

James Earl "Chip" Carter III interviewed by Bob Short
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BOB SHORT: Our guest today is James Earl Carter, III, affectionately known as Chip, son of former Governor and United States President, Jimmy Carter, and former First Lady Rosalynn Carter. Welcome, Chip, to our program.

CHIP CARTER: Thank you.

SHORT: You know you and I could talk hours about the Carter family and its many accomplishments, but I want to talk to you today about you, Chip Carter. You were born in Honolulu on April 12th, 1950 and grew up in Plains after your father had left the Navy and gone back to run the peanut business. Tell us about your family and growing up in Plains.

CARTER: Well I'll start with birth. "Chip" is Hawaiian for "baby" and my blue armband that, when I was born had "Chip Carter" written on it which meant "baby Carter" and that's how I got the name Chip.

Plains is an interesting little community. It was mostly racist, very racist when I grew up. My dad had a peanut business that afforded us the opportunity to begin work when we were 10 years old. Riding around the back of a tractor and pick up the ton of a peanut wagon. The tractor would back up and he'd drop the little pin in there and that's how I started off at Carter's Warehouse and I worked there constantly until about halfway through college.

Plains was an interesting town in that everybody knew everything that everybody did. There were no secrets. It was a great almost inherited ability to live in the Whitehouse because of that because you knew that whatever you did everybody was going to be able to know about it. You could kiss a girl in Americus, and by the time you got back to Plains everybody in town knew it when I grew up.

The whites and blacks lived together very peacefully. My next-door closest neighbor was a black family with two kids my age and we played together after school everyday, Saturday and Sunday and that was the people that I grew up with. And I think everybody in town had a similar perspective on the people that were there. It was always outside agitators. It's not ever the ones that actually lived in Plains.

Shortly after dad moved home there was a huge movement to keep our schools segregated. And the White Citizens Council, a group of dad's customers, came to him and asked him to join the White Citizens Council. He refused and they wanted him -- one of the guys said I'll give you the \$20.00 to join and dad took the crowd back into the toilet at the Carters Warehouse and flushed \$20.00 down the toilet, and we lost 95% of our customers.

I think dad's profit the next two years combined was about \$460.00. We lived in public housing at the time and when he first came home. We lived in public housing. And it was a real eye opener. I got beat up everyday at school. My uncle, my mother's brother, stood on the steps of the school one day and watched as the students tied me upside down from the volleyball net and threw the football at me while I spun around there. So I was kind of raised in a liberal, I don't think it was liberal because certainly fiscally conservative, but in a non-racist culture mostly because I think of the way my grandmother treated people all of her life and dad kind of picked it up from her.

SHORT: That's Ms. Lillian.

CARTER: Ms. Lillian.

SHORT: Tell us about Ms. Lillian.

CARTER: She's a wonderful lady. Very stuck in her own mind. You couldn't change her mind about anything, but she was always right in her own words. Fairly demanding. I got a lot of funny stories about it, but I think she kept Amy most of the time when Dad was running for President and she sat in the Depot there and lines of guests came by and she was always very nice.

When dad was elected and took office in '77, that February, the next month, the President of India died, the ceremonial figure, not the Prime Minister. And my father asked my grandmother Lillian to represent our country there, and asked me, because she had been in the Peace Corps there, and he asked me if I would go as her aid to keep her out of trouble.

So we went and we did everything politically and protocol wise and we get to the funeral and everything at the funeral is interpreted into English. The Vice President of the Soviet Union was the first one to speak and my grandmother was supposed to be second, and about halfway through his speech, which was being interpreted, she turned around, I was on the fifth row, she was on the first, and she passed her speech back to me and said "There's too many people. I can't get up and give this." There was 2 ½ million people in the audience in a natural amphitheater, had 2,200 different languages of press there, so it was a huge event. And so I grabbed this thing scared to death and I start reading and when it starts saying "When my son

was a small boy" - - oh no.

So I get up and I make this speech and since I'm speaking English they don't interpret it, but nobody in the audience understands it because of my southern accent and I realize that about a third of the way through so I got real relaxed and I made the rest of the speech. But it was a really funny experience.

SHORT: Tell me about your other grandparents, the Smiths.

CARTER: I never knew my mother's father. He died when she was 12. Mother Allie, my mother's mother, raised her. She was a seamstress for a long time. She made cakes. And then she spent 30 years as a part-time employee of the Post Office there in Plains, so she was always there. Everywhere she went she ran. She'd get out of the car and run in the store. If she's going out to pick something out of her yard she'd run out and run back. Not very well educated, but well-read, well loved. Held her family together very tightly, kids and grandkids. Then kind of served as a mediator there.

After her husband died she spent her time looking after her children. Never got remarried.

Never even dated as far as I know about. Mom 's the oldest of four and I think all of them went to college and all of them got a, you know, a good job afterwards and that kind of stuff mostly because Mother Allie just kept pushing and pushing and pushing and making them do it which was almost unusual way back then...

SHORT: Now your father's siblings, Billy and Ruth and Gloria, they were very active in his campaigns.

CARTER: Yes.

SHORT: Would you tell us a little bit about his siblings? Uncle Billy.

CARTER: Well Uncle Billy was a piece of work. He drank too much, but he also read a book every single day. He read five newspapers every single morning and no matter what time any employee got to work, if they could come into the Carters Warehouse and pick up a newspaper and tell him the title of the article and he couldn't give you the details, he would give you \$5.00. And that went on for years and I don't think anybody ever stumped him. But he didn't drink much beer. He got up in the morning, he poured the beer down the toilet and filled it up with vodka. So he walked around with a Billy Beer can of vodka all the time.

Really funny stories, campaigning in Wisconsin one time and he knocked on this woman's door and there was a hole in the screen and a cat came out and clawed him, and he kicked like this and the cat went and landed up against a tree and lying there jerking dying. There was a bunch of press behind us. This woman came the door and he - - Billy said "I'm Billy Carter, I'm Jimmy Carter's brother, and I'm here campaigning for Mo Udall. Because I don't like my brother. And here's the cat over there, you know." I've got a film at home of the cat lying there kicking with the - - and Billy saying that to one of the reporters that he gave to me when I came through, but

Billy knew his stuff. He ran the warehouse, did it well. Extremely intelligent. Got along with everybody. He had a problem with alcohol, but his last eight years of life he never drank a drop. All of dad's siblings and his mother died of pancreatic cancer, the four of them, and his father in the early '50s died of what they call yellow jaundice which probably was pancreatic cancer. We assume it was environmental, but we're not sure. It's one of the highest incidences in the world. The only other one I know of is in Italy where four people have died in the family of pancreatic cancer. I've been tested a lot to make sure that it's environmental and not something that is heredity. They want to know if it's a heredity streak so they can figure out if they can help other people with it. So...

SHORT: Right.

CARTER:One of Billy's children and me and one of Ruth and Gloria's children all go up every five or six years to the National Cancer Institute to be monitored and see what's changed. Ruth was an evangelist. I used to go out to Tyler, Texas where she had her evangelical camp. I'd spend a week with her every year trying to get my own head straightened out with God. Other visitors there for two weeks at a time were Billy Graham and Oral Roberts, and all these big evangelists would come out and spend the week with her or two weeks with her. Cat Stevens was a big - - came out there all the time and he turned into a Muslim and changed his name, came back and she told him God loved him anyway. But she was wonderful. They were all extremely smart. Gloria was an accountant and did a lot of that, but she and her

husband ended up buying Harley motorcycles. In 1973 the price of land went way up and they sold all their land, bought two Buick dealerships in Alabama and Harley motorcycles and they rode all over the country on the motorcycles.

During the Daytona races, the motorcycle races, my uncle Walter, who's a couple of years older than dad, was the Justice of the Supreme Court of all the biker organizations. So once a year he held court and he would rectify disputes between the Hell's Angels and the Outlaws and all the other bikers. It would be a court. He had a gavel and he would sit there and they would come in and present their things and what he said went. So he solved all their problems once a year.

Kind of a great guy.

When Gloria died, the bikers from all over the country drove in and gave her an honor guard as they drove up, put her in the grave and her tombstone reads "Gloria Spann, she rides in Harley Heaven." Great woman. She didn't campaign as much as the rest of them. She did some in Georgia, but Gloria and Billy were on the road quite a lot.

SHORT: I had learned that at one time there were 11 Carter relatives in 11 different states.

CARTER: Yes.

SHORT: How did he determine who to send where?

CARTER: In May before the campaign, so May of '75, I moved to New Hampshire with my

wife and we stayed there quite a lot. My aunt, dad's grandmother's sister Lee and Sissy came and helped us in New Hampshire and they had an event in Maine and she went over there and fell in love with some folks over there, just the people, and ended up pretty much staying in Maine, and I don't know if anybody remembers but Iowa happened and then Maine happened before New Hampshire, and if it hadn't been for winning in Maine, we never would have won in New Hampshire. So that pretty much goes entirely to Sissy. I was over there a couple of times. Aunt Sissy was over there all the time.

Grandmother was always somewhere different. My mother and dad always traveled separately. My brother Jack wasn't a very good campaigner so he stayed in Georgia and eventually they let him down to Florida some, but Jack spent a lot of time in Georgia raising money and traveling around this area.

Jeff and his wife moved to New Hampshire early after I did. Amy was tiny. I mean she was like eight so she didn't campaign much, but she went out with grandmother some and got some publicity and did some things so I guess you could count her. We had Alicia, which is Mom's sister, was out and her mother was out some, so there was a bunch of us on the road splitting it up.

And people don't realize that Iowa wasn't important at that point. Dad's the one that made Iowa important. He went out and was in all 99 counties. I've been in all 99 counties three times. Because of campaigns I've been in all 50 states three times. I've been in 95 countries in the world after the campaign.

SHORT: You were always very close to your dad, weren't you?

CARTER: Yeah. I mean, you know, you have problems with your parents like everybody does, but yeah I think we're certainly politically very close and I've given an awful lot of my life to him and he's, you know, reciprocates. And I'm a priority with him I think. It's difficult sometimes when you're far away.

SHORT: Your Dad once said that you are a better politician than he is and you love it more.

