of life we all want for future generations of Americans.

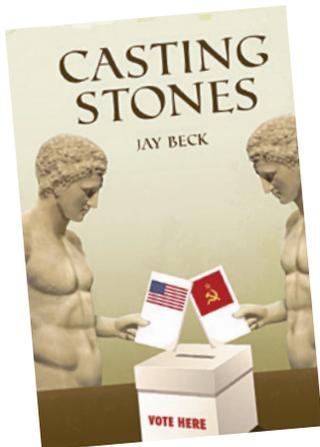
On Oct. 30, 1979, Jimmy Carter announced that he was nominating federal Judge Shirley Hufstedler to be the nation's first Cabinet-level secretary of education. As he said in that announcement:

Judge Shirley Hufstedler has one of the best minds in the country. To fill the position of first secretary of the new Department of Education, I wanted a strong, creative thinker who could take a new, fresh look at the way we educate our children. In Judge Shirley Hufstedler we have found that person. She is deeply

committed to the quality of education and enjoys my full confidence and support. I am certain she will be an outstanding secretary.

In assessing the current secretary, Betsy DeVos, and her priorities and performance, former Vice President Fritz Mondale said pointedly, "Previous administrations, even ones I disagreed with, generally appointed leading voices for education, making sure its interests were represented at the Cabinet table. That is, after all, what President Carter had in mind when he pushed for creation of the department in the first place. I think it is fair to say that the current secretary is not what we had in mind!"

## BOOK CLUB



### Casting Stones

Jay Beck

In Jay Beck's sequel to his novel "Panama's Rusty Lock," political consultant Mark Young's adventures continue. "Casting Stones," set in Greece during the 1985 elections, is a historical political thriller that pits the United States against the Soviet Union in a battle over Greece's future

political and economic soul. The novel is set among airliner hijackings, terror bombings, and assassinations. The Soviet KGB, Greek secret police, and terrorists all conspire against Young as he tries to win an election while simultaneously rescuing the most valuable ancient sculpture ever created.

Beck, a veteran of domestic and international marketing, communications, and political consulting, worked in the executive office of the president in the Carter-Mondale administration and in the 1976 and 1980 campaigns. In 1985, as an international political consultant, he worked in the Greek election described in this, his third novel.

### Poisoned Life

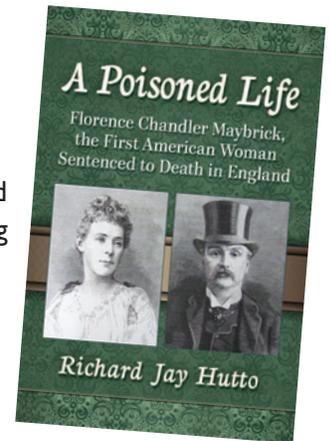
Rick Hutto

Florence Maybrick was the first American woman to be sentenced to death in England, for murdering her husband, a crime she almost certainly did not commit. Her 1889 trial was presided over by an openly misogynist judge who was later declared incompetent and died in an asylum.

Hours before Maybrick was to be hanged, Queen Victoria reluctantly commuted her sentence to life in prison; in her opinion, a woman who would commit adultery, as Maybrick had admitted, would also kill her husband.

Maybrick's mother, whose second marriage took place in Macon, Georgia, worked for years to clear her daughter's name. Decades later, a gruesome diary was discovered that made Maybrick's husband a prime Jack the Ripper suspect.

Author of seven books, Rick Hutto was a member of the original Peanut Brigade to New Hampshire. He served as the Carter family's appointments secretary on Mrs. Carter's staff in the White House.



**John Dalton** sent us his recommendation of Stu Eizenstat's book, "President Carter: The White House Years," which was featured in the Spring 2018 issue of the Carter-Mondale Letter. Dalton said that President Carter accomplished a lot more than most people realize and that he hoped "you will do what I did and recommend it to your contact list."

# Carter Redefined Roles for Cabinet Liaison, Intergovernmental Affairs

By Jack Watson  
with Bruce Kirschenbaum

President Carter first spoke with me in December 1976 about the role he wanted me to take in the White House. He said he actually had two roles in mind: secretary to the Cabinet and assistant to the president for intergovernmental affairs, both of which he intended to define differently than had been done in previous administrations.

The job of assistant to the president for intergovernmental affairs had existed before, but always as a lower-level staff position without the authority, mission, and focus he wanted it to have. As a former governor, he wanted someone who reported directly to him to be his personal liaison, communicator, and linchpin with the governors, big-city mayors, and other state and local elected officials who were on the receiving and operating end of almost all federal domestic programs. He said that when he was governor of Georgia, there were times he wanted to communicate directly with the president or an assistant to the president about an important matter involving federal programs and wasn't able to do so. As president, he wanted to fix that problem by having someone on his senior White House staff whose job would be to work with the governors and other state and local elected leaders to implement the key domestic policies and programs of his administration.

