

A Fresh View of a Historic Presidency: An Evening with Stuart Eizenstat

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Speakers: Marie Griffith, Stuart Eizenstat

Prof. Marie Griffith: Greetings everyone and welcome to you all! I'm Marie Griffith, the director of the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics here at Washington University in St. Louis. We're delighted to see all of you here and thank you for taking time out of your schedules to join us for this evening's very special event with our distinguished guest, Stuart Eizenstat. I'd like to just remind you to silence your phones and other electronic devices at this time. I want to give a special shout out to our Provost Holden Thorp who first had the idea for tonight's program. The Provost is an old friend of our speaker and may have a couple things to say about him afterwards. Holden presided over the Ambassador Stuart E. Eizenstat Distinguished Professorship in Jewish History and Culture at the University of North Carolina, which was given to honor Stuart Eizenstat. Stuart Eizenstat has had, and I should say is still having, an extraordinary career. After receiving his undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina and his J.D. from Harvard Law School, he met a talented man in his home state of Georgia who was about to embark on a race for governor. That man's name was Jimmy Carter. Carter invited Stuart Eizenstat to work for him on his campaign. And then when they succeeded and won the governorship, to work for him in the governor's office. When Carter was elected president, he brought Ambassador Eizenstat to Washington D.C in 1976. Eizenstat served as chief White House domestic policy adviser to President Carter from 1977 to 1981, and then went on to hold prominent roles in the two administrations of Bill Clinton, including US Ambassador to the European Union, Undersecretary of Commerce for International Trade, Undersecretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs, and Deputy Secretary of the Treasury to name only a few. The list of initiatives that he helped develop, from the Transatlantic Agenda with the European Union, to the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, to the Holocaust Memorial Museum, and numerous negotiations on behalf of victims of Nazi tyranny, is simply incredible. Even while practicing law full time at Covington in his post-D.C. life – I'm not sure he has a post-D.C. life – Ambassador Eizenstat has authored three major books, all of monumental importance. *Imperfect Justice: Looted Assets, Slave Labor, and the Unfinished Business of WWII*, with a forward by Elie Wiesel, *The Future of the Jews: How Global Forces are Impacting the Jewish People, Israel, and its Relationship with the United States*, with a forward by Sir Martin Gilbert, and just earlier this year, *President Carter: The White House Years*, with a forward by Madeleine Albright. This book is extraordinary. He had 5,000 pages of his own personal notes to work with, from his years in the White House. He conducted 350 interviews, five of them with Carter himself and so much else besides. All of his books have been roundly celebrated. He has received eight honorary doctorate degrees and has been awarded high civilian awards from the governments of France, Germany, Austria, and Belgium, as well as from Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Madeleine Albright, and Lawrence Summers. In 2007, he was named the leading lawyer in international trade in Washington D.C by Legal Times. He's had articles appearing in all sorts of different venues, popular and academic and he also taught at the Harvard Kennedy School for, I believe, nine years. His list of honors and accolades is an exceptional one. I can't possibly do anything close to justice to it in a short introduction, but our time is short and I want you to get to hear from him directly. After

Ambassador Eizenstat speaks, I'm going to ask him a few questions here. And then, we will open the floor to all of you, so be ready. We will end a little after 6:30 and invite you to stay afterward for a reception and a book signing outside this auditorium in the foyer. And Ambassador Eizenstat has very generously offered his books on sale for twenty dollars apiece, which is a steal. His lecture is titled a *Fresh View of a Historic Presidency*. Please join me now in welcoming him here. [Audience Claps]

Ambassador Eizenstat: Thank you very much, Marie. This really is a very special evening for me, for a variety of reasons. One is being able to meet Marie, being also shepherded around by Deborah Kennard, from the John Danforth Center on the study of Religion and Politics. And I had a very close relationship with Senator, and later Ambassador, Danforth, which makes this particularly meaningful. I really wouldn't be here, frankly with all of that, were it not for Holden Thorp, your wonderful Provost. We got to know each other when he was Chancellor at the University of North Carolina. I have tremendous respect and admiration for his leadership and for what he has done both at UNC and here. I'm fortunate to have family here, Jeff and Danny Medenson, their families live in the St. Louis area and the former head of Federation here who's now on the Brown faculty at WashU, Berry Rosenberg. So, all of those make it very special and being in Missouri makes it very special too, for the reason I'll state at the very outset. And that is that Jimmy Carter's political hero was your own Harry Truman and he placed his famous slogan "The Buck Stops Here" on his Oval Office desk. Both presidents left office highly unpopular. Truman is now remembered now much more for his achievements than for his failures. And I'm hopeful that my book will have a similar impact on reassessing Jimmy Carter as president, not simply as an admired former president. Two recent surveys indicate that almost 70% of all of our legislation was passed by Congress just under the percent of my first White House boss, President Lyndon Johnson, the master of Congress. He honored the office; he respected the independence of the Justice Department, and the FBI, and the role of the press in a free society, even when it was brutal to him. Walter Mondale, his Vice President said, "We obeyed the law; we told the truth, and we kept the peace." Now the wrap on the Carter Presidency is summarized by four 'I's: inflation, Iran, inexperience by the President and his so-called Georgia mafia, and inter-party warfare with the liberal wing of the Democratic party headed by Ted Kennedy, which split the party during the 1980 re-election. And these are very real problems; I don't whitewash them. The reason why New York Times, Washington Post, even conservative publications have given it excellent reviews, is because I do not whitewash them. I'm very candid about them. I'm candid about his mistakes and mine, as his adviser. This is not a book that could be entitled, "If He Had Only Listened to Me." [Audience laughs] But, those mistakes and failures have obscured an enormous array of achievements and accomplishments both at home and abroad which continue to have lasting impact. And so, my determination was to write this book while there were still living eye witness and before history's verdict was somehow indelibly sealed, that the Carter presidency was a failed presidency. And I present, therefore, all the positives and the negatives together. As Marie indicated, its uniqueness is based on a habit that I've had since UNC and Harvard Law School and I brought into the White House, which is taking verbatim notes of everything I heard, everything I saw, every meeting, every conversation, in real time. And augmenting it with 350 interviews, and I was not selective. I interviewed Republicans and Democrats, detractors and supporters, to provide an honest and candid assessment of the 39th President of the United States.