CARTER: That's true. That's true. I'm a better politician than him. The best politician in the family is my mother who not only was better at campaigning, but better with every day-to-day politics. I mean she would sit there with Dad at the dinner table and go through a list of things that meant something and he would listen. And, you know, she worked closely with Hamilton and that crowd in the campaign, often times trying to get dad to do something he didn't want to do or whatever, but they would go through Mom often because she's that good. She still is. If you've ever gone out and watched her campaign or watch her just do presentations, she still gets along with everybody in the world and very personable and people feel like they've known her before. You know, when they meet her for the first time people kind of feel like they've already known her, which is an interesting thing.

SHORT: Let's go back to 1962.

CARTER: '62.

SHORT: When it all began for Jimmy Carter.

CARTER: '62. My, I was 12 years old. My father would make speeches around the 14th Congressional District. So if he had a speech in Richland, he would drive me with him and put me out in Richland with the brochures and I would go in door to door and say "Hi, I'm Chip Carter, my father's running for the State Senate" and I'd give them a brochure. And I'd start, go all the way around, and dad, when he got through with his speech would stay on the other side and come back until he met me. So we had that and that happened in 1966 in the Gubernatorial campaign quite a lot too. We did the same thing. Dad would make speeches and I did the brochures.

'62 was a tough year I think. He was on the school board. He ran for Senate. He got beat by like 80 votes and there was 160 votes that were folded 10 at a time voting in alphabetical order stuffed in the box in Quitman County. And Dad hired two lawyers to help him out. They were David Gambrell and Charles Kirbo who later became fixtures in our campaigns and in our lives. And Dad made Pennington, was it Brooks Pennington? No.

SHORT: Brooks Pennington.

CARTER: The editor of the Atlanta Constitution.

SHORT: Al Gulliver.

CARTER: Gulliver's there too and then the reporter was named Pennington also.

SHORT: Oh John Pennington.

CARTER: John Pennington.

SHORT: John.

CARTER: Dad met Gulliver and Pennington then and they kind of got on d's side and they helped with the press, which it never would have changed had they not been involved in it too. And Moore, I don't remember his first name, but he was in Quitman County in charge of the registrar and whatever. He ended up spending time in jail for that. And then later he was also sent back to jail for distributing moonshine, so it was one of those things. And that was the first year that we changed from the county unit system to the direct vote for the governor. So the south in Georgia lost an awful lot of power because I don't know if you remember but Sumter County, my county, had two votes in the county system and Fulton County had four votes. So even though we had just a fraction of the amount of people, we had a lot more power. So this

change was coming on and I think it caused a lot of turmoil in that particular campaign amongst people trying to keep the power base when it was going to be taken away from them basically.

SHORT: Right. Well your father's case handled by Kirbo and Gambrell went to court.

CARTER: Yeah.

SHORT: And the judge ordered a new election.

CARTER: Yes.

SHORT: And he won that election.

CARTER: Yes he did.

SHORT: He went to the Senate.

CARTER: I remember.

SHORT: Yeah.

CARTER: I was a page for him that year. Stayed in the Dinkler Plaza Hotel and we would walk to work, leave at 6:00 in the morning to walk to the Capitol and stop at the Krystal which at that time was kind of new in Atlanta and we'd have a big meal and get to the Capitol about quarter until 7:00.

SHORT: I think I mentioned to you the Bobby Rowan story about when he was 26 he was elected to the Senate and he strived to get up the earliest and be there first, but regardless of what time he got up Jimmy Carter was always sitting in the Senate Chamber reading bills.

CARTER: Right. Well Dad made it a habit to read every bill he voted on and that was highly unusual back then. My guess is it probably still is, but he knew what was in them so people like Bobby Rowan - - there was a group, a small group of people, of which Bobby Rowan was one, Ford Spinks was another one, Paul Brown from Athens, Bob Smalley, J.B. Langford, that was kind of a clique of people that dad hung with and they all got together and decided on bills and dad wasn't their leader probably but he would read the bills and tell them, you know, what he thought about it and that kind of thing. So a lot of those people, Ford Spinks, I think I left him out, those people and others were became fairly prominent in Georgia and as time went on and they grew older and a lot of them are very wonderful people still.

SHORT: 1966 everybody thought your dad would run for Congress.

CARTER: Yeah. He had his eyes on Bo Callaway. And they never really got along, but dad had his eyes on Bo Callaway and he decided to run for Congress and he was out campaigning and all of a sudden Callaway decided he was going to run for Governor and I think two days later dad announced he's going to run for Governor. He was taking on Bo Callaway. Bo Callaway went on to be the Secretary of the Army. Was able, through almost no money of his own, to get Crested Butte from the Army. I'm not going to say anything else much about it, but he was also Chairman of the Gerald Ford campaign against dad.

SHORT: Right.

CARTER: So that we ended up fighting Bo a long time. After dad got out of the White House Bo Callaway called him one day and said "We have a thing in Crested Butte for mentally retarded kids to come and ski and we wanted to know if you would come and honor us by being there." So dad ended up making that a priority and went there every year and still goes there I think almost every year and he and Bo became pretty good friends after that. Not that they would ever say so in public, but they got along and Dad went to Callaway Gardens to see him a few times, and Mrs. Callaway at Callaway Gardens has always been a close friend of us forever and ever and ever. So, you know, politics changes. It makes strange bedfellows, but regardless of politics people are people. If you put them in a room, they'll end up getting to like each other even if they don't profess that when they get outside, as you well know.

SHORT: Well in that election in '66 it was a donnybrook, you know, as you recall Ernest Vandiver withdrew. Senator Tallmadge said he was going to run there for a while Then he withdrew. And then that left I guess three - - four pretty stout candidates – Ellis Arnall, your dad, Lester Maddox and James Grey. So it was a fight to see who could get in the runoff really.

CARTER: I forgot about James Grey. You're right. It was a big one and dad and Ellis Arnall were basically fighting for the same votes in that time. The one I remember is Ellis Arnall, somebody standing up on a stadium with a podium with all these people up there reading a postcard from the friends of Richard Russell and Herman Tallmadge say to the effect that they really supported Jimmy Carter and, you know, blah, blah, blah, blah, and Ellis Arnall turned around and walked off the stage and got in the car and left. He wouldn't even speak after they read this postcard which was from friends of, not from the people themselves. I don't know if it had anything to do with that, but it was a wonderful, wonderful thing.

That was a close campaign. We thought we'd won. I went to school the next day and about 2:00 in the afternoon Billy came to school and pulled us out and told us we'd lost, but we had thought the night before that we won and gotten into the runoff with Lester Maddox and then beaten Lester. But we hadn't. But we finally got there.

SHORT: You made it.

CARTER: We made it.

SHORT: Getting back for a minute to school integration, when Plains High School was integrated, you were, what? 10th grade?

CARTER: I was in 11th grade.

SHORT: 11th grade. And two black children walked into the school with no incidents, so obviously your father's influence on the community had some effect on that.

CARTER: It did. I wouldn't say there were no incidents. I would say there was no violence.

SHORT: No violence.

CARTER: They didn't hit anybody. See I got a hit a lot, but I was really voraciously against everybody that was racist and I let them know. When they asked me, I told them the truth. And I never hit back so anybody who thought they could hit me they did. I just was a nonviolent person, but April Wright who was in my class and graduated with me was the daughter of one of dad's sharecrop partners, and that was another reason that I'd go. She's a wonderful lady. I still see her. Her and Brenda Oats. That was the two girls that came in. And they both graduated pretty high in their class and they fit in. It was a difficult time though, it really was.

SHORT: Your family was religious.

CARTER: Very.

SHORT: Your Dad taught Sunday School.

CARTER: Still does.

SHORT: Still does.

CARTER: Still does.

SHORT: Your Mom is religious and I'm sure your siblings.

CARTER: When Dad was running in '76 I went to this guy's house door to door and he pulled me in and showed me a picture of him and dad in uniform and they served on a ship, before Dad got into submarines a ship, it was right after dad got out of the Naval Academy, and dad taught the Sunday School class there and brought this gentleman to Christ, and here I am in '76, you know, 30 years later and here's this guy, you know, with this picture of him and dad and this Bible with dad's signature in it that dad had given him in the Navy, and I think this was in Pennsylvania. I mean it was just like clear out of the blue sky when you knock on somebody's

door, but that made a big impression on me.

And he's taught Sunday School his whole life. He lives his life I think as he believes Jesus thinks we should. Much more of the beatitudes than the 10 Commandments. I wish somebody would get arrested trying to put the beatitudes on a courthouse wall because I don't believe people here, Christians, view much in the beatitudes anymore. It's so confusing that so they can get their little anti-abortion and anti-this or that, or this or that, and they leave out the good stuff that God says you're supposed to do to your neighbor.

So I lived in the Middle East about half my time now. I'm in Jordan, but Jerusalem is about 45 miles away. Palestine is very close. And I was out in this little village one day and there's this old well there and this woman bringing up water and she gave us glasses and we poured, we were drinking water, and then she begins to recite, from the Bible, Moses being at that same well when he met the girl that he indentured himself to the Father for for eight years to get her hand and ended up getting her sister's hand instead. Had to do three more years to get her hand and it was at that well, and you're standing there 2,000 years later or more and it's just an unbelievable feeling that you get when you're there.

And my being brought up in the Christian faith and knowing that stuff makes me living over there so much more special. I'm not a great Christian, but I'm a great believer in God, but I also can believe that Mohammed is a prophet. I believe Jesus is the Son of God and Mohammed is a prophet. So I'm kind of a mixture of the two, but.

SHORT: Well it was obvious, back to '66, it was obvious that although your Dad didn't win, he

had become a key figure in democratic politics in Georgia. But he went back to Plains. And what did he do when he went back to Plains?

CARTER: He went back to Carter's Warehouse. Got the thing up and going better. Built his business. And I guess he probably took a month off. We started campaigning for election again four years later.

SHORT: I was going to ask you about that.

CARTER: Because he was gone all the time. I mean I remember Amy being born and Mom going to the hospital and calling dad and telling him to come home. He got there from somewhere in north Georgia on time but had she been a bit earlier he wouldn't have been because he was out campaigning.

SHORT: Did the family participate in his politics during that period?

CARTER: Yeah. I was 16 years old. We had an office at a hotel over on 285. I don't remember the name of it now. I mean on 75. Every Sunday Dad would have us come there. We'd get there Saturday night. We'd leave on Sunday afternoon. I'd drive my car. I had a congressional district they'd assign me and I would stop in every single store I saw and give out a brochure and tell them to vote for my father and I got \$22.00 a week for expenses, plus a gas

credit card.