On the federal side, he wanted his secretary to the Cabinet to be not only a communications link with his Cabinet secretaries and other senior administration officials, but also to help manage and coordinate the execution of domestic policy across agency lines.

Combining these two roles in one person on his senior White House staff was an innovative and unprecedented move and was entirely the president's own idea. No administration, before or since, has given such a high priority in the White House to the coordination and implementation of domestic policy and programs among the federal, state, and local governments.

Some of the early hires on my staff were Jane Harman as deputy secretary to the Cabinet (Harman had worked for Sen. John Tunney on Capitol Hill); Larry Bailey as

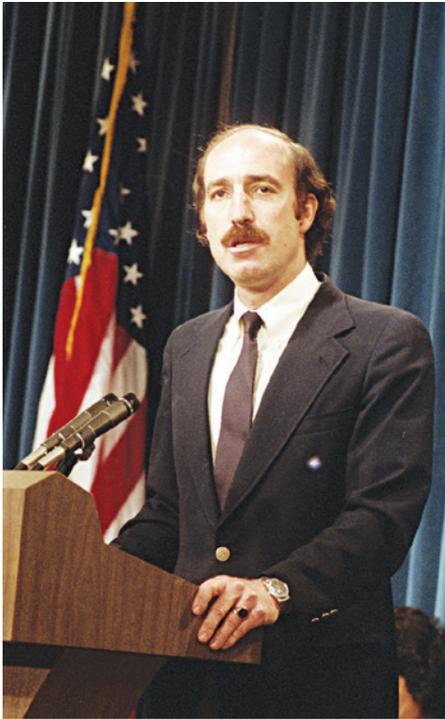
deputy assistant for intergovernmental affairs (Bailey had been with the U.S. Conference of Mayors and had worked on the Carter-Mondale Policy Planning Group); Bruce Kirschenbaum (Kirschenbaum was on New York City Mayor Abe Beam's staff and had also worked on the Carter-Mondale Policy Planning Group); Cynthia Wilkes Smith (Smith had worked as my executive assistant when I was board chairman of the Georgia Department of Human Resources under Governor Carter and had a similar role in the White House); Patricia Yarham, my secretary at King & Spalding; and Larry Gilson (Gilson had been on the staff of the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations). Gene Eidenberg, whom I had met and worked with in the early days of the administration when he was deputy undersecretary for intergovernmental affairs at HEW, joined us in July 1978 as my primary deputy; and a short time later Berry Crawford, who had worked with the Western Governors' Association, also joined us.

Gene Eidenberg brought an amazing amount of talent, political savvy, and intelligence, as well as a great, unfailing sense of humor. Eidenberg was an integral part of everything we accomplished from the time he got there in mid-1978 to the time we left. He was one of the smartest, best, and most capable men I've ever known.

## Defining the New Roles and Building Credibility

Unlike the well-established and well-defined roles and responsibilities of the press secretary, domestic policy, national security, and congressional liaison staffs, we had to figure out exactly what we were going to do, how we were going to reach out to our constituencies, and how we were going to organize ourselves to do it. I knew we needed to work closely with Stu Eizenstat and his staff in the formulation of domestic policies so we could ensure that the perspective and input of the state and local elected leaders who would be implementing those policies were taken into account. We also needed to be able to explain and promote the president's policies and programs to the same state and local leaders once they were adopted.

Although it was clear from the beginning that Stu and his staff had the lead on the formulation of domestic policies, whereas our role would be to coordinate the



**Gene Eidenberg gives a presentation during the Carter administration.**

implementation of those policies, Eizenstat and I had to figure out how best to make it work. It took time, effort, and patience to work out the kinks, but once we did, our staffs complemented and collaborated with each other very productively. I greatly admired and respected the knowledge, dedication, and competence that Eizenstat and his deputy, David Rubenstein, as well as his entire staff,

constantly demonstrated in their work for the president.

The first major intergovernmental challenge we faced shortly after inauguration was dealing with the effects of a record-setting, multiyear drought that was devastating Midwestern and Western states. Working with the governors and others in the affected states, and with Stu Eizenstat, Jim McIntyre at OMB, Cecil Andrus at Interior, and Frank Moore, the administration put together and passed in early April an \$844 million drought assistance package. It was a clear and early demonstration of the Carter administration's capabilities.

My staff and I believed from the start that the best way for us to build credibility with the state and local elected leaders was to be as accessible and responsive to them as possible. We couldn't always do what they wanted, but we could always promptly return their phone calls, try to understand their problems, stay in touch, and listen.

Another way to establish and maintain personal contact and open lines of communication with the state and local elected leaders around the country was for me to speak at their national and regional meetings. Doing that required a lot of time and travel; but early on, I realized that my being available for those meetings meant a great deal to the people involved and gave me a continuing

opportunity to articulate and explain what the president's domestic goals and objectives were at any given time, what our challenges were in achieving those goals, and ways in which we could work together to meet them. I spoke regularly at meetings of the National Governors' Association, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, and the National Conference of State Legislators.