In order to understand the Carter presidency, you have to understand the decade of the 1970s in which we governed. And given that there are many students here who perhaps weren't even born then, let me just remind you about the 1970s because it was a decade of epic change in which the post-WWII consensus had begun to unravel, as a result of our first military defeat abroad in Vietnam, urban violence, and I remember – whether it hit St. Louis, you'll remember better than I – but I can tell you that, working in the Johnson White House, I remember being on the portico, and seeing 14th street burn only a few blocks away. And this was happening throughout many of our major cities. And it was a decade in which a new economic phenomenon of slow, sluggish growth, and high inflation, came together, something not seen before or after and economists had to give it a new name, so they called it the sort of ugly name of stagflation. And it affected all three presidents of that decade: Nixon, Ford, and Carter. It was a decade in which a whole range of social movements, which we now take for granted, burst on to the scene. The environmental movement, the consumer movement, the Black Power movement, now morphed into Black Lives Matter, the women's rights movement, now hashtag me too, and yes after the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision on abortion, which resonates today and which I can assure you haven't heard the last of, it was the birth of the Pro-Life movement. A new political force arose in the 1970s, which is as current as today, and that is the Reverend Jerry Falwell, from Roanoke, VA, catalyzed into a political force – the Christian Evangelical movement, largely based in the south but also in rural areas, in this state, Ohio, and others. And Falwell called Jimmy Carter, who was undoubtedly the most religious president we've had in American history, not a real Baptist, and accused him of harboring homosexuals on his staff. I actually went to his Sunday school sermon two weeks ago, and I can assure you, he's a real Baptist. Abroad, this was also a time of great change. But let's look at what happened to the Evangelical movement, because Ronald Reagan married that new catalyzed Christian Evangelical political force to Richard Nixon's so-called silent majority of disaffected blue-collar workers in the industrial Midwest and Northeast. That powered him to victory in 1980 and it's precisely the base of Donald J Trump's coalition today. Abroad it was also a time of great change. The Soviet Union, in the midst of the Cold War, was at the height of its power and influence. Huge increases in military spending, in the air, on the ground, in the water, challenging our own supremacy. Supporting Cuban proxy troops to foment communist revolutions in Africa, places like Namibia and Angola, invading, as we'll see in more detail, Afghanistan, supporting Euro-communist movements in western Europe with some success particularly in Italy. It was a decade in which a new world power just began to inch its way on to the global agenda now with both feet, the People's Republic of China, again more on that in a minute. It was a decade in which a Polish born priest became Pope John Paul II and gave hope, for the first time, to those living behind the iron curtain, as did Carter's own human rights policy. And yes, it was a decade in which a new revolution, which is front-page news now every day, the Iranian radical revolution burst onto the scene and engulfed our administration. And for those of you particularly interested in Israel, it was a decade in which Israel came as close, as hopefully it ever will, to a stunning military defeat in 1973 in a Yom Kippur war, and that laid the ground work for what I'll discuss in a minute on Camp David. So, let's look at some of the domestic accomplishments which are totally unrecognized. The energy security we enjoy as Americans today, the lack of dependence on Arab OPEC oil, which had reached more than 50% and growing when we took office, is due significantly to the foundation of three major energy bills that we passed in four years, which ended regulation of the development of natural gas and crude oil and by unleashing the power of domestic industry has made now today, in 2018, the