So I ate Carol's cheeseburgers for 25 cents a piece, slept in my car. Got up in the morning and put the coffee pot on the radiator of the car and cranked it up to heat it up and learned to drink my coffee black because the milk would sour, and that was at 16. So I was on the - - I did that for months and months and months during that campaign. And well it seemed like months and months. I don't know. Might have been three months. Probably the summer after school was out, but.

SHORT: What was the family reaction, getting back to '66, to the loss?

CARTER: I think it was devastating. When you say family you're not talking about Dad, you're talking about everybody that's around him. I think all of us were discouraged and perturbed and the Georgia voters had made a huge mistake, which they had. And Dad was kind of, you know, "This is a bump." "I'm going to be Governor" and off he went to be Governor. I mean it took him four more years, but Dad held us all together at that point talking about the good job we were doing, to come from nothing he had gotten way up there.

He'd come before us in politics and, you know, people recognized him when we walked down the streets in Atlanta. I saw that people say "hey, hey Jimmy" two or three times walking down the streets which to me was phenomenal because Atlanta was such a foreign place to me having been raised in Plains that it was this huge city. It was tough but, you know, life went on.

Carter's Warehouse was there and, you know, something to do. You come back home, you work

hard. It was...

SHORT: And then 1970.

CARTER: Yeah we started off early and did the same thing, you know. Had our campaign put together. Hamilton Jordan, as you know I'm sure with your help, put together the campaign plan, and dad was good at bringing us, the family, into the campaign plan, meaning that he'd sit down with a written campaign plan and he'd say here's how it's going to work, and here's what we're going to do. "You got to do this by so and so" and this, you know, I remember the '76 presidential campaign more we're going to win in Florida, we're going to do this, but in '70 he sat down with us with the campaign plan and said "This is how we're going to win, you know. You have to go do this, we have to do this," and his big plan and we all bought into it and the family went out and did it. I think Mom after '76 was a lot more comfortable doing it. She was really nervous I think in '76. I have a picture of Mom and Dad shaking homes in the shopping center - - shaking hands in a shopping center when they didn't recognize each other. They were just there shaking hands, you know, moving on.

SHORT: Shook each other's hands.

CARTER: Shaking each other's hands and not even knowing who it was, you know, moving on. But we got this great picture of that and the shock on their face when they realized who they

were shaking hands with. But it was an interesting time, a time for all of us to learn obviously about Georgia. I mean if you're doing like we are living in your car and you're talking to people and you're in and out of people's homes and businesses and that kind of stuff, the education that you get is phenomenal about Georgians. The same thing is true about America when you're doing a presidential campaign, but I think the first or most important lesson is that people are basically the same, and if you treat others with respect, you'll get treated with respect, and that's something that I think dad has done all of his life. Rich or poor, you know, whacko, radical, terrorist or anybody else, dad treats them with respect and in return kind of accomplished an awful lot of things. I'm not saying we're now in today's time and not '66 or '70, but I think today that our problem with America is that our government doesn't treat others with respect, other governments or other peoples, and that's all that they had to do was not to feel superior and not to make other people feel like we thought we were superior.

I live in, like I said, the Middle East now and people there don't like us and the reason they don't like us is because they think that we don't respect them or their religion or how they were raised or their culture or anything else. I don't believe that our government - - that we can help the cultural invasion that America's had throughout the world. I mean that's something that people have picked up and it's not being propagated by our government, but the superiority complex that we suffer from is something that we could change fairly easily and I think that Obama will change next time. I think even if McCain's elected that he'll change that to. I mean it's just, you know, a sad mistake on our part.

But in '70 the campaign was fast and furious. Fundraising was something I was not involved

with but it took a lot more of dad's time in '70 than it had in '66, so I was out a lot more, I mean we were older obviously also, but he and mom spent a lot of time. I remember dad sitting in the house making those phone calls day after day after day and how he hated every one of them, you know, hated every one of the phone calls, not the people but just having to dial and ask for money is something that he never got over. I mean he still hates to ask for money even though he lives in a nonprofit world where he depends on other people's money, so he's been doing it his whole life.

So I think that the Governor's mansion was phenomenal for me as a child to move into. I had a little suite in the basement, two rooms. Supposed to be servants' quarters, but ours servants were for all prisoners that came in from the prison everyday, so nobody lived there. So that was a great time for me. Sat out front in the Governor's office and worked there for eight hours and then went to Georgia State University. And dad started way back then this non-nepotism thing. So even though I worked eight hours a day, I never got a paycheck. And still have never gotten a paycheck for many of the things he's done. Never got one from the federal government. Never got one from the Carter Center. It's not something that he particularly believes in, so.

SHORT: Well an unusual thing happened there in '70 when he was elected Governor. Lester Maddox was elected Lt. Governor. And they had quite a number of disagreements during that four years. I'm sure that that was very uncomfortable for your dad.

CARTER: It was. It was. I road a skateboard. Lester rode a bicycle backwards, and I could

ride around the Governor's mansion on my skateboard backwards because I was trying to imitate Lester.

A few things happened. When we first moved in the very first day, Lester had moved out at Christmas and he came in and for Christmas Lester had given his son a brand new GTO, and when we moved in the GTO was wrapped around a large oak tree at the bottom of the driveway where he missed the curb. I mean it was completely destroyed. He must have been going 50 miles an hour on that little driveway. You know, I kind of felt bad for his son actually who I had never met. And I think Lester ended up becoming somewhat of a friend.

But Lester Maddox was always really kind to me, you know, always treated me nicely. Called me Mr. Carter. You know how he kind of bowed when he shook your hand and he said "We got different politics but that don't mean we can't like each other." And I always kind of liked him. I mean I certainly disagree with his politics, but obviously those racist elections they were in with Barry Goldwater and all that kind of stuff going on there, that was a very difficult time in Georgia history.

But I think that after racism I think that nobody now that's seen it without racism would want to go back because our economy has gone up so much, and, you know, I mean there's so many thousands of things that's gone right for us because we've kind of shed that. But it was a difficult time to live in I think especially in a little town where your father's a liberal or a nonracist, because I keep saying he's a liberal, but in a lot of the world what I've realized when dad ran for President, a liberal and a conservative have to do with spending money. That wasn't like that when I grew up in Georgia. It was all racist or not. Period.

So I think dad would have actually been a conservative in Georgia if it hadn't been for racism because as you know he was pretty tight with the dollar or the dime. And I think his budgets reflected that and I think that the stuff that he did as Governor with the zero base budgeting and the reorganization of government and those kind of things served him well and gave him the opportunity to run for President.

SHORT: Speaking of his fiscal conservatism, Bert Lance liked to tell the story about being called in from the Department of Transportation to have lunch with your dad in the Governor's office and having to pay for his own food.

CARTER: Yeah. \$3.80 for a sandwich. I remember. I used to do the same thing. Mary Beasley, I don't know if you talked to her in one of these things, but she would be a good one to get, but Mary Beasley used to collect the money for you to go in for lunch. So Dad wouldn't see us giving it, but yeah \$3.80 for a sandwich and a Coke or whatever it was. And when I went and had lunch with him I had to pay when I went in too, so.

SHORT: His big program was reorganization.

CARTER: Right.

SHORT: And had some problems with it.

CARTER: Sure.

SHORT: But finally passed it and do you think it's worked to his expectation?

CARTER: I don't know what his expectations were. Things were so bad when he got there that it obviously at least gave a platform to figure out where to go from here. I mean, you know, just cut it back by 5% or do whatever. The reorganization was very difficult because it involved a lot of people's fiefdoms. You know, people had spent years building up power in one little organization or something like that politically, which is how things work, and then when dad reorganized a lot of those people lost that. So it was a huge fight going on.

I think that it worked to his benefit largely - - we used it a lot in the presidential campaign and the results of it, so just as an advertisement for what he might do as President it was a really good thing. I know that's not the reason he did it because I know he didn't think about running for President at that time, but it really was helpful and he talked about it an awful lot the zero base budgeting and the reorganization of government.

SHORT: He had been in the Senate and he certainly knew how the government operated and what its shortcomings were.

CARTER: Right.

SHORT: So his plan I think was fairly well accepted by the public.

CARTER: It was by the public. Like I said but you had the fight with the people that owned that little fiefdom's that they had built over a while, so it was a lot of individual skirmishes. But the public accepted it well. And dad made, you know, throughout that whole period he was making close friends with very capable people that ended up serving in the White House and in the campaigns and things that were really competent people who never even considered doing anything on a national level, never considered going out, because the people in Georgia just didn't do that. So you can name more than I could.

SHORT: Well I'm going to ask you about those folks in a minute or two.

CARTER: A lot of those people ended up in the White House in Washington.

SHORT: Right. And I want to get into that, but now year after he became President - - I mean after he became Governor, he realized that he wanted to be President.

CARTER: I don't think that's right. I think it was after that.

SHORT: After that?

CARTER: I think what made him even think about it was all the Presidential candidates coming through for the '72 election staying in the Governor's mansion and us talking to them and, you know, watching a lot of them drink a lot, you know, a lot of them came in and had to drink five or six scotches with milk. And I think that that turned Dad off, the drinking, so he never drank during the campaign or while he was in the White House or anything like that. Mostly because of that but I think he realized in '72 that those people coming through put their pants on the same way he did. Wasn't anything particularly special about them. It was something that he might could do and I think he started thinking about it after the McGovern got the nomination and lost the election.

And, you know, Hamilton make - - the crowd got together down in Bainbridge at Charlie Kirbo's cabin and put together a semi-campaign plan that Hamilton edited and put out that we followed, and it was very extensive and as you know then Hamilton went to Washington and worked for Bob Strauss and a lot of those people and ended up putting together a campaign. Nobody cared because nobody thought we had a chance so we could do anything we wanted to, you know. Power sure, let them have it, you know, I don't want to do that job, give it to him, you know, nobody ever expected us to have any kind of a chance at it.

And Hamilton in that memo rewrote the rules. Like I said we made Iowa important. We turned out. 80% of the people that voted to us had never been to a caucus before. Four years later when Kennedy ran against us it was one of the best all-time political stories ever, but a guy named Eddie Jesser who was our campaign coordinator, the press secretary there, was from

Massachusetts and had formerly worked with Ted Kennedy, and knew a lot of the press and he was out there so we did a survey and found this one county that was the worst we had and we decided not to organize in that county. So when the press would come in we'd tell them we're doing really good and we would name that county, it was 30 miles outside of Des Moines so easily accessible and people would go out there and find out that we were just doing horrible out there and we'd tell them it's one of our best.