On my trips around the country, I would also meet with reporters and editorial boards of newspapers large and small and speak to business groups and other organizations such as the NAACP, the National Urban League, veterans' organizations, and environmental groups. This aspect of my job gave me the chance not only to explain the president's major domestic policies, but also to listen to people's reactions and perspectives.

I was also asked from time to time to speak at a meeting or conference that was important to a particular governor, mayor, or Cabinet member. I tried to accept as many of those invitations as I could because, almost invariably, they strengthened my personal relationships with the men and women involved and paid rich dividends in terms of support for the president.

On the Cabinet secretary side of my job, I began shortly after inauguration to visit the departments and talk with the Cabinet secretaries and their teams, including the assistant secretaries in charge of managing the key domestic programs in each department. I explained the president's thinking in creating and combining my two roles, and I told them my staff and I wanted to work with them in any way we could.

In March 1977, I called together all the people responsible for intergovernmental relations throughout the administration for a meeting in the Old Executive Office Building to introduce my staff and myself and to brief them on the mission the president had given us. I said we would need their ongoing advice and support if we were to do what the president wanted us to do, and that we wanted to help them do their jobs in any way we could. We stayed in close touch with those people throughout the administration to positive effect all around. They served as an early-warning system of both potential problems and opportunities for us and, in doing so, they extended our reach and ability to get things done. We reciprocated their help in every way we could.

I knew that the development of personal relationships  
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and trust with the Cabinet secretaries and other key people in the administration would be essential if we were to do our job successfully. In my opinion, both then and now, the president had assembled an exceptionally experienced, capable and committed Cabinet. The more I came to know and work with them, the more that opinion was confirmed.

I also knew that our credibility with our colleagues in the administration as well as our constituencies at the state and local levels would depend on our ability to get things done. Lacking a road map or clear precedents for what we wanted to do, I sometimes felt, especially in the early days, that we were making things up as we went along. As Gene Eidenberg was fond of saying, when all else fails, use smoke and mirrors and act like you know what you're doing, even when you don't—both of which we did on more occasions than I can even recall.

### **Interagency Coordinating Council**

Initially, the president asked HUD Secretary Pat Harris, working closely with Eizenstat and me, along with other relevant Cabinet departments (Commerce, Transportation, HEW, Labor, Treasury, and others), to take the lead in developing the nation's first comprehensive national urban policy. For several reasons, one of which was the difficulty of having one department coordinate the policies and programs of other departments, development of the policy dragged on for months without much progress. In due time, Eizenstat took over the policy lead on the project, and under his leadership, we started making substantial headway. We learned two important lessons in the process:

- (1) Since most major domestic programs involve the input and actions of more than one federal department or agency, to be most effective, they need to be coordinated across agency and departmental lines.
- (2) Generally speaking, departments can't coordinate the programs of other departments. The sense of turf in the federal government is a categorical imperative that's hard to overcome.

In early 1978, Bruce Kirschenbaum, Larry Gilson, and I began working on a mechanism to coordinate the implementation of numerous programs in the emerging national urban policy. Some examples of such programs were the new Urban Development Action Grants (UDAG) in HUD; the economic development programs in the Economic Development Administration in Commerce;



**Jack Watson poses with Cynthia Wilks Smith and Bruce Kirschenbaum.**

the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) programs in Labor; and the Urban Mass Transit Administration programs in DOT. To maximize the synergistic impact and benefits of these programs, we needed a mechanism that would enable them to work in tandem.

The answer we proposed to the president was the Interagency Coordination Council (IACC), to be chaired by the secretary to the Cabinet/assistant to the president for intergovernmental affairs and composed of the operational heads of the major domestic programs. IACC's mission would be to expedite and facilitate interdepartmental execution of major domestic policies, beginning with urban policy. We had had some experience with a similar mechanism in managing the president's Economic Adjustment Council.

Rather than have the Cabinet secretaries or undersecretaries as members of the council, we wanted the assistant secretaries and others who actually run the relevant programs in each department to sit on the council. For example, we wanted the following people: Ernie Green, assistant secretary of labor, who managed the \$8 billion CETA program; Bob Embry and Larry Simon, assistant secretaries of community planning and development and housing, respectively, in HUD; Bob Hall, EDA administrator in Commerce; Mort Downey, assistant secretary for budget and programs in DOT; along with others, all of

whom turned out to be invaluable members of the team. Their individual and collective contributions to the success of the president's domestic programs were inestimable.

Although initially I convened IACC meetings at the White House to discuss existing or potential problems and opportunities for interagency cooperation, we soon developed the kind of working relationships that made formal meetings unnecessary. It became an informal process where people would pick up the phone and call us or each other, or we would call one of them and say, "Do you know about this problem? Call Bob Embry or Ernie Green or Bob Hall and get it worked out." Most of the time, they'd work it out because they knew we were available to step in if we were needed. If conflicts arose, we'd convene the relevant people and, almost always, resolve the impasse. The IACC represented an idea and an approach to problem solving and program coordination that worked.