United States the greatest producer of crude oil, more than Saudi Arabia and Russia. We made conservation the centerpiece of our energy policy. The first fuel economy standards for trucks, for automobiles, and inaugurated the new era of clean energy – wind, and in particular, solar. And symbolically, as one of the photographs shows in the book, and I was with him when he did it, he installed a solar panel on the White House roof to demonstrate that this was our future. We're talking about the 1970s, here in 2018, ten percent of all of our new electricity comes from solar energy. After eighteen very difficult months, we broke the back of the most difficult of the energy pieces, which goes back to Harry Truman's time in 1948, that is ending regulations on natural gas and he did it in a way that is totally foreign to Washington today. He had several Republican senators in the Map Room of the White House, called the Map Room because that's where President Roosevelt charted the course of WWII; we felt we were in an armed domestic war, with conservative Republican senators brought down into the Map Room and liberal members of the House, Democrats, agreeing on a bipartisan formula to deregulate it, something again foreign today. And let me read because this is being sponsored by the John Danforth Center for Religion and Politics just one paragraph that sums up the point I'm making but also Senator Danforth's remarkable bipartisanship. Here's what I said in the book, "I was nevertheless impressed how genuinely conscientious and even bipartisan most were about their vote. They realized it was important to the president and the country. John Danforth of Missouri, a tall impressive ordained Episcopal priest, as well as a highly intelligent thoughtful politician, expressed his belief in decontrol, but was concerned that the complex package was an invitation to uncertainty. I told him the complexity was inevitable because of the competing interests involved and, in a spirit, totally alien to today's politically divisive atmosphere, this Republican Senator Jack Danforth said to me, if I vote for it, it's because I don't want it to hurt the president even though he's a Democrat." Oh, if we had those days today. Carter was also a great consumer champion, appointing consumer advocates to regulatory agencies overseeing regulations of the industries, not as today, taking people from or lobbyists for industry to regulate the industries that were their bread and butter. And he augmented that by transformative legislation that ended controls and deregulated and brought competition and new entries into buses and rail and trucking, and most important for us, for air travel. We wouldn't have the Southwest and the JetBlues and the Spirits as we do today, or the UPS or FedEx air cargos working as efficiently had we not removed the shackles that prevented them from entering into the market. We democratized air travel and that may not seem so great as when my flight from Cleveland was canceled and I was stuck in 26E, in the middle, but the fact is we brought air travel to the middle class. And we didn't stop there. We ended controls on telecommunications and inaugurated the whole cable TV era, and for those of you who are aficionados on local craft beers, we ended the prohibition era restrictions which prevented their flow. Carter was without question the greatest environmental president in American history, second perhaps only to and maybe even exceeding Theodore Roosevelt who created the National Park system. We doubled the size of the National Park system, with the Alaska land spill, over the fierce opposition of the Alaska delegation, which wanted the whole state open for oil and gas exploration and Carter did it in typical detailed fashion, taking a giant map of the state of Alaska, putting it on the Oval Office rug, getting on his hands and knees with Senator Ted Stevens, the Republican Senator from Alaska, and showing him where every mountain stream and range would be, what would be available for development and what would be protected for wildlife and for you and I as tourists. And Stevens said to us afterwards, he couldn't imagine that the president of the United States would know more about his state than he did having represented it for twenty-five years. In an

ethically challenged Washington, and it is ethically challenged, we won the election in 1976 against Ford, largely as a reaction against Watergate. Carter pledged the government is as good as its people, I'll never lie to you, and coming as an outsider, that resonated. But this was not just rhetoric; all the major ethics legislation in place today, 2018, we started. The Ethics Act of '78 which required the disclosure by senior officials of any conflicts of interests and assets coming into office, gift limits, then \$25 when you were in office, and restrictions on your lobbying of agencies that you had work for after you left office. Where did Robert Mueller come from and the investigation today? It came from our special counsel's law, that we created to have an independent investigative voice looking at potential wrong doing by senior officials. We put independent inspector general into all the agencies to rule out fraud, waste, and abuse, merit selection of judges, and much more. So, I got caught up, unwittingly, in the gift rule. There was a profile done of me in a business magazine early in the administration saying that I had a great love for the one cent tootsie rolls, that many of you may remember, they still sell them. And so, I got this giant box of tootsie rolls from the tootsie roll company. And when I got it I thought I'm going to be father for life to my two young kids, I take it home, only to find out from the ethics officer that Dandy, who was going to count every one of these, but it might be worth more than twenty-five dollars, I had to return it. So, I did, with a letter to the CEO explaining we were in a new more, high moral atmosphere, I couldn't accept it. Thank you. A year or so later, there's a profile done of the tootsie roll company and the CEO says "Eizenstat tried to have it both ways; he sends us his high and mighty letter, his new ethics, and new morals, we open the box, it's empty." So, I'm still trying to find the secret service agent who stole my tootsie rolls. [Audience laughs]. Now, more serious, the first target of the new special counsel that we created with Congress, was none other than the president's own chief of staff Hamilton Jordan, who was falsely accused by a lawyer named Roy Cohn who was the hatchet man for Senator Joe McCarthy, and was Donald J Trump's first political mentor. And he, Cohn, represented the owners of a bar in New York called Studio 54 and alleged that Ham was in the bar, which he was, and that he was snorting cocaine, which he wasn't. He was doing it as a plea bargain for the owners that he represented. A year later, a million dollars of legal fees, twenty-four to zero the grand jury says no, but that's not the point. Not once during that investigation in a reelection year, did Carter ever call it a witch hunt, did he ever say it was a political investigation, did he ever try to denigrate the special counsel, we believed in the rule of law, and I'll let you draw your own conclusions about the way in which Mueller has been treated. So, here is a southern president from the deepest part of the deep south who appoints more Jews, more African Americans, and more women to senior positions and judgeships than all thirty-eight presidents before him put together. And we support affirmative action, Holden, in university admissions, and created the department of education, we hugely increased spending for the Pell Grants, for college and for elementary and secondary education. Saved New York City from bankruptcy, and Chrysler as well, including many workers in the state. And we created out of a position that was a constitutional afterthought by our Founding Fathers, the vice presidency. A totally modern vice president that lasts to this day. So Mondale, our vice president, after the election and before he was sworn into office before the inauguration, send a memo to Carter with ten requests, things like access to all classified documents, the ability to go into any meeting without notice, one on one meetings in the Oval Office over lunch every week, and Carter checked each off and did everyone for four years. And even added one that Mondale didn't have the temerity to ask for, which was moving the entire office of the vice presidency from the executive office building across the street from the White House into the west wing. Anyone one who knows anything