So even the night before the election they had written off dad as going to be defeated in Iowa I mean they - - because we had set Kennedy up so badly, and then election night we won 98 of the 99 counties. The only one we lost was the one that we had told them we were doing well and the press had only been out to. And Kennedy had gone from an expected massive win to an utter defeat which pretty much ruined him from then on. He never recovered. That was '76.

And by the way, the guy that ran that county was named Joe Trippi and Joe Trippi got his kick because he was the only one that won a county in Iowa. So you talk to him and he talks about how he was the only one that won a Kennedy county there and that's how he ended up going up the ladder, you know, and he ran Dean's campaign and Edwards' campaign recently. But that's how he got his start the county that we didn't bother with.

But Iowa was something else. Iowa is so much like, the people in Iowa are so much like Plains, Georgia. They're farmers. They're practical, you know, common sense people, and it was easy to associate with. Billy did a lot of campaigning there. Every green mill or whatever Billy was there helping at the scales or doing something, you know, and all these call-in radio things with ones that talked about the price of milk or the price of beef and, you know, how much you're

getting for cattle, you know, for pigs that day or whatever, and Billy would be on those things talking about those prices and comparing them to the prices in Plains and just kind of making everybody feel like that we were all the same big family almost.

SHORT: Tell us this, Chip. Iowa was followed by you said Maine and then New Hampshire. How do you distribute your resources between states like that which have quick elections? Do you concentrate on Iowa first and then worry about the other two?

CARTER: No.

SHORT: Or are you...

CARTER: You're worried about New Hampshire foremost because New Hampshire was the traditional starting point. For an unknown candidate you had to do well in New Hampshire. We won it, which was an amazing thing. But that was two-prong. Iowa and New Hampshire, then Sissy in Maine. But Sissy's budget I think was something like \$11,000.00. Sissy was just on the road. She didn't have any money. I don't know that we ran commercials there except some that fed over from New Hampshire.

What we ignored was what Scoop Jackson then called the "big one" which was Massachusetts, which was following New Hampshire. We skipped Massachusetts basically and went to Florida. But Iowa we had a huge campaign going, you know, and we had these people from Georgia, the

Peanut Brigade

SHORT: Peanut Brigade.

CARTER: They went to Iowa and New Hampshire and, you know, everywhere you went you met people who have met people in the Peanut Brigade. And it was a real phenomenal effort and totally different from anything anybody had done before. A lot of people copied it afterwards, and people somewhat copied it then.

When I lived in New Hampshire I would get up almost everyday and have a debate and I would debate one of Udall's two children and one of Sarge Shriver's children, and Fred Harris' daughter and, you know, we were just great friends. We would get out there and we'd debate and bash each other all up in every school you could meet and then at 11:00 at night on Saturday we met at the Meriwether Tavern, all of us, and sat there and took off our pins and we had four or five beers until about 2:00 every Saturday night, you know, just kind of in a friendly, like each other atmosphere, and I still am good friends with Maria Shriver and, you know, who was out on the campaign trail at that point.

So it was good, you know, I spoke in St. Louis at the Jefferson Jackson dinner and I use this story a lot, but there was seven children surrogates for the seven candidates and Hubert Humphrey was the keynote address, and we all had five minutes so we got up and made our speech and everybody could have made each other's speech because we had been around each other that much, and then Hubert Humphrey got up and talked for an hour and 30 minutes and he

had the audience in the palm of his hands. I mean he would look in the back and see somebody from China and he would talk about the corset coming from China, you know, I mean it was an amazing thing.

We had a little reception afterwards and I went back there and told him that I got really nervous when I spoke. I failed it three times in college and then I shook like this every time I got up there. He give me some advice and he said "yeah Chip I heard you speak earlier and my advice would be to always keep it short." I used that story forever. But it was an interesting campaign and like I said it was just us with a bunch of real people and kids and, you know, volunteers that poured in up there and little organization we did. And Chris Brown ran it. He was from New Mexico. Tim Craft ran Iowa. He was from New Mexico. He was executive director of the party. Craft was in the New Mexico party, and Brown had run the Governor's campaign, King's campaign out there, so dad went out and had dinner with them one night and hired them both and that's how they ended up where they were.

SHORT: Florida turned the corner.

CARTER: Iowa turned the corner and Florida kept us going. Before that election they sent me to California. And George Burns and I sat in this country club, Riviera, something, I don't remember. George Burns with a girl on each thing with a big cigar. And he would call people over. "Write a check for \$1,000.00 to Jimmy Carter. He's the only one that can beat George Wallace in Florida," you know, and I ended up sitting there and collecting 300 and something

thousand dollars in a day sitting there with him and it was all to beat Wallace in Florida. So I think that was our big - - you're right, our big test that if we had lost to Wallace in Florida, then both Dad and him would have been wiped off the map.

SHORT: What did you do there to beat Wallace?

CARTER: We ran a very positive campaign. Never said anything bad about Wallace, but it was a lot of, you know, we're your neighbor from Georgia and we're down here and we had an organization that was nonstop. You know, all the regular polls had gone with Scoop Jackson or other people, so we had a bunch of the kids that wanted to make a name for themselves in politics and we promoted them in the campaign and sent them out and did it. Phil Wise, who is somebody else you might should talk to here, ran the campaign there, and it was just a people to people.

I mean you're talking about Peanut Brigade, from south Georgia they were down there every weekend and every - - during the week and my mother would ride by, we had a thing we'd ride through until we saw a radio tower and then you'd drive to the radio tower and you'd walk in and you'd say "Hi my father's running for President" or "Hi my husband's running for President, we'd like to talk to you." So, you know, you'd drive in and sit down and you'd talk to the radio thing and you'd do that over and over and over.

Today the difference is that we worked our butt off for 30 seconds on the evening news. And today you've got this door to door coverage of, you know, on cable so that you're on the news all

that you have really cut back what you say to the news instead of trying to say something outrageous enough to get on the news. So it's turned into a real different kind of campaign then. But Florida was, you know, we spent money there, everything we had I think we were totally broke when the Florida campaign was over with, but positive advertising. Not being bad to Wallace I think was the big thing. We were the one that wasn't jumping on him. The rest of them were because he was the one to beat there.

But he liked dad. He ended up endorsing dad, the first opponent to endorse him, after the campaign was over in 160 something delegates, which was a huge amount for us, and that gave us interest to get the other to settle it before the convention. And then I spent a good bit of time with George Wallace while dad was President. I would go down and stop and see him every time I went down and do some special things for him. He's Billy's wife - - Sybil's first cousin.

SHORT: Is he really?

CARTER: So there was a family connection that was somewhat exploited against, you know, in 1970, that was not exploited in '76. So but they came from the same town, Sybil and him, and she knew his whole family and - -

SHORT: So the campaign picked up after Florida.

CARTER: Yeah because Florida people that never heard of us and started giving us money, so

that was a big thing and then the other candidates kind of split off meaning that Udall had run against us in Michigan and Jerry Brown was running against us somewhere else and Hubert Humphrey was running in Pennsylvania so we never really met in the field after that. It was always trying to go in and go one on one with somebody, so it was "ABC, Anybody But Carter," and that was a huge group.

SHORT: That was a remarkable campaign.

CARTER: It was.

SHORT: Did you ever think when you were working in the peanut warehouse at age nine or 10 that you would one day be in the White House?

CARTER: Never. Absolutely not. You know it's just something that came about. It's like being thrown to the wolves. I mean you don't know what's going to happen the next day. On the campaign trail or being the President's kid, you don't know if you were going to be speaking like I did with Grandmother to 2 ½ million people or you were going to be seeing a blizzard up in Buffalo, New York or they were going to send you to, you know, it just didn't matter what it was. You just went and I did it without ever even questioning it, and you know, not having had any experience in it, but you were supposed to go and do it and you did. I mean the whole family did it.

It was an amazing push on everybody's intellect and everybody's psychic that it didn't matter what it was. You know, my favorite saying to myself is "you can do anything for 20 minutes except hold your breath." And you get in front of an audience and my knees shaking, I can do anything for 20 minutes except hold my breath. I keep telling myself that 50 times a day.

We were doing it, you know, and straight from Plains. It was an amazing campaign. And we made an amazing amount of friends, we stayed in people's homes everywhere we went, another way Dad saved money, we never paid for hotel bills. We always stayed in people's homes.

You know I just had an apartment in New Hampshire. The first one I had was condemned. We couldn't get the heat working. I had 30 people living with me that were all volunteers from all over, so we called the public health department because the guy wouldn't let us out of our lease and the public health department came in and turned the heat on full blast and came back four hours later and took the temperature reading and it was 32 in the bedroom. So we got that condemned.

And then we moved across the street, from Concord to Manchester across the street from Levi's Red Arrow, which was on the press several times in this campaign. They interviewed candidates there. This campaign one of the places to -- we were in the fifth story Coldwater walkup and the night of the election we moved all of our stuff out and put it in the car because we were heading out the next morning and the whole place caught on fire and burned to the ground the night of our election. All the volunteers that hadn't moved out lost everything. It was quite an experience.

SHORT: California. How do you run in California if you're a peanut farmer from Georgia?

CARTER: You don't and we didn't. We screwed California. We went there and raised money often times saying that we were going to put it back into California, but it never ended up getting back there even though when we were saying it at the time I really thought it might happen, that it was going to happen, but someone higher up in the level decided that money should be spent somewhere else.

But I spent three months there the summer before the '80 election raising money and doing the pence. I was there 10 or 12 times during the '76 campaign just trying to get media, you know, you hit three or four media spots you can get on the news for 30 seconds was basically what we were trying to do. It's much too big to organize and much too big to do advertisements. So you depended on the national press as much as possible and the newspapers.

But it was basically a cash cow. I mean we took the cash and then ran, which I think is still happening. Florida was the same, I mean Florida for years has been the same where people go there. They come to Georgia now and get money and then don't come back and campaign. It's the same thing that happened in California.

SHORT: So Jimmy Carter was elected President of the United States in 1976 and became President in January of 1977. You were at the inauguration?