The IACC itself, and the working relationships my staff and I were developing at both the federal and state and local levels, led almost immediately to our becoming the de facto "crisis management" shop in the White House. It was our experience working with the governors and others on natural disasters of one kind or another that contributed in part to the creation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the president's 1978 Reorganization Plan. From droughts and hurricanes, to the national truckers' strike, to Three Mile Island, to the Mariel Boatlift, to Mount St. Helens, we always worked closely with the governors involved and the relevant federal agencies to deal with the crises. Once FEMA was in place, the process was greatly expedited.

As the IACC began more and more to take on a life of its own, Bruce Kirschenbaum, Berry Crawford, and Jane Hansen managed its day-to-day operations. Kirschenbaum had the lead responsibility for implementation and coordination of urban policy, and Hansen had a major role in putting together the president's briefing books for his domestic travel, working closely with David Rubenstein and others on Stu Eizenstat's staff, Frank Moore's staff, and other White House and agency staff.

In 1978, we began to turn our attention to small community and rural development issues and to realize that a group like the IAAC could be effective in dealing with those issues. When Larry Gilson left our staff to take a senior position at Amtrak, Berry Crawford continued the work Gilson and he had begun, which ultimately led to the announcement in December 1979 of the president's Small Community and Rural Development Policy. For this effort,

we created a counterpart to the IACC called the Assistant Secretaries Working Group, with Crawford acting as its lead staff. The Working Group coordinated the execution of rural development policies in health, housing, water and sewer, transportation, energy, and other areas. Our efforts in these areas were a huge success, both substantively and politically, because White House attention to these issues for small-town and rural America was unprecedented.

When Hamilton Jordan became White House chief of staff in July 1979, he asked if I would assume oversight responsibility for presidential appointments so he could focus on other aspects of his job as chief of staff. I said I'd be happy to do it, so for the remaining 18 months of the administration I had the privilege of working closely with Arnie Miller, director of the Office of Presidential Personnel. Miller and his staff were incredibly competent, politically astute, and hardworking in the way they performed their job for the president. Though we had worked together before, Miller and I now worked with each other on an almost daily basis. With his sharp intellect, unerring political sense, straight-talking manner, and sense of humor, there was never a dull moment, and we got a lot done.

## Conclusion

The problems, programs, and projects, large and small, on which we used these approaches during the president's four years in office are, of course, too numerous to mention. A few examples, however, are the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics; economic analyses for DOD base realignment decisions around the country; high-profile case work referred to us by Frank Moore and his staff (cutting red tape, expediting federal decisions, resolving interagency conflicts on matters important to members of Congress); leveraging federal dollars with state and local and private-sector investments in urban and rural developments of one kind or another to increase the impact of the federal funds expended; and simply making the federal government work better out in the country where it affects people the most.

A good example of that is what we did with the IACC's Employment Initiatives project. The CETA program in the Department of Labor (DOL) was designed to employ the long-term unemployed for whom finding jobs was, and still is, a continuing challenge. With Ernie Green's help, we negotiated a written standard agreement between DOL and the other federal departments that had job-creating grants under various programs involving

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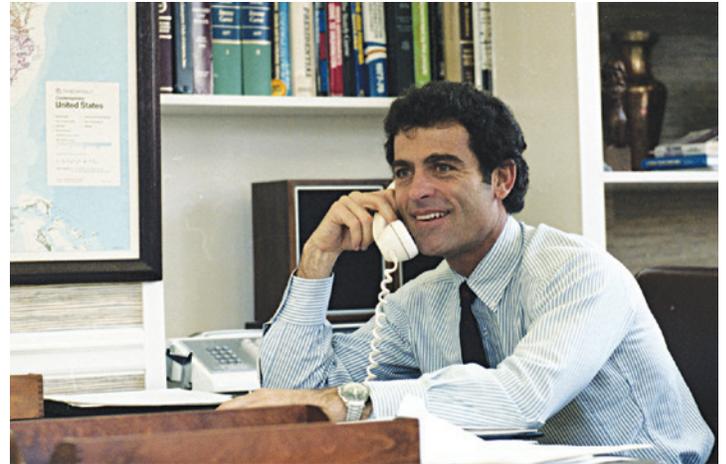
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community and economic development, housing, and urban mass transit. Under the agreement, the departments would notify DOL of the impending grants before they were publicly announced, so that DOL could try to fill them under the CETA program. This initiative alone placed almost a quarter of a million CETA-eligible people in jobs at no extra cost to the federal government. That was almost as many people as were placed in jobs under the employment tax credit program and more than were placed under the private-sector initiatives program that cost over \$200 million.