about real estate or politics, knows location is everything and by being right next to the Oval Office, just down the hall way, it was a symbolic gesture that Mondale and vice presidents since, are meant to be real partners of the president. Now, the Achilles Heel domestically, was one of those four 'I's I mentioned: inflation. We inherited very high inflation from Ford and Nixon and it got worse during our four-year period. And yet this was in many ways Carter's finest hour. He calls us in, in July of 1979 as we were beginning to think about our reelection cycle, and he said "I have done everything I can to deal with this imbedded decade long inflation. I've had two anti-inflation czars, I've given five anti-inflation speeches, I've developed voluntary wage and price guidelines, with procurement sanctions on companies doing business with the government have to follow them, I've had to cut domestic spending and alienated the liberal wing of the party to satisfy financial markets, and nothing's worked!" So, he said, I'm going to take a step, which may mean my election, and it did, I'm going to deliver the stiffest medicine that the economy can take; I'm going to appoint Paul Volcker to be the chairman of the federal reserve board. And he knew in advance, as I described in a celebrated meeting in my book, exactly what Volcker was going to do because he told him. I'm going to limit the money supply; it's gonna cause interest rates to go sky high; it will raise unemployment; I'm going to squeeze inflation out of the system the painful way. Don't appoint me if you don't support what I'm going to do. I have to have your support. And many of us said "This is going to be your election; don't do it." And he said, "I don't want my legacy to be this high inflation even if it means my election." And not once during the entire reelection campaign against Reagan in 1980 did Carter ever say the high interest rates are from Volcker, we need lower interest rates. Never once. We supported what he did and it worked. Inflation, which is low today, dropped like a rock and has been low ever since and that drop came in the first year of the Reagan administration, too late to help our reelection and in many ways its emblematic of so much of our administration, which we planted the seeds which flowered only after we left. Let's look at foreign policy because his greatest accomplishment, and I would dare say and I do say in the book and I say to you, the greatest single diplomatic achievement of any president in American history including Woodrow Wilson and the Paris Agreement after WWI, Camp David and the Egypt Israel peace agreement. So, let me lay the stage. Anwar Sadat, the president of Egypt, makes a dramatic totally unexpected trip to Jerusalem, after fighting five wars with Israel since 1948. And just at the early part of the Carter administration, just after the Sabbath, after Shabbat, the plane lands, a white Boeing plane with the insignia Air Republic of Egypt. There's a red carpet laid for him. He comes and pledges no more wars. Hardened Israel generals who had fought those five wars are crying like babies. Golda Meir is standing in the receiving line next to Yitzhak Rabin, two former tough Prime Ministers. And Golda says to Yitzhak, "I wish only that he had come earlier so we could've avoided all the loss of lives on both sides." And when he gets to Golda in the receiving line, she says, "Mr. President, I've been waiting for you for a long time." And he said, "Yes, I'm here. Shalom." Okay, now...this is dramatic, but months go by when Israel and Egypt try to make something out of the pledge, no more wars. What does that mean? How do you make it concrete? And they failed. And so then Carter, over the opposition of almost everyone in his administration, takes a chance. He invites them to the presidential retreat at Camp David in the Catoctin Mountains, about an hour and a half north of Washington, bars the press, and sees if he can bridge what seemed to be unbridgeable gaps between the two countries. He studies intensely, Sadat and Menachem Begin, the Prime Minister then, where were their red lines, what was important to them, what could they not go beyond. And then for thirteen agonizing days and nights, with virtually no sleep, he, the