CARTER: Absolutely. I helped run it. When dad was elected I think on the election was on

Tuesday, I think on Thursday we went down to St. Simons Island to Musgrove Plantation and after about five days I got up early one morning, you know adrenalin, you know, you can't stop it. You've been living on it. About 5:00 – 6:00 in the morning I was up, it was dark, and dad's cabin had the porch light on and dad was sitting in the chair outside so he wouldn't wake up mom going through briefing books and stuff like that, and I walked up and I said "I'm bored". He said "Good. I was hoping you'd go to Washington and go and do the inauguration." He said "and I've got Secret Service. Take my car."

So I had dad's private little Pontiac, you know, and I drove up to Washington. Could park that thing anywhere. You could park in the middle of the Pennsylvania Avenue and nobody would tow it away. It was a great car to have. So I went up there and worked out of the fort and dad and I had a deal. I could call him on Saturday and ask him no more the 10 minutes about the inauguration, any questions that they wanted, other than that if people everybody knew to go to me to get to dad on the inauguration and I was supposed to wait five or six hours and then go back and give them all dad's answers, and the only thing I was supposed to ask dad about on Saturday was stuff I couldn't decide for him.

So that's how we did the inauguration and put it together and then I worked up there. Like I said you could park anywhere. I mean it was the most amazing car in the world that you can drive around.

SHORT: Following the swearing in ceremonies, your dad and mom surprised the nation by walking up Pennsylvania Avenue. Was that planned?

CARTER: Yes, sir.

SHORT: It was?

CARTER: Yes, sir. When I went home we planned that Thanksgiving. That was that early we planned that we would do that and the Secret Service and then I sat down with mom and dad and it was a suggestion that we had for them from the people at the inauguration, and the Secret Service and everybody agreed that it would be great to do, but not if anybody knew it was going to happen. So we never told a soul after that. We just we knew it was going to happen.

We did do some special things like set up a few TV's, you know, TV access areas in places that ordinarily wouldn't have had them to make sure that it would be covered, but we did that. We knew about it. We went out and bought - - my wife was pregnant, my son was born in February. dad took office in January. So we had her the proper shoes for walking and all that kind of thing. And then we had Georgia Tech put together this beautiful inaugural stand for us to sit on the grounds of the White House and watch the parade and it was solar powered.

And about 20 minutes after being there we laid this huge orange wire from the back of it into the White House to plug the damn thing in. It was so cold that you couldn't move in that thing, and Omar Bradley was about to freeze to death in his wheel chair. I mean he was sitting there complaining. Who wouldn't complain? And so we ended up talking solar power and had these space heaters in front of us the whole time that nobody could see on TV.

But that first night in the White House was amazing. We did our inaugural ball and came back the very next night we watched "All the President's Men" in the White House before it came out, and you're sitting there and they are calling your new phone number. It was great to watch, you know. So it was a...

SHORT: Speaking of "All the President's Men," let's talk for a minute about the folks who supported your Dad who went with him to Washington. Of course, naturally Hamilton Jordan.

CARTER: Hamilton Jordan was the editor/architect of the campaign plan. Probably as good a political hack as there is or was in America. Gave everything that he had to my father. Health, everything else. Because of him we were able to overthrow the most powerful country on earth. I mean if you're talking about changing of regimes, he's the one that did that. He was a great Chief of Staff, ran a tight ship. Everybody liked him.

He and I never particularly got along. When dad ran for Governor in 1970 I was in college and I was having a little bit of trouble with drugs, and dad said, "Okay get out of college. I'm sending you to work with me on my campaign" and sent me to move in with Hamilton, and Hamilton had a campaign one-bedroom apartment so I slept on the sofa downstairs and Hamilton never liked it. He was dating Nancy Conesmark at the time and Nancy would come home from the University of Georgia and Hamilton would give me 3 bucks and I would go down to the XXX movie theater on the corner and buy a ticket and spend the night there sitting in the seat sleeping so that I could come back here.

I was the only person that could be my father's son on the road campaigning so Hamilton

stopped anything I tried to do otherwise during the administration or whatever. I worked for the Democratic National Committee and a couple of times they came up with plans for things they would like for me and Hamilton nixed them all the time because I was the only one that could do what I was doing. So there wasn't ever a lot of love lost, but there was an awful lot of respect.

SHORT: Bob Strauss.

CARTER: Funny, smart, shifty, powerful, unbelievable sometimes. And never really a Carter supporter until we won in '76. Of course he was with us from then on, but he was for Scoop early on, but he helped us put together a campaign for the general election and did an excellent job. He brought in all those old guys that had played the old time for the long time and that dad was basically replacing because these guys were not going to be in the administration because none of them knew dad. So he ended up putting all those people together for dad. And was very, very helpful for us.

SHORT: Griffin Bell.

CARTER: My mother's cousin. My father repeatedly points it out when he wants to embarrass her. Griffin has loyalty only to Griffin. He screwed dad many, many ways while he was in the White House and since. Has never been very close to us and was an absolute mistake. Dad's worst appointment.

SHORT: As Attorney General?

CARTER: As Attorney General in my opinion of course.

SHORT: Bert Lance.

CARTER: Wonderful guy. Smart, businessman type. I think he's the only person to write a check to pay off the federal debt while he was OMB manager in Washington. Wasn't as scrupulous in his business dealings, and still isn't, as my father would have been and which would have been required for the kind of publicity and stuff that they put him in, but as a Georgia banker he did exactly like all the other Georgia bankers did. So it wasn't, you know, it's a difference in those definitions and how you look at things when they get older.

Still a friend of the family. Saw him not long ago. My son got married three weeks ago and Bert was there, he and LaBelle. They've had a tough run with some of their children. I've tried to help some of their children on occasion. Was in business with him a couple of times and he made money and I didn't, so that's as far as you should go with that, but I think that he really helped dad not only get elected, but with those power brokers and people that the same kind of crowd that Bert Lance helped with - - I mean that Bob Strauss helped with during the campaign. They knew they could talk to him and that he would be honest with him and tell him what was going on, so I give him a lot of credit for what's happened.

SHORT: Jack Watson.

CARTER: He ran the reorganization team if I remember correctly during dad's administration and went on to work and ended up being Chief of Staff after Hamilton quit in the campaign. I know him fairly well. Not as well as some of the others. He was never a day to day at the campaign when I was there and I was on the road a lot so the people I dealt with were mostly over the telephone, but I think he's really competent and came home and got beat when he ran for Governor. Hamilton got beat when he ran for the Senate. So a lot of that didn't transfer when they came back here. But I'm assuming that he's a great lawyer and is wealthy and I think that's probably what he wanted to do.

SHORT: Charlie Kirbo was very close to your dad.

CARTER: Yeah. He refused any position in the White House or in the administration. But Dad got him to do special projects like with the Indians in Maine. The Indians claimed the whole state of Maine in a lawsuit and dad got Kirbo to handle it and he went up there and got a compromise on it. It worked out well with everybody.

I've always thought of Kirbo as dad's father figure. You know I didn't know dad's father. He died when I was small, but Kirbo was I think the one that dad would call for fatherly advice, not only political advice. And I think one of the best things that ever happened to dad was having

that contested election in 1962 when he met both David Gambrell and Charlie Kirbo because of their powerful and positive influence on him after that.

As you know, the Carter Center has the Kirbo Annex which is the only one named for somebody other than dad, and I think that dad felt that he was almost like a father to him. Someone he could trust with anything, talk about with anything. He wasn't very good running dad's trust when he was out of office because when dad got out of office the Warehouse had so much debt we had to sell it. And I think dad after paying off the debt dad's total life investment in that place netted him less than \$100,000.00. So when he got out of office he was broke, which has probably not happened to many other Presidents. But Kirbo was always somebody that we all respected.

Billy had a goat named Mack that would ride in the front of pickup truck on the front seat and Billy's wife, Sybil got really perturbed because Billy wouldn't make the goat get in the back so he'd always ride in the front. And he told Billy that he was going to have to give that goat away. So Billy put the goat in the car front seat, he drove it to Kirbo's house here in Atlanta and had a 50 foot cord and he tied that goat to the doorknob of Kirbo's house and left about 10:00 in the morning. And Kirbo and them weren't at home. They got home a day later and there was no vegetation, no plants, no anything within 50 feet of that doorknob. That goat had destroyed everything.

But Kirbo was the kind of guy that would laugh about that. And, you know, I don't think he was liberal and yet he was the first person I knew that had a cabin in south Georgia that was off the grid, generated his own electricity, you know, he could live like a hermit there, but he had the

power generation going and solar panels and everything right there on his property. I mean this was back in the early '80s right before anybody was really doing it, so I thought it was - - I always liked and respected him. He and Boo.

SHORT: How about David Gambrell?

CARTER: I think David and dad felt more of each other's equals than as father/son. As you know David appointed dad to the U.S. Senate. When dad was elected Governor before he took office, Richard Russell was on his deathbed and he called dad to Washington to see him. So dad went up there between November and January and Richard Russell said he was going to die, but he wasn't going to die until dad was Governor because he didn't want Lester Maddox to appoint himself to the U.S. Senate.

So Russell died two days after dad took office and dad appointed David Gambrell who lost the next election to Sam Nunn, who turned out to be a great guy, Sam Nunn, but at the time as you know politics was all personal so we were a little sad that David didn't win, but looking back Sam Nunn did an excellent job so I don't think the state suffered. I think the Gambrell's and we suffered, but the state didn't suffer. And our country certainly gained Sam Nunn being there.

SHORT: Some people thought that your father should have appointed Ernest Vandiver.

CARTER: Well that's the worst thing of appointments. You get to make one person happy and

20 sad or mad, and I think that's something you have to do when -- you got to just take responsibility and do what you think is right. Dad was not the typical Georgia politician when he got elected. He was not power to the power structure and David Gambrell was not part of the power structure and dad tried, you know, I think dad purposely went outside the political power structure in the state to appoint David and I think it was fine.

Vandiver might have won again. I think his daughter is now Chairman of the party or something. But I always liked Ernest Vandiver too, who helped with dad also was a friend. Maybe we should have appointed him. I thought he always should have appointed you, Bob.

SHORT: Well I might have to gracefully decline.

CARTER: But you wouldn't have then.

SHORT: Probably not. One more, Jody Powell.