For another example, in working with me on this article, Bruce Kirschenbaum came across the following statement in Transportation Secretary Brock Adams' weekly report to the president on Nov. 27, 1978:

**Urban Policy:**...For leveraging our transportation investments with non-transportation federal programs, I have worked closely with your staff, particularly Jack Watson, to create a new approach to urban transportation development. Working with members of the IACC, we are encouraging federal, local, and private investment to build on our urban transportation projects, notably in the areas of housing and economic development.... The Century Freeway in Los Angeles is contingent on using this opportunity for improving housing stock in the area and building an economic base, which will expand job creation. Similar efforts in small, as well as large, cities are being made which should be used to build a new policy.

By the summer of 1979, with a lot of help from a lot of people, we had developed a considerable ability to deliver results and a reputation for being both accessible and responsive to state and local elected leaders. Democratic politics were heating up even more than "partisan politics," with Sen. Ted Kennedy publicly positioning himself to challenge President Carter for the Democratic nomination in 1980. Although the president's overall public approval ratings at the time were in the low 30s, his credibility and standing among state and local elected officials were high, and his political support from them was extraordinary, much to the surprise of the political pundits in Washington. At the National Governors' Association meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, in July of that year, I asked the Democratic governors for a resolution of support for the president's re-election and



**Jack Watson takes a phone call in his office.**

got a unanimous vote in favor of the resolution, with two governors abstaining. We had similarly strong support from the Democratic caucuses in the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, and the National Association of Counties, all of which we had been working with since the beginning of the administration.

Generally speaking, Washington is understandably absorbed with what's going on "inside the Beltway" and with foreign affairs, rather than what's happening out and about in the country. President Carter's idea to give the *execution* of domestic policy the same priority and importance as its *formulation* was practical and wise, both governmentally and politically, but it didn't get him much credit in D.C. His idea to redefine and combine the two roles of secretary to the Cabinet and assistant to the president for intergovernmental affairs in the way he did produced countless unprecedented collaborations and a multitude of highly effective results. I regret we did not have another four years to continue what we started, not only in these areas, but in so many others.

*About the author: Jack Watson was secretary to the Cabinet and assistant to the president for intergovernmental affairs from 1977 to 1980, and Gene Eidenberg was his deputy. When Watson became White House chief of staff in 1980, Eidenberg succeeded him in both roles. It is with sincere gratitude that we acknowledge the staff in alphabetical order: Karen Beatty, Berry Crawford, Larry Gilson, Jane Hansen, Tom Hegan, Bruce Kirschenbaum, Elaine Liang, Cheryl Marcus, Teddy Mastroianni, Steve Page, Regina Purcell, Pauline Schneider, Margaret Sloan (Brinson), Cynthia Wilkes Smith, Virginia Strauss, Marcia Thomas, and Patricia Yarham.*

# Debates Central to 1976 Campaign

By Barry Jagoda

In the election year of 1976, presidential candidates Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford agreed to a historic resumption of presidential campaign debates, which had not been held since the famous contests between Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy in 1960.



**Georgia Gov. Jimmy Carter and President Gerald Ford meet in September 1976 in Philadelphia for the first presidential candidates' debate in 16 years.**

The leading academic authority on presidential debates, Professor Sidney Kraus of Cleveland State University, wrote, "Just as the Kennedy-Nixon confrontations were credited with tipping the balance in favor of the Democratic challenger, the Carter-Ford debates were instrumental in securing Carter's slim margin of victory" 16 years later.

"The debates were a central element in the 1976 election," Carter told Kraus. "As perhaps nothing else could have, they provided an opportunity for the American people to weigh the merits of the candidates. President Ford had come to office only two years before, without a chance to define his views in a national campaign. I had never held national office and was relatively unknown."

Ford told an audience at the University of Michigan, "I think the fact that we did debate ... makes a strong case for their being held in the future." And so they have been, with faceoffs held every four years, down to the present.

Inside the Carter-Mondale campaign we saw debates not only as an important chance for our challenger to be present on the same stage with the incumbent, but also as a good opportunity to show the American people the

lightning mind of Jimmy Carter. Though there was the normal apprehension about such highly focused events, the Carter campaign was prepared to win, with the normal confidence we all had in Carter's ability to prevail in such a contest. The chance to get a level playing field with President Ford was welcome.

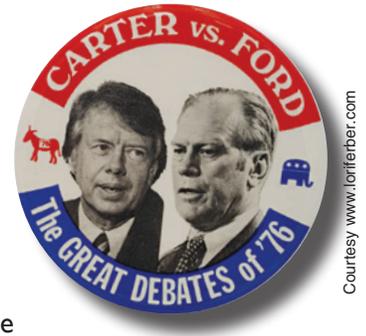
The debate's sponsor, the League of Women Voters, had chosen various sites around the country at locations with some historic importance. Philadelphia had been a natural choice for the Bicentennial year. San Francisco, site of the signing of the United Nations charter, was selected for the second debate because the subject was to be foreign policy. Two other venues turned up that were just right for the vice presidential debate and for the final presidential encounter: The Alley Theater in Houston and Phi Beta Kappa Hall on the campus of the College of William and Mary, respectively.