president, drafts twenty-two separate peace agreements, not his aides, he drafts them. And then he negotiates separately with Sadat and his Egyptian team, and Begin and the Israeli team, because we put them together the first day and it was like two scorpions in the bottle. They were just absolutely impossible together. And then Carter adds two personal touches. On the first Sunday of the thirteen days, he drives them in his presidential limousine. With Begin on his left and Sadat on his right, he says no negotiations; I'm going to take you to the Gettysburg battle field and he takes a tour of the Gettysburg battle field. I was there about six weeks ago and remarkably found the guide who guarded them around. And it had a sort of electric effect; I mean why did he do it? Because he was trying to demonstrate the tragedy of more wars. And Sadat, who was a general, a very eloquent erect man, had studied in the United States, knew the Gettysburg battle upside down and backwards, and starts expounding on all the mistakes the Confederates made, including Pickett's last charge – a little uncomfortable for a Southern president, but okay [audience chuckles]. Uh, and then, Begin who is anything but a military expert, but was a student of Abraham Lincoln, on the spot, verbatim, no notes, delivers the entire Gettysburg Address. A really dramatic moment. And yet, with all of that, we're now at the thirteenth and last day everybody agreed if we couldn't get it done then, we can't get it done. And Begin says to Carter, "Mr. President, I'm sorry. I cannot and will not make any more compromises. I'm going home. I've ordered an El Al plane; it's waiting for me at Andrew's Airforce base. I want a White House limousine to take me there. I'm sorry. This won't work." Carter, realizing, if after thirteen days, Begin leaves and the whole thing breaks up, Sadat could go home empty handed and be assassinated, it would catalyze the most radical elements in the region, including the current President of Syria, Bashar al-Assad's father, Hafez al-Assad, who was a rejectionist, and it could engulf his own administration in failure. And so, he comes up with a really brilliant personal tact. Knowing Prime minister Begin's love for his eight grandchildren, there was a photograph taken when the three first met at Camp David at the first hour. He gets eight copies made, autographs each to Begin's grandchildren by name, walks it over to Begin's cabin, hands him the photographs, and sees Begin - his lips start to quiver, his eyes tear, as he reads each of their names inscribed by the president with best wishes for peace. He puts his bags down and he says, "I'll make one last try." And that's how history was made. But, people think the Camp David accords was the end of it; it was not. It was an accord, a framework, not legally binding. And they called for a treaty between Israel and Egypt within three months of leaving Camp David. So, six months pass, no treaty, the same problem we had when they came into Camp David. And I assure you, I'm not exaggerating, every single advisor told him, "Don't go to the region and try to make this happen, it will be egg on your face." And he said, "I've got to make the last try." Four days go by, shuttle diplomacy between Cairo and Jerusalem, again close but not there. Airforce One is now refueled, the airspace over Ben Gurion airport's been cleared. The staff is going from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv for the flight and Begin calls up and says, "Mr. President, I'd like to see you before you leave." And we all think it's just a courtesy call. Carter's not expecting this and so he and Rosalynn are just dressing and he calls down and says, "Entertain the Prime Minister in the lobby of the King David Hotel while I get ready." Begin says to the Carter team that was left, he says, "You know, boys, this King David Hotel is a very famous hotel." And we said, "Yeah of course, we know that." And he says, "No, no, not for the reasons you think. When I was head of the Irgun, the underground, during the British Mandate, I blew this hotel up. But don't worry, I'm not gonna do it again until the president leaves." [audience chuckles] So, Begin goes up and that's where the treaty is sealed in the presidential suite at the King David. They come down to make this dramatic announcement.

The elevator breaks in between floors. The secret service has to pull them down butt first into the lobby. I call it the breech birth of the treaty. [audience laughs] Carter also inaugurated and implemented human rights in foreign policy, something presidents before or since haven't done, although they're measured by what he did. It wasn't a dewy-eyed naïve notion. We were competing with the Soviet Union for the hearts and minds of the world. We wanted, he wanted, foreign policy to reflect our best values of democracy and tolerance and freedom of religion and he applied it initially very controversially to the right-wing conservative military in Latin America who was pro-American and anti-Communist because they were very repressive. We got thousands of political prisoners released and really created the momentum that allowed the democratic movement in Latin America to flower and created a whole new era that exists to this day of US Latin American relations. When we merited it to what was the bloodiest battle we had in four years over the Panama Canal. When we started with the Panama Canal, which Rosalynn told him not to do until his second term, and he said suppose I don't have one, 85% of the American people were against returning "our canal" to the Panamanians. It was never ours but that's what people thought. Two unlikely heroes: one, something again you would never see today, a Senator of very small physical stature, but a giant of a Senator, the Republican leader of the Senate, Howard Baker of Tennessee, supports the treaty knowing it would mean he'd never get the Republican nomination for president. But he did it because he thought it was the right thing for the country to do and he brings a number of Republicans along, but we're still short. We have to get two-thirds of the Senate to support the treaty. And Mondale decides to take a risk; he puts on the phone with Carter in the Oval office, Senator Hayakawa, who's a conservative senator from California, who coined the phrase, "It's our canal; we stole it fair and square." Hardly a likely supporter of the canal, and yet Mondale knew he had a high vanity level, and so he puts the two on the phone, and Carter says, "Senator, what can I do to convince you to vote for the treaty?" "Don't talk to me about the treaty; you know what I think about it. But, if you will see me once every two weeks, and let me share my wisdom with you about the direction the country and the world should take, then I'll think about it." And Carter says to him, "Senator, only once every two weeks? I wouldn't want to limit you to that." Flattered, he voted for the treaty. Carter never saw him again. [audience chuckles] We also applied the soft power of human rights to the Soviet Union. We reached out to the democratic movement there, Andrei Sakharov, the Nobel Peace Prize winner, and we championed the Soviet Jewish movement. The most famous so called Soviet Refusenik was Anatoly, now Natan Sharansky. We helped with pressure double the number of Soviet Jews who left and according to his own memoir, don't take my word for it, we saved Sharansky's life during his trial on the fake charge that he was a US spy. Carter did something presidents don't do, and he said publicly this is nonsense; he's not a US spy, we've never talked to him and Sharansky said that saved his life. And then, we didn't rely just on soft power; we relied on hard power with respect to the Soviet Union. Here, even his most conservative critics give him credit. We increased defense spending after Vietnam and every single weapons system that Ronald Reagan implemented, and I give him full credit for helping bring the Soviet Union to its knees, every single one, we started. The Mobile MX missile, Intermediate nuclear weapons in Europe, the Cruise Missile, the stealth bomber: all were green lighted by Carter. And then on Christmas 1979, there's never an off day in the White House, the Soviets invade Afghanistan. By the way there, it's our longest war: 17 years. And they put a puppet to head the government and Carter announces the Carter doctrine: any further penetration into the area will be met with US military force; we increase defense spending even more; we arm the opposition called the Mujahideen; we reinstitute from the Vietnam era, you