CARTER: I think Jody's probably the smartest of all of them, including dad. Has a real knack with people. Never misses with a shotgun. I saw him shoot 100 out of 100 skeet at Camp David. Has gotten very wealthy since the Carter administration and hasn't changed at all, which is not true for most of them. Still easy to get along with and talk to. Still cultivates great friendships among the press and does a great job I'm sure for all his clients.

And I think without Jody that dad might not even been elected Governor much less the Senate.

As you know, Jody was dad's traveling companion during the Governor's years, when dad ran for Governor and kept his notes and helped him write his speeches and, you know, just kind of was an alternate ego of dad's and it takes him about two seconds to get right back into alternate ego with dad even today. So, you know, I have an awful lot of respect for him, as much as anybody I've ever met.

SHORT: There's often been criticism that President Carter had too many Georgians on his staff. Do you think that's a fair assessment?

CARTER: Maybe, but I think the people that made those criticisms are the people in Washington that would have had those jobs had somebody else gotten elected. You know, like I said, dad was not part of the power structure, so he brought the people he trusted and he believed that could do the job with him come in instead of those people who had hung around Washington kissing fannies long enough so they could get an appointment to something.

So that was a lot of the criticism, and I remember the, you know, the jokes that dad with a piece of grass coming out of his mouth holding a fork up and, you know, us being country bumpkins, but we were country bumpkins but we won and they didn't, just happened to be it was the country that we were involved in and trying to help and not the power brokers of Washington. So we ran against that a lot.

Kennedy really tried to coalesce all the power brokers that were there before dad in Washington so we had a lot of that group against us in 1980 when we ran against him, and it was very

difficult to get them back. I do know, because I talked to dad recently after Kennedy got sick and told him that I thought the two of them should get together and work out some of their differences and that maybe neither one of them could get to Heaven until they did, and he informed me that they already had.

So I was very pleased with that, but Senator Kennedy was a jerk when he ran. He felt entitled. Similar the way Hillary felt this time that it was theirs; that it didn't matter what anybody else did and could not believe that he was being beat, and he couldn't believe when he got beat that he wasn't going to win at the Convention and he made serious mistakes during the general election in the '80 campaign of which Kennedy has regretted.

SHORT: Well speaking of being a Washington outsider, how difficult was it for your dad to pick a cabinet and how did he go about that?

CARTER: Well he had transition teams and others. He went to Musgrove Plantation and right after the election set up a group and crowds of people would come in and make recommendations for all the things. Jack Watson had already run an organization for a while that was kind of behind the scenes trying to vet people on who they thought should be doing what, so somewhat set up on how to get it done by the time he got elected.

But a lot of the, you know, the cabinet came from out supporters but dad was never near as political as he should have been. Had dad been more political he would have gotten reelected, but he just didn't, he wanted to do what was right regardless of politics in it. Panama Canal

Treaty was right, but what six or eight U.S. Senators got beat because of it, including Herman Tallmadge. So, you know, there are some right things you can do in your second term, but he wouldn't put anything off until the second term except he put off the Palestinian issue until the second term after the Camp David issue, so it still never got done. It would have had dad gotten reelected.

But it was hard running that '80 campaign with dad not being a politician. Staying in the White House letting Khomeini keep him cooped up. Mom taking Mondale's place and me taking Mom's place on the campaign trail and dad always in the Rose Garden. It was difficult. So...

SHORT: Speaking of that...

CARTER: I had forgotten who we were talking about when I went off on that tangent.

SHORT: We were discussing - -

CARTER: Cabinet.

SHORT: Choosing a cabinet.

CARTER: Choosing a cabinet.

SHORT: Which also brings up the question of Vice President. How did he end up selecting Mondale? Is there any particular reason for it?

CARTER: I think it was tiny reasons. We had a six people come to Plains to be interviewed by dad. They would all come in and fly in a little airstrip, be picked up in Atlanta. John Glenn flew the airplane that landed in Plains and bounced about 100 yards when he tried to land in a tent which the press thought was really exceedingly funny.

But Mondale came in and had memorized everybody's name. He knew my name. He knew all of Billy's children's name's and obviously had a picture because he would see them and go up and say "Hi Kim", you know, he knew Hugh Carter when they did the store he walked in and talked to Hugh and somebody had been down there taking people's pictures and Mondale had memorized all that stuff when he got there and that made a good impression on a lot of folks in Plains, so Plains was for Mondale because of that.

And I think beyond that dad tried to see who he thought would be the best President because obviously, you know, Minnesota was a Hubert Humphrey place and you were going to win Minnesota as a democrat, at that time anyway. It wasn't that he picked him to balance the ticket or anything like that. But I thought that dad thinks - - I mean that dad knew that he knew the Senate, that he was well respected there and dad could trust him and that he would be a good president somehow.

And he was my favorite like I said and obviously everybody in Plains' favorite. He knew the Post Master by name when he walked in. It was an amazing - - something nobody else had ever

thought of but I'm sure he had to have somebody, photographer that went down there in advance to take people's pictures and write down the names so he could study them.

SHORT: Getting back to the cabinet, the key cabinet positions of course at that particular time were filled by Washington insiders. And I don't remember, I'm sure you will, how many of those so-called insiders your dad replaced?

CARTER: Cy Vance I guess was replaced because of the Iranian hostage situation. Griffin Bell was replaced for incompetence but he wasn't a Washington insider at the time, and later became George Bush Sr.'s attorney, and he's from Americus, which is nine miles from Plains for people that don't know. I used to hitchhike over. That was the big city we went to when I was growing up.

I don't remember the rest as being anything more than natural attrition. I mean we made a Malaise speech and that kind of thing, but...

SHORT: Yeah.

CARTER: Bert I don't think that OMB was cabinet. I don't believe that was cabinet at the time, although it still is so that wouldn't have counted.

SHORT: Well it's just interesting to talk about what a President does when he comes into office

having all that tremendous responsibility of finding the right people for the right jobs. You mentioned Camp David. How often did you get up to Camp David?

CARTER: Very often. I went quite often when he wasn't there. It was a nice place to take a date. Cheap, you know, boy you talk about cheap dates. You go to the White House with your - - you buy a bottle of wine, sit in the Red Room and have a glass and go downstairs and see the movie. I mean, it costs you like a bottle of wine and any girl would say yes. I mean, it was an amazing thing to have women chase me, instead of me chasing women. It ruined my marriage. But Camp David is a wonderful place. It sits above an extremely secure communications system that "red phone" comes out of there. That's one of three locations. It's got a underground - - you get in the closet in my cabin and you slide the coat hanger like that and the wall opens and you take the circular stairs down into the bomb shelter and 180 people could live there for a year. That's over and above the military that live there. And it has all kinds of outdoor activities 3 T1 green chip and put thing that Eisenhower had put in and has skeet shooting and golf carts and bowling alley and movie theaters. It's a really neat place and it was totally private. When you live in the White House you lose your privacy completely. To be private became a real something that a lot of people strove to just find some place where they can go where nobody was looking over their shoulder.

SHORT: Yeah.

CARTER: You know I could go out to - - I would date and go out to a bar or something in Washington and have a perfectly normal evening. The bar itself would call the gossip columnists to say that I was in there doing something just to get the bar's name in the paper, that's what they were there for, so it didn't matter where you went every single day, you know, people knew where I was the day before because the proprietors or the people that worked in the place were called to try to get the publicity.

So that was kind of difficult, but I dated some interesting - - I dated Linda Ronstadt for a year or more. Still see her occasionally, you know, we're close friends and I had girlfriends all over the country. I had a blast. I was a single kid at the time.

SHORT: Were you accompanied by the Secret Service?

CARTER: Yes, sir.

SHORT: All the time.

CARTER: Yes, sir. Knock on the door to a date and go "Hi I'm Chip and this is George and John and Bill", you know, yes sir I had it all the time. One week a year with the President's permission, meaning he had to sign a formal thing, I would sign off one week a year so I would go to Boston and they would take me to a dock. I had a friend that had a sailboat and we would go out sailing for a week and they would take me to the dock and then a week later they would

come there and meet me. I wasn't allowed to leave the dock without the Secret Service, but once a year they let me get on the sailboat and go off and do regattas and goof around up in New England, so I did that once a year.

Dad was defeated in November and the next Sunday I signed off Secret Service and bought a little Ford Escort and put 10,000 miles on it before we went out of office just visiting all the people and doing all the fun things I couldn't do because I had policemen with me. Every time I went so I had a good three months.

SHORT: So after your father's defeat the Secret Service just left, huh?

CARTER: I had to sign off on them. He had to sign off. Mine went from me to Ronald Reagan, Jr. And he was at the time in ballet class in New York and so for Christmas that year I sent all my agents size 12 tutus.

So I had a great group of guys. You're supposed to stay no more than a year, but I was on the road for 22 months. My agents, nobody left me for 22 months. They stayed on the whole time. And each agent made as much as a director which is the maximum you could make because I was on the road constantly. I averaged 13 speeches a day, 24 days a month for 20 consecutive months in that campaign. And the other times I was on the phone with Jody or back home and doing the briefings because I was answering those questions out there that Jody, you know, everyday I'd get the briefing and then I'd know what to push. So that was my life during that time.

You know it was all adrenalin, it was all you didn't know where you were, the agents became you're best friends because they were they were the only constant, you know, and I was never late but once and that was because the airplane had to make a unexpected landing because of the air compression went out and we sat there with this bubble, you couldn't see above it. We had this bubble above us, this cloud with the air compression, and it had to land so that was the only time I was late.

And it was, you know, like I said a real interesting time. I was in all 50 states three times and it wasn't that you saw the sites, it was that you got to meet the people, you know, people that go on vacation and don't end up in somebody's home talking local politics or whatever, and that's what I did every night with somebody different. So you gained your respect for the differences that people had by region, but also the similarities were just so overwhelming that it turned into a really good thing.

SHORT: The hostage situation hurt your dad, didn't it?

CARTER: Um-hum. Sure did. Khomeini and Kennedy, and the failed attempt was tough. I got the call and I was in the upper peninsula of Michigan and got a call from my father at 4:00 in the morning and told me to come home. And when I got in the car they put me through some kind of secure system where they could tell me that the hostage crisis thing had failed and that they were bringing us all back in for a few days.

And one of the things I still have is when I went to the Oval Office to see dad when I got in is he

wrote me out talking points on Afghanistan handwritten just little blurb like he did and I have still have the handwritten Afghan stuff the same day from his talking points from what happened that day. And I have another one the same thing when Russia invaded Afghanistan he did the same thing wrote out the talking points.