Our entire campaign staff, led by Hamilton Jordan, went into preparation mode. Briefing materials were overseen and provided by Carter's principal policy advisor, Stuart Eizenstat, with input from many sources. Once the "briefing books" had been prepared, candidate Carter took possession of them for exhaustive study. Normal campaign events were put on hold for several days prior to each encounter, giving our candidate plenty of time to review the great issues of the day.

Staff members, led by Jody Powell, turned to logistics. In addition to Powell, Carter's debate negotiators included media advisor Gerald Rafshoon and television advisor Barry Jagoda, author of this article. As we met with a team from the Ford campaign, a principal issue for us was to ensure that the two debaters would appear on stage equally—no presidential seal for Ford, no television coverage showing a 6-foot-tall Ford looming over our 5-9 candidate, and no questioners who might show favoritism. In a series of pre-debate encounters, representatives of the two candidates were able to work out such issues.

In the first debate, held on Sept. 23 at the Walnut Street Theater in Philadelphia and moderated by the distinguished NBC News broadcaster Edwin Newman, some will remember a 27-minute delay when the audio on the network (pool) broadcast went silent, for largely technical

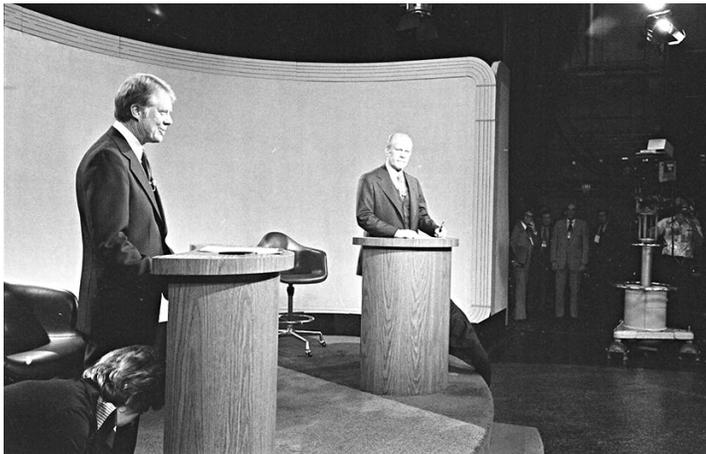
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reasons. Just as Jerry Rafshoon got ready to go on stage to brief Carter, the sound came back.

The second debate, moderated in San Francisco's Palace of Fine Arts Theater on Oct. 6 by NPR's Pauline Frederick, would be remembered for President Ford's "gaffe." Answering a question from Max Frankel of the New York Times, Ford asserted, "There is no Soviet domination of Eastern Europe." Responding vigorously, Carter said, "I would like to see Mr. Ford convince Polish-Americans and Czech-Americans and Hungarian-Americans that those countries do not live under the domination and



**The audio cut out for 27 minutes during the first debate between Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, in Philadelphia.**

supervision of the Soviet Union behind the Iron Curtain."

Ford's comment and Carter's rebuke overwhelmed anything else from the second debate and gave almost all fair observers the opportunity to say that Ford was the loser in the encounter. More than 70 million viewers had tuned in, and a few days later President Ford said he had made a mistake in his characterization of the Soviets and Eastern Europe.

Just over a week later, on Oct. 15, Sen. Walter Mondale faced off against Sen. Robert Dole in the first-ever vice presidential debate, held on the stage of Houston's Alley Theater. Post-debate polls indicated that partisans of each ticket would claim victory in the contest. Dole had been known as a "hatchet man," and Mondale had a reputation as a strong-minded, ethical, even-handed political figure.

An estimated 45 million viewed the Mondale-Dole debate. Then, as now, we in the Carter-Mondale campaign camp were certain that Sen. Mondale had well advanced chances for our ticket.



**Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford always addressed each other with respect and civility during their televised debates.**



**Minnesota Sen. Walter Mondale celebrates at the conclusion of the first vice presidential candidates' debate ever held.**

Barbara Walters moderated the final debate, Oct. 22 at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. The questioners were syndicated columnist Joseph Kraft, Washington Post editorial writer Robert Maynard, and Los Angeles Times Washington bureau chief Jack Nelson. Televised in 113 nations around the globe, it reached another

estimated 70 million Americans.

With the Nov. 2 Election Day then only 11 days away, the race had tightened. President Ford closed by asking the electorate to say, "Jerry Ford, you've done a good job, keep on doing it." Gov. Carter, in his closing remarks, said, "Mr. Ford is a good and decent man, but he's been in office now more than 800 days, almost as long as John Kennedy was in office. I'd like to ask the American people what's been accomplished? A lot remains to be done."