think this is popular in an election year in 1980, draft registration. Just weeks before the Iowa caucuses when we're contesting it with Ted Kennedy, we impose a grain embargo of American grain to the Soviet Union, highly unpopular in Iowa. And we did something else - the Soviet Union was hosting the Moscow Olympics in a few months in 1980. And if you want to know a tough meeting, we bring all the young Olympians into the White House, who have trained for four years to go to Moscow, and tell them they can't go because of US national security interests. We created the Freedom Games in Philadelphia but it was not the same. And we did it because we knew it would affect Soviet prestige and because we remembered in 1936 in the Berlin Olympics, the United States bowed to the demands of Hitler, wouldn't let a Jew be on the Olympic team. Jesse Owens won two sprints, got no awards from the host government and we were damned and determined not to repeat that again. So, Reagan deserves, and I give him, all the credit for helping bring the Soviet Union to its knees, but we deserve credit as well. China - Nixon and Kissinger deserve, and I give them, tremendous credit for reaching out to the People's Republic in 1972 in the famous Shanghai communique, but they did not establish diplomatic relations because the Taiwan lobby, which opposed it, was a major force in the Republican party. We did, we broke relations with Taiwan, created a new cultural and defense relationship, and in another bloody battle got it through the House and Senate. I was in the cabinet room when little Deng Xiaoping, all 4'11" of him, comes into the cabinet room. And I remember seeing him for the first time and saying how does this little guy control a billion Chinese. And so, we're in the cabinet room and Deng Xiaoping says to the president, "I really appreciate what you've done; it's historic to recognize the People's Republic as the legitimate ruler of China, but what I really want now," and this will seem very current today, "is I want you to provide the lowest tariff levels on our Chinese goods so we can trade more with you." And he said, I know that there's a law - it's actually *jas evanik* law, which prevents countries that limit immigration from getting the benefit of low tariffs. And Deng Xiaoping says to Carter, "I know this law, but it's aimed at the Soviet Union, not us. We don't limit immigration." And he takes a little White House notepad, says the White House Washington, with a pencil and pushes it over to Carter at the other end of the cabinet table and says, "Write on here the number of Chinese you'd like us to send you each year. A million? Ten million?" And Carter laughs and said, "I'll tell you what. We'll make a deal. I'll take ten million Chinese a year if you'll take ten thousand American journalists." [audience chuckles] Neither had to fulfill that, but the fact is we brought China into the family of nations. Now the coup de gras, is another one of the 'I's - Iran. Now, I'm brutally candid in the Iran chapters about the mistakes we made. I don't think it's fair to blame Carter for the Iranian revolution and for the exile of the Shah and the rise of Ayatollah Khomeini, any more than it would be fair to blame Dwight Eisenhower as president in 1959, for the Castro communist revolution in Cuba 90 miles away, or Barrack Obama for Mubarak being deposed. There are certain things even a super power can't totally control. But, I call in my book and I say it to you, it was the single worst intelligence failure, in my opinion, in American history, even worse than the absence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The CIA in 1953, in a coup with MI6, the British Intelligence, deposes an elected Iranian Prime Minister, puts this young, then 21-year-old, Shah back on his father's peacock throne, and then for over twenty years, every president, Republican and Democrat, give him an open shopping list of every sophisticated weapon we have - F14s and missiles and the like. He was our principle ally, and yet, the CIA did not realize that his domestic support rested on quick sand. He had alienated all segments of society; they didn't understand, imagine this, that our principle ally was secretly getting for five years cancer treatments for an incurable form of cancer; they didn't know it. They didn't