So those are fun days. I mean it was so much work. You never got to stop, you know, you go all day long literally from factory shift in the morning at 4:00 to the events that started at 10:00 or 9:30 or you'd get off about 11:00, adrenalin pumping, so you'd have four or five drinks. I understood exactly why those politicians kept coming here to see dad did that because it was the only way you could get to sleep. And then without the alarm clock you would wake up and I had it down where it took me 20 minutes to get up, shave, shower, dress and walk out the door packed ready to move on to the next place. So and that went on over and over every day after day after day.

And I didn't make a mistake. I mean I never got the press on me for saying something wrong. I did say some bad things, but mostly they were told to me by Jody to say. Like I blasted Billy two or three times when Jody would call me and say it was necessary that I do it. I didn't want to do it and Billy hated me a long time after that.

But and then one day Dad had this - - I was on the set of Happy Days with all the people, you know, that was a big TV program back then, and I was sitting there. Mrs. C was the only republican in the whole crowd the rest of them were democrats. And this reporter came up to me for ABC and said "Your father just said that he lusts in his heart." I said "Well I don't know anything about that, but I know he's got the biggest heart of any man in the world." Of course

that made the national news that night.

So those were, you know, some of that was planned. Sometimes it wasn't, but mostly I got local media. I was never where dad was, never where mom was because I was trying to get the local media the political reporters like in Atlanta if I was here to talk to me and put an article about me in there. If dad or mom was around or grandmother or even Billy I didn't get any press, so they never put us in the same place because of that.

SHORT: So '80 was a very, very disappointing year.

CARTER: Yeah.

SHORT: Your dad had struggled through a lot of political issues that were not of his making.

CARTER: Right.

SHORT: And the Congress was not particularly good to him.

CARTER: Right. That's true. It was a tough time. And dad was hurt by the rejection. I don't see how you couldn't be. Over half the people in America say no that's a bad deal, but I had a great job offer from Saul Winnowits who was on the Board of Directors of Ford Motor Company, and they wanted me to come over and spend a year in the Middle East and at the end

of the year become the Managing Director of the Middle East for Ford. And I had another offer from Ted Turner and his offer was to come in and spend two weeks in each of his 10 divisions, pick one, stay within there six months, come back and negotiate a salary with him. And those were the two I was really interested in, and I went to talk to dad about it in the oval office and dad said, "No I need you to come to Plains."

So I ended up giving up those job opportunities and moving to Plains for two years, which I regretted in one way because I could have made a lot of money and done a lot of stuff, instead I made no money and the only way I could figure out to get out of Plains was I called up Fritz Mondale and I said, "I'll do anything in the world you want me to, but you got to call my father and tell him that you need me to work on your campaign." So Mondale called dad. So dad allowed me to move to Atlanta and work for Mondale, so I finally got out of Plains. Dad spent half of his lifetime trying to get out until he finally did and now he wants to stay there. I spent all my life trying to get out. So I finally got out again.

But, you know, dad did a lot of, you know, set up his woodworking shop and he wrote a book and did a lot of stuff there that I helped with during that time and - -

SHORT: He's a doer isn't he?

CARTER: He's a doer. He doesn't stop.

SHORT: Yeah.

CARTER: Even today. I mean, you know, I don't know what he did today, but I know at 5:00 he got up and I know by 5:15 he was sitting at his typewriter and he was writing on his book until 7:00. At 7:00 he gets up and makes a pot of coffee. Then he gets a cup of coffee and takes it in there and wakes mom up. Gives her a little backrub and gives her the coffee every morning. Sometimes rubs her feet. Gives her coffee and gets up, and while she's getting up and doing that stuff, he puts on his swim trunks and goes out and swims his mile. And he gets out and mom 's been up by now and she goes and swims hers because it's a small pool. Two people can't do it at the same time. But that's kind of the routine. I know by 7:00 he's written two hours on some book or some article or something. That's not Carter Center business. That's anything else. That's just him up there doing his writing stuff everyday.

And then he goes all day long and he wears people out still. He's 83 years old and he wears out everybody when they're trying to be around him.

SHORT: You've traveled the world with him, haven't you?

CARTER: Some. Yeah.

SHORT: Tell us about that.

CARTER: He's a lot more respected internationally than he is at home. Most countries,

European, Asian, when they have the gossip column they write about politicians and businesspeople, not about actors and actresses and those kinds of things, so in Germany for instance people know who my father is much better than I do because he's in the gossip column. Every time he goes to Africa there's a little thing in the paper. Everybody knows about him. But I've seen being treated with respect in the worst of circumstances. He negotiated a peace treaty for humanitarian reasons, excuse me, in Sudan. And he had been with the SPLA and John Garang in the south and they had agreed that they would do a two-month ceasefire so we could get in and fight Guinea worm and give vitamin A and Measles vaccinations. Three million people died in that war, but still the biggest killer of children under six was Measles, not starvation or anything like that. Starvation was a tool used on both sides of the war, but they were dying because they hadn't got that one Measles shot.

So he talked John Garang into the ceasefire and then he went up to the north to the government of Sudan to meet with President Bashir and Bashir told him no he wasn't going to do it, and dad said well I was planning on sending my son here to manage it, it means that much to me, and in the Arab world that means more than it does here, and Bashir said really? If you're going to send your son then I'll do it.

So I had been in Morocco, met with the King of Morocco, just got a deal where he signed this agreement to buy gravel from a gravel pit in Morocco to build his roads with, and we used that signed agreement to finance 10,000 low income housing units there close to the gravel pit, and I had just done the deal and excited about it, and I had gotten home on Saturday night and 2:00 in the morning on Monday morning - - 2:00 at night Sunday night the phone rings and I picked it

up and I hear dad say "You wouldn't believe how beautiful it is in Khartoum this time of year." Well I don't know if you've ever been to Khartoum, but Khartoum is the middle of the desert. Everything is the same color about the color of that mat. I mean everything. Doesn't matter. The roads, the houses, the streets, everything is all the dust color of that thing. It's not a beautiful city at all.

I ended up going over there for two months. End up getting it stretched to four months the ceasefire, the only ceasefire for humanitarian reasons ever done. And we had a deal worked out with dad where I would call him on the phone from my hotel room. Ted Turner had lent dad Arnez's telephone that he had used to call in all the things from Baghdad during that war.

And so I had this big satellite telephone thing that was, you know, as big as a trunk. I mean it was huge that I had come there and we had it set up on the roof of the hotel I was in, with the government's permission, but quickly I quit using it because I could call and dad on the landline at \$6.00 a minute and I could explain something to him and if I used a certain word in the first paragraph, my first sentence, then he knew that he was supposed to cuss out the President and tell me to go tell the President to do this or that or duh, duh, duh, duh, duh.

So we would do this and he would say "You go tell that son of a bitch that I am gonna...you go tell him right now." Well this would be the night before. Well by the time I got up the next morning, I got a driver, I showed up the first time and they had 60 Sudanese military to protect me, this was my first trip there, right, and a driver, a car with a Mercedes limo with number two on the tag, President 2 it had on there, so I looked up and said "What are all y'all doing here? I thought I was going to somebody protect me from you guys, not you guys protecting me. I don't

want any cops. All I want is that car."

So I went over there and got in the car and drove off. So that car was mine for the whole time I was there. Because I'd get in the car and say "I got to find the President, got to give this to the President." He already knew it, you know. We'd drive around blah, blah. He'd end up taking me to wherever the President was because he the night before the President would already know I was coming.

So one day I'm driving up there taking me to his home in the suburbs which is on a military base, and I've been told to stand there and wait at the door, and as I did these people started coming out. President Bashir comes out, who I've met with 30 times and knows me pretty well by now, he'll speak English with me but not with dad. He doesn't interpret what I say, but everything dad says gets interpreted to him.

These Iranians are coming out and he was introducing me to them, and I was shaking their hands and the last one he says you got to shake this guy's hand before I introduce you so I was shaking it and he said this is the student who took over the embassy in Iran when your father was President. He's now ambassador here to Sudan. And I kind of pulled my hand back and I said "I don't normally shake hands with women."

And I tried to walk through the President's door. The President and ambassador just stand there and kind of stared at me because that's somewhat of an insult in the Arab world. It's a nice insult, but it's an insult. So I'm sitting there and they had arrested the care worker in southern Sudan and had her under house arrest and she couldn't get out and do her job and all this stuff was sitting there and the ceasefire was supposed to be going on and they weren't supposed to be

arresting people and I'm sitting there with my finger in the President's tie like this on the sofa and dad comes on CNN at the same time, which is over in the corner, and I said there's my father. He's the one that told me this last night.

Well the President already had a transcript of what dad said the night before so he knew what was coming and before I would ever get to see him he would already have the answer to what I wanted every time. So it worked out well.

And then I did spend about six months total in Sudan and then I spent about six months in Liberia putting on the first free and fair election they had when Charles Taylor won. So those are the two huge things I've done for the Carter Center overseas. That was an interesting election. There's no government. All anarchy. No monetary system. No checks. No credit cards. Only cash. U.S. cash. So there's no way to pay people. We had to set up all the voting booths and we had to pay all the workers that worked there.

So me and a woman named Denise from Washington each put \$1.3 million each in a duffle bag and, from our government, my government, who my government told me not to report it on the airplane, so we walked home with our carry on duffle bag, you know, heavy duffle bag with all these small bills because we had to pay people, you know, people are making like \$12.00 a day so we had all this change to pay people for three days during the election.

So we get to the airport finally and first of all we get into Abidjan to spend the night before we take the thing the next day and here we are with, you know, \$2.6 million in our rooms, so I put mine above the closet and the closet above the thing, she put hers in there. We went out and had a part, you know, did the town and came back in the next morning and had to check the luggage

on this Russian airplane. As passengers sitting down at the very end they closed the back door and opened the front door and then they threw the luggage in the front and against the pilot's door, so here's we see our, you know, two million being thrown in.

We arrive at the airport in Liberia and Monrovia and it's anarchy. I mean people there are trying to take stuff away from you. You know they got to get your yellow card, your passport and then your yellow card and take your luggage and all that kind of stuff. So I had called some friends of mine that were roughians. A roughian is, they're all black of course this is Africa, a roughian is about 6'4" with a shaved head, dark clothes, dark sunglasses even at night. And they're guards for the king or the tribal leader, and each tribe, there's 13 tribes, had a group of roughians.