The rest, as is said, belongs to history.

*About the author: Barry Jagoda was Jimmy Carter's television advisor during the 1976 campaign and special assistant to the president for media and public affairs in the White House. Earlier he had been an award-winning writer and producer at NBC News and CBS News. Later he was a high technology media executive and recently retired as director of communications at the University of California, San Diego. With his wife, Karen, Jagoda resides in La Jolla, California.*

# Comings & Goings

**Doris Crenshaw** recently visited the Jimmy Carter Library and Museum to give an oral history that included her work with the 1976 and 1980 Carter-Mondale campaigns, Walter Mondale's presidential campaign, and at the White House Conference on Small Business.



**Doris Crenshaw is greeted by Carter alumni Phil Wise and Jay Beck at The Carter Center.**



**Sarah Deutsch**

**Sarah Deutsch**, an intern and assistant in the Office of Jimmy Carter in the 1980s, is a retired attorney turned photographer who spent time in Puerto Rico last spring in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

Deutsch wanted to donate her photography skills to replace what people had lost or provide what they never had before. She reached out

on Facebook, looking for connections in Puerto Rico. Carter

alumna **Nancy Vorpe Quinlan** put Deutsch in touch with a friend who knew of a nonprofit that would be visiting Puerto Rico at the same time as Deutsch.

In Puerto Rico, Deutsch met Claudia DeCecchi of Sunrisas, a Miami-based nonprofit group created by young people to help children ([www.sunrisas.org](http://www.sunrisas.org)), and visited a shelter in rural Puerto Rico, where she took photos of children. She described it as a life-changing and rewarding experience.

With the assistance of the Ricky Martin Foundation, she also did a photo shoot in the town of Loíza, which was especially hard hit by the hurricane.

Photos from the trip can be found on Instagram and Facebook through Sarah Deutsch Photography.

**Robert “Skinner” Donahue**, who worked on the Carter-Mondale campaign, is retiring as the government and community affairs vice president at Boston University after 32 years.

University President Robert A. Brown praised Donahue as the “principal architect and steward” of the university’s “excellent relations with City Hall.”

The shepherding of BU’s first Institutional Master Plan through City Hall approval (a role he also played with subsequent plans) is among his many accomplishments, as is his involvement in helping secure the permits that allowed BU’s National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories (NEIDL) to begin conducting Biosafety Level 4 research.

**Chuck Levin**, who managed advance for Vice President Mondale and Mrs. Carter between 1976 and 1979, was recognized by the state of California for his extensive contributions as an advocate for democracy and more than 50 years of service to the County of Los Angeles and the people of California. Beginning as a registrar of voters in 1968, Levin has devoted his career to informing citizens and engaging them in the electoral process. He created The First to Vote, a nonprofit dedicated to registration that resulted in over 75,000 new registrants.

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**Lance Simmens**

**Lance Simmens** ran for City Council in Malibu, California, in November at the age of 65. His campaign, which ultimately did not succeed, was based on a principle he has written about over the years: the need to restore confidence in our leaders and institutions.

Simmens worked in the Carter-Mondale campaign in the snows of January in Nashua, New Hampshire, then in the Florida, New York, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Michigan, and South Dakota primaries.

In August, Macedonia signed a landmark agreement to change its name to North Macedonia, sealing a deal with Greece that would, if ratified, resolve a decades-old dispute and pave the way for the enlargement of the European Union and NATO. **Matthew Nimetz**

(Carter-Mondale administration counselor and then undersecretary for security, science, and technology at the State Department), United Nations special envoy, has mediated the Macedonia dispute for a quarter century. Nimetz congratulated Greek and Macedonian officials for their “political courage” and “strategic vision.”



**Matthew Nimetz**

## Nordhaus Wins Nobel Prize for Economics

**William Dawbney (Bill) Nordhaus** (Council of Economic Advisors 1977–1979) has received the 2018 Nobel Prize for Economics. Best known for his work in economic modeling and climate change, the Sterling Professor of Economics at Yale University was awarded the Nobel Prize “for integrating climate change into long-run macroeconomic analysis.”

Using a computer-based assessment model that he developed, Nordhaus’ research confirms past estimates that without major policy changes, rapid climate change over the next century is likely. It further suggests that it will be extremely difficult to achieve the 2 degrees Celsius target of international agreements, even if ambitious policies are introduced in the near term.

Nordhaus has recommended that the world fight climate change by imposing a universal carbon tax, so that polluters would pay for the cost to society of greenhouse gases.

Author or editor of over 20 books, he co-wrote the textbook “Economics.” Currently in its 19th edition, the book has been translated into at least 17 languages. His most recent book is “The Climate Casino: Risk, Uncertainty, and Economics for a Warming World.”