understand the impact that Khomeini's proactive tapes, the leader of the revolution in exile in Paris, before he comes back, were having and fomenting a revolution, absolutely unacceptable. How could the president make good decisions with that kind of intelligence? And in my interview, one of the 350, with Stan Turner, who was the CIA director at the time, he said, 'Frankly, we let the president down.' Okay, now the hostages are taken, and what does Carter do? This is one time I wish he had followed my advice. I recommended immediate military action, as did our national security advisor, Dr. Brzezinski, not bombing Tehran, but blockading their harbors and mining them so they couldn't export oil, which was the lifeblood of their economy. Instead, Carter meets with the families of the hostages and in a humanitarian gesture says my number one priority is to get your loved ones out safely, and he does. But only after 444 humiliating days, in which his own political support evaporates and the country is at arms for its own humiliation. Khomeini really did circle around us. We reached agreement after agreement, every time we did with his government, he vetoed it. Carter makes another mistake; he holes himself up in the White House, cancels foreign trips, cancels campaigning against Kennedy in the primaries, to show he's working full time on the hostage crisis. But that makes him the hostage in the White House. He gives Khomeini more bargaining authority, and he causes more press attention. Ted Koppel's Night Line program starts because of this. Walter Cronkite, who was then the dean of reporting for CBS, ended every night broadcast, day 103, day 306, day 407 of the hostage crisis. Humiliating, debilitating! And then the straw that broke the camel's back was the unsuccessful rescue effort - Desert One. And to this day, hopefully when people read my book, they'll be disabused of it, Carter is viewed as being weak because he didn't order enough helicopters. That's not the case. The joint chiefs of staffs wanted six; Carter added two more as insurance, eight in total, the most that could fit under an aircraft carrier and avoid being seen as Soviet reconnaissance as it got closer to the Iranian coast. Everything that could go wrong did go wrong, sandstorms and the like. But the real problem was we had four military services in an extreme complicated rescue effort that had to go from desert one to the suburbs of Tehran then into Tehran, get them, get them back, and there was no joint command at that time; we created it. And so, you had four military services that never once practiced together the entire mission. Imagine a football team that didn't practice all elements together. And so, when the rotor blade of one of the helicopters struck the C-130 cargo plane full of fuel, it caused an explosion and eight of our servicemen were killed, and those flames engulfed not just them, but our administration as well. Now my book is not just about policy; it's about people. And there are a cast of characters that I lay out that could come out of Shakespearian play, the tragic and the uplifting, the humorous and the villainous; time doesn't obviously permit talking about many of them but I'll give you just one or two and then get to Carter and close. You can't understand Jimmy Carter without understanding his mother Ms. Lillian. As a young registered nurse, when it was simply not done, she tended to black and white patients, got paid in vegetables and chickens. At age 68 she enters the Peace Corps in India and of course during the presidential campaign in '76, she's a vigorous defender of her husband. A reporter from New York calls and asks to come down to Plains for an interview and then starts cross examining her about her son's pledge 'I'll never lie to you.' And she says to Ms. Lillian, "Now come on, you're his mother, you know he must've lied when he was growing up." "Oh of course, he told white lies all the time." "What do you mean, Ms. Lillian, by a white lie?" "Well you know" said Ms. Lillian, "honey" she said, "when I said how wonderful it was to have you down here from New York to Plains, that was a white lie." [audience laughs] I saw Rosalynn Carter evolve from a campaign wife who was so shy she literally couldn't speak on a podium into an enormously

accomplished First Lady, only the second after Eleanor Roosevelt to testify in Congress, drafts her own mental health legislation and gets it passed, and becomes a real partner of the president. It was like seeing a flower blossom. And then there's Carter, himself, who is of course the main character in the book. Here's someone who comes, and you have to see it to believe it, from a gnat invested hamlet of 500 people in southwest Georgia to the Oval Office. And I recount in a book this magic trick of how it happened. But it was indefatigable campaigning, one hundred days alone before the Iowa caucuses, but also understanding the mood of the public at the time. It was not for more social spending after eight lean Republican years; it was to restore integrity and honesty in the oval office. It was to remove the stain of Watergate and he was beautifully positioned to do that as an outsider not connected to Washington. And he became, in effect, the first new Democrat fiscally moderate, socially progressive on race and gender issues, believed in free trade and the importance of alliances and yes he can be blamed for excessive attention to detail; he would always ask for more back up information before he made a decision; he would circle some of my memos for misspellings, but I've begun to believe over the years that it is better to have a president who is extremely prepared to make a decision compared to one who isn't. He had a very odd view of politics. He was a ferocious campaigner who would do what he had to do to get elected. But then, once he was in office, he wanted to do the right thing, to park politics at the Oval Office door. That was a strength and a weakness. The great strength was that it enabled him to take on politically unpopular things and make great accomplishments, like Panama, like the Middle East, like energy, which were political losers. But it was a weakness as well because the president is not just commander in chief, he has to be politician in chief. He has to nurture his base and keep his party behind him, which Donald J Trump does very well with his republican base; Carter did not and it was a weakness and I'm frank about it. In the end he was too liberal for conservatives and too conservative for liberals. He didn't play the political game fully, although he accomplished great things. If you read my book, you'll understand not just the Jimmy Carter presidency but the American presidency; you'll be a fly on the wall to the hot house atmosphere, the almost unendurable pressures, that cascade into the White House on the president. The fact that often the options you have to choose from are bad and awful. And you'll appreciate the pressures on every president of the United States. So, I'm not nominating Jimmy Carter in this book to be another face on Mount Rushmore, but I am suggesting he belongs in the foothills with several other presidents who made major achievements in making this a better country and a safer world. Thank you very much.

[Audience claps]

Griffith: Thank you so much, Ambassador Eizenstat. I'm not gonna take too much time because I want to open it up to all of you, but I did want to ask you a couple of questions about this. And I just want to say to the audience this book is so compelling; I've been telling everyone in reading it how good it is as you can see here. And there's so much else of course you didn't have time to say. but I was really taken by your account of the 1980 election. And you mention this as one of the Is, the intra party politics that occurred when Ted Kennedy made a run for the nomination and based in part on his frustration it sounds like with President Carter on healthcare, which is one of your regrets, that not more got done on healthcare, which I'd love for you to say a word about too. But I was stunned, even though I suppose this has come out

already, to read that there is very strong evidence suggesting that some of the Kennedy loyalists actually stole the debate playbook that you had crafted for President Carter against President Reagan and gave it to the Reagan folks before that October 28th debate and I just wondered if you could say a word. This just reminded me of a lot of the intra party politics we see now. And that we saw the sort of Bernie, Hilary stuff and the aftermath of that too. So, I wondered if you'd just reflect for us on that.