So I called up this group of roughians who came in their pickup truck to the airport and I told them I had computers trying to get to the office and I didn't want them to get stolen, so they were there and here we are thrown in the back of this pickup just \$2.6 million driving to our office. I mean a thousand people around with their hands out trying to get stuff from you. There's only one plane a day.

So we arrived there, put it in our locker and having to pay everybody in cash, but that's just some of the uniqueness of having an election in Liberia. Charles Taylor won that election free and fair and could have been good, would have been good I think, except our government cut him off just like that because they supported Ellen Sirleaf who is now the President. They gave her several million dollars to run for President there. He beat her and they never forgave him so they wouldn't allow him to do anything with our consent.

So they ended up screwing him and he just finally said "The hell with it." Made all his friends rich, instead of trying to govern. He had already gotten rich enough. He wasn't going to need money, but after we treated him like that and wouldn't accept anything he did, wouldn't even accept this free and fair election it was. He kind of changed into a bad guy and ended up trying to overthrow Siera Leone.

But my MO as that every night at 9:00 if you're a U.S. citizen you had a U.S. curfew on you, you couldn't go out after 9:00 and the reason for that is because our Embassy people get combat pay if they're in a bad area and if they don't have a 9:00 curfew it's not a bad area, so these people lose 25% of their pay. So if you're trying to put your kids in college you don't want to lose 25% of your pay so you keep it as dangerous as you possibly can in order for you to get danger pay, and it still happens today. It's a ridiculous system that we got set up that way.

So at 9:00 we had a curfew. So the ECOMOG which was the military authorities from Nigeria had a curfew at 11:00. So at 9:00 I leave my compound, walk out to the crossroads where they had this big sandbag thing and the troops and give them all cigarettes and shoot the crap with them a little bit, then I walked down the streets. There was a big war going on and 13 tribes each one of them had a section of the beach.

And so you'd walk down, this was pitch black dark, and there had been no electricity or running water for seven years because of the war so it was dark. You'd be surrounded by these roughians, big black guys with sunglasses and dark clothes, and I'd pull out \$10.00. I had on Teva's, t-shirt and a pair of shorts. Nothing else. No ring. No hat, no nothing, pull out \$10.00 and say "All I want to do is I want to buy beer in your pub for all of you guys until we give out

the money."

In any war torn people never bomb the beer factory. Everybody wants a beer after a tough day of rape and pillage. So the beer factory's always there. They always bomb the glass factory. So you bought the beer for \$1.00. You returned it and got 95 cents back for the bottle. So if you went to a little pub where they weren't serving it in the bottle, they just pop the top and they pass the bottle and it goes around until it's empty and then starts another one, \$10.00 you could, you know, 30 people could drink all night long.

So I'd sit there with the chief and everybody, and we'd sit there until 2:00 in the morning and then we'd have this group of people lead me back to wherever I was and, you know, chief after chief after chief. Jason came down, my nephew came down, and I did that with him a few times and he ended up loving it so much he joined the Peace Corps and went to South Africa. But Charles Taylor, who was an elected President, hadn't taken office yet, well actually when Jason was there he had. Clinton called me and appointed me and I got an appointment for Jason to represent our country at Taylor's inauguration, so we stayed there for four weeks.

But I go to see Taylor twice a week. He'd go what are you doing down in this place, you know, I wouldn't go down there. They'll cut your throat and blah, blah, blah. I said "Well I'm the only white person they've ever met. They're interested in knowing if it can rub off. The only other white people they see has American flags on the front of their cars as they ride by, you know, with their guards and stuff."

But that was great times. I mean it's all been good real interesting. I've gotten to do some stuff that nobody else would ever get to do, so.

SHORT: You certainly have had a very interesting life.

CARTER: Yeah.

SHORT: Did you ever consider running for public office?

CARTER: I ran for city council in Plains and left that position to start campaigning for dad for President, so I was on the city council, but if you wanted to do basic opposition research on me it would take 30 minutes and Newsweek while dad was there, you know. No matter what happened all the gossip columns, everything that came out, so it wouldn't take long.

For instance, my wife's family they were Griffins from Hawkinsville. Every year they went down to Port St. Joe and there was another family from Bainbridge and there was three families and brothers and sisters that would go with all their kids and I would go with them every year.

Well one year we hired a charter boat and we went out fishing and had a great time, came back.

That night that charter boat was arrested going out to some mother ship and unloading marijuana onto it and running it into the shore. Well I didn't know. I remember the guy's name now is

King. He got busted and the news was saying that I was involved and the Secret Service were trying to mess up the sting they had going and, you know, I had met the guy that day and we had gone fishing at the dock, you know. That's all I knew about it. But you can just take that one thing and destroy me politically, so no I never thought about running because I've had my life

examined enough.

SHORT: Jack ran.

CARTER: The only one that shouldn't have. Yeah. He's the worst politician in the family and -

-

SHORT: I remember reading - -

CARTER: Much, much more conservative than me. Much more of a libertarian. Believes in live and let live as long as I can keep everything I got and the poor people can't get nothing, then I can destroy the environment as long as it doesn't affect my neighbor's environment, but I can destroy everything that I own. His solution for helping the environment in Nevada because of all the invasive grasses that have come in overseas was to put more cattle on it. So it was difficult for me to be there to help him, and I would have voted for him but I would have held my nose. I voted for Hamilton Jordan when he ran for the Senate even though he said that he would be honored to send his son to Nicaragua to fight the Sandinistas. But I voted for him anyway.

Would have been the same with Jack.

But I'm pretty liberal. I can do, you know, I don't normally do that stuff. I spent four months volunteering for Dean. I've been for Obama for over a year, but because of dad's - - because the Jewish community doesn't respect him right now as much I can't get involved in his campaign.

This is the first one I've missed since I ran the third congressional district for McGovern in '72. That's a good story. '72 the McGovern, dad's for Scoop Jackson. I'm for McGovern. He's put in the first caucus ever and the only one in the state of Georgia, and he wrote no special rules meaning that he as a governor had to run in his home congressional district in order to be a delegate. Well his district was my district and I was working for McGovern. We had it in a gymnasium, Americus High gymnasium, and dad walked in and he had Stock Coleman and Freeman, his two state troopers. Freeman's now the head of Fulton County, Sheriff.

SHORT: Sheriff of Fulton County.

CARTER: Right. But they were standing there and dad walked in the gymnasium and he stood under the basketball goal and he looked over at the Jackson - - everybody else but McGovern people had about 85 of them over there, and I had over 600 people there for McGovern. And I'm sitting on the top row and I'm sitting there watching dad's eyes go down each row trying to find me and finally gets to me and he points like this and does like this, and I come down and we're walking to the bathroom and Stock and Freeman stand outside the bathroom and keep the door closed. And dad says "I need to be a delegate." And I'm saying "You should have gotten some people here to support you, you know."

Anyway, I was running as the head of the delegation from that district. I had my name on there because I knew I was going to end up giving it up. I gave it to dad in exchange for free round trip to the convention in Miami. Got to work for McGovern. I got to stay in and do the whole

thing. Dad paid for everything plus gave me floor passes and all that. So that was my little coo. And during that was when dad endorsed Jackson it was front page of the Atlanta Constitution above the fold. Turn below the fold, me and Jay Frank Meyers from Americus endorse McGovern in the same newspaper. So same front page.

SHORT: So you're an independent too.

CARTER: Didn't get the front page very much.

SHORT: You're independent as well as having that great love for your father.

CARTER: I do have that great love and respect for my father. He is the most caring, agape love of anybody I know. If you don't have as much as him he loves you. If he can do anything that will help you as a group, he'll do it, without particularly in regard for money. He doesn't care about money which is one of the gripes I have, being a potential inheritor. But he, you know, everything that Carter, the Presidential retirement money, you know, those checks go directly to the Carter Center. All of his speaking fees go directly to the Carter Center. You know, most of his book stuff goes directly to the Carter Center.

So he hasn't, you know, he doesn't care. And I think that's what helped him be great after he got out of office because he didn't join those Boards, or Ford and other things like Jerry Ford did or the other presidents have when they get out. And never cared about hanging around those glitzy

ultra rich folks.

So when he comes at you, he comes at you with total honesty, and as a son you can sit there and say maybe he could have been a better father. Maybe he could have spent more time with me. I could have been higher priority. Some of the things you have to work through in your own mind, but at the same time that he didn't do that he was doing it for everybody in the world. So I have no complaints about it really.

Of namesakes of Presidents I think there's 11 of us and six of them died before 30 of alcoholism or suicide. So it's a pretty difficult thing to live up to, and it's taken me a lot of work and effort to get there because I can't be me. I've got to be his son. That's just how people look at you when they first meet you, so it's very difficult. I think that happens to a lot of different people, children of politicians, governors, that kind of stuff. It happens to a lot of people, but he's been generous in including us and making us feel part of it. Not making us feel like it's a family business, but making us feel like we're part of what happened and we're part of that and that's been a big blessing, and being able to do all this other stuff is a huge blessing. So you can sit there and look at it kind of both ways.

SHORT: Great experience.

CARTER: Great experience. And I'm exceedingly happy to have lived it. And I wake up every morning and tell myself "Today's going to be another great day," you know. And I go through those days as a great day because it's up to me to decide, not anybody else, and you can't let

your expectations of your parents or control how you live. You can't let dad's political views or somebody not liking you like that. If everybody liked you, you hadn't done anything. So you got to have pretty thick skin and just tell yourself everyday it's going to be a great day.

SHORT: Chip, we greatly appreciate you being with us.

CARTER: Well thank you very much. Thank you. It's been my honor.

SHORT: It's been my pleasure talking to you.

CARTER: It's my honor. You've been a friend and respected ally since I was a teenager.

SHORT: That's right.

CARTER: And it's my honor to be here and I'm really just appreciate you calling and asking because anything I can ever do for you I'll do it.

SHORT: Well I..

CARTER: Any time, any place.

SHORT: ...appreciate that. And that goes for me too.

CARTER: I know that.

SHORT: Okay.

CARTER: I know that. And I'll talk to my parents on Wednesday about maybe trying to do something.

SHORT: Please do. Please do.

[END OF RECORDING]

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