## Passages



**Doug Bennet**

**Douglas J. Bennet** left his position as staff director of the Senate Budget Committee to become assistant secretary of state for congressional relations in the Carter-Mondale administration. In 1978 he helped shepherd through the Senate the contentious Panama Canal treaties, which led to the eventual transfer of control of the canal to Panama.

In 1979 Bennet was named administrator of the Agency for International Development. A few years later, he took over the presidency of National Public Radio, expanding its audience and news operation. At his farewell party in 1993, NPR correspondent Susan Stamberg said, “Thanks to Doug Bennet,

we have no debts anymore, except to him.”



**Chris Carlson**

**Chris Carlson** was the press secretary of former Idaho Gov. Cecil Andrus, an author, and a public lands advocate. Before becoming Andrus’ press secretary, Carlson was a teacher and newspaper reporter. He also served as assistant secretary of the interior for public affairs under Andrus in the Carter-Mondale administration.

Colleagues remember Carlson as being tenacious when it came to causes he believed in.

“Some policy issues are mind-numbing boring, but if they had huge implications, he’d work on them like a terrier with a bone and not give up,” his friend Mike Kennedy told the Coeur d’Alene Press.

Daughter Serena Carlson recalled that after her father was diagnosed with cancer 13 years ago, he was given six months to live. “He wrote five books after he was diagnosed, got to see both of his grandkids born, and saw Cecil Andrus’ life through to the end,” she told the Press, where Chris Carlson was a columnist.



*Arvonne Fraser*

**Arvonne Fraser** was a regional coordinator for the 1976 Carter-Mondale campaign, later recruiting women for the new administration. Hers was a leading voice on women’s issues in Minnesota, nationally, and abroad.

Former colleagues recall Fraser’s international focus on helping more women become policymakers, and her belief that “policies would be far more effective if women helped create them.” To that end, she helped found or worked with numerous women’s groups; became coordinator and then director of the Office of Women in Development, part of USAID; and traveled the world as the country’s representative to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

Later Fraser was a founder of the Center on Women, Gender, and Public Policy at the University of Minnesota’s Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs; she ran the political campaigns of her husband, Donald M. Fraser, a former U.S. representative and Minneapolis mayor; and she was a political candidate herself, making an unsuccessful run for lieutenant governor in 1986.

Her family and colleagues recall that Fraser was a mentor to numerous young people—women and men—encouraging them to consider public service, be politically active, and fight for what they believed in.

**Woody Price** of Dennis, Massachusetts, pursued a long career in politics in Washington, D.C., where he served on the staff of senators and congressmen.

In 1974, he joined the staff of Rep. Brock Adams, D-Washington. When Adams became secretary of transportation, Price was closely involved in the drafting and passage of legislation to substantially deregulate the nation’s freight railroads, creating Conrail. In the continued consolidation of railroads, he became vice president of federal affairs at CSX and retired in 1996.

Price was a junior commissioned officer in the Navy. An admirer of all things botanical, he served on the board of the National Arboretum in D.C., was a great supporter

of the Dennis Conservation Trust on Cape Cod, and was an avid birdwatcher.



*Betty Jo Stephens*

**Betty Jo Stephens**, a champion of women’s causes, served from 1978 to 1980 as chair for the California Commission on the Status of Women, which advocated for equal pay and the Equal Rights Amendment, among many other issues. She became a pioneer in women-owned businesses and used her success to contribute to her community through support of charities, political associations, and social causes.

Stephens was one of a small handful of female CEOs when she ran Excel Mineral Co. and cracked the glass ceiling in the male-dominated mineral and mining business. She expanded the Jonny Cat litter brand from coast to coast with hundreds of employees, whom she worked with from the company headquarters in Goleta, California.

After bringing down the gavel at the very first meeting of the Democratic Women of Santa Barbara, she remained a supporter of the group and of the Democratic Party for the rest of her life. Among the influential people she counted as friends were President Jimmy Carter, Gov. Jerry Brown, Speaker Tip O’Neill, Gov. Ann Richards, Sen. George McGovern, and attorney and women’s advocate Sarah Weddington.

**Betty Swayne Leslein** of Buford, Georgia, was one of the first women to step forward to work with Rosalynn Carter during Jimmy Carter’s 1970 campaign for governor. Later, she was an active Peanut Brigadier.

Remembered as a tribute to her family, Leslein is said to have made a positive difference in the lives of those who knew her as a teacher, educational and political leader, friend, and relative.

**Richard Dana “Dick” Warden** worked in both the Johnson and Carter administrations and in the labor movement.

Warden began his career in Montana as a journalist for the Great Falls Tribune, a family-owned newspaper. In 1961 he moved to Washington, D.C., on a political science fellowship from the American Political Science Association. He completed his career as a legislative director with the United Auto Workers, retiring in 1991 and becoming a full-time resident of Delaware.

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**Alumni from the Carter-Mondale administration gathered for breakfast at the Carter Center Weekend last June in Washington state. The 2019 event will be held in Leesburg, Virginia.**

### **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](mailto: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.