Eizenstat: Sure. So, if you look at modern presidents, the ones who have, as sitting presidents, substantial opposition within their party to their re-nomination, go into the general election very weakened and often lose. That's one of the reasons we beat Ford, because a guy named Ronald Reagan ran against him in '76 and almost got the nomination. So, the Ted Kennedy run was extremely debilitating and what was even more so is that when we won at the convention, overwhelmingly 2-1 in terms of delegates, Teddy never reconciled; there was no joining of the hands together. Instead, he gives a speech saying "The dream will never die." He has to be literally pushed onto the podium with this long distance hand shake. He doesn't join the campaign with Carter - extremely debilitating. Could this have been avoided? Ted Kennedy's, and I'm a great admirer of his, we were very close, even with this splitting of the party, his number one goal was always, from the day he came into the Senate to the day he died, was national health insurance. And we had pledged to support national health insurance in the '76 campaign. But, as the months and years unfolded in the Carter presidency, inflation got higher, the deficit got higher, and it was very difficult for us to do; so, I negotiated with Ted in what's called the Senate hideaway office that senior senators have, a complete national health insurance program. Every phase we would start with covering young kids and the elderly, Medicaid expansion, employer mandates, it's like the Obama plan twenty years later. Really almost identical. And I bring it back to the president and I said to him and to Ham Jordan who's Chief of Staff and top political aid, if we can agree on this with Ted Kennedy, even though it has absolutely no chance of passing, he'll have no justification for running against us. And the economic said no we can't afford it, etc., and he runs. Okay, so again, if he was gonna run, at least reconcile after. Then what happens is we have a debate with Reagan, only one debate, eight days before the election; we lost every single state except six; we lost the popular vote by 10 million votes. But, going into that debate, we were ahead. It was a huge mistake to debate to begin with. And it was as if Reagan knew all of our debate lines, and they did. So, one of the people I interviewed was James Baker; he gave George H.W. Bush's eulogy today, his secretary of state, and he was the campaign manager for Reagan, and so I interviewed Jim and I said Jim, you know there's been a book about this, is it true that you guys got our debate book. And he said, it's true, he said our campaign manager plopped it down in front of us about two weeks before the campaign, that I had prepared, all the attack lines and so forth. And Jim said I thought for about a second, about whether it was ethical for me to use it, and then I decided, all is fair in love and war, and I did. Now, it has now come out that it was a Kennedy operative, who had some inside track into the White House who ended up facilitating the theft. And I can only tell you one other anecdote, so in 1968 I worked a year with the Johnson White House and I was Humphrey's, Vice President Humphrey's, research director in the '68 campaign against Nixon. And I can remember the brutality of that convention. Mayor Daley's forces that tear gassed against the anti-Vietnam things, the anger and bitterness. It was almost like a replay in 1980.

I'm on the floor. Kennedy's got like 59 minority planks, huge spending increases and so forth and the bitterness and the yelling against me was just unbelievable, I mean just the party was really rent this and it was a major factor in our losing.

Griffith: Amazing. Another incident that you mention as maybe being, um, I don't know if you call it a mistake in the book or not, is that famous interview with Playboy magazine in 1976. I think I told you the only Playboy magazine I've ever seen in my parent's house was that particular issue when I was a kid and it was for that interview. But there was that famous line about lust in my heart that you think did some damage.

Eizenstat: So, this almost lost us the election in '76 because Carter had portrayed himself as he is, a really devout Baptist, a religious man, highly moral, so mistakenly his press secretary during the campaign and communications director say to him, look, you're running in a very negative way with young people. They think you're too straight and they don't relate to you. And they arrange in his house in Plains this Playboy interview. So, it's actually a very straight interview on policy, he answers all the questions. And then the reporter is leaving his house, the same one I was in two weeks ago, and unbeknownst to Carter, the reporter still has his tape recorder on. And he says to Carter, tell me, you're a devout Baptist, what does the Bible say about sex, what's Christ have to say about this. And he, Carter says, well, the New Testament says that men will inevitably have lust in their heart but they shouldn't go any further, and somehow that got morphed into Carter having lust in his heart and that was the headline in the Playboy thing and it was devastating because it undercut the whole image of Carter as a moral guy. Now, we only wish presidents had lust in their heart, right?

[Audience chuckles]

Griffith: Well and the, I would think, anyone knows that Jimmy Carter has lived such an exemplary life since the presidency, right, that his true character has shown. Okay, let's open it up here for a few minutes. We've got a couple of mics here if anyone else would like to ask a question...are we gonna bring the mic down? Great! Thank you.

Audience Question 1: Stuart, Dick Flemming, I haven't seen you for 38 years. It's great to see you again, had the pleasure of working in the Carter administration. Um, really enjoyed your tour through the discussion this evening and look forward to reading your book. Looking forward, how do we get out of where we are, and what is the path looking back as you so succinctly did in terms of the 60s and the 70s and the 80s, where are we going to be in the next round and how do we get out of this ditch that we're in?

Eizenstat: Thank you. So, let me just say that Dick Flemming was, during the '76 campaign, one of the fathers, really the father, of what was a sort of landmark urban policy of ours, public

private partnerships, to leverage private sector efforts in the inner city, so-called UDAG program and others and I want to thank you Dick for what you did. So how do we get out of the current situation. You know, I really think that a winning message in 2020 would be the following: Let's restore what we've had before; we've always had partisanship in the country, but we also had respect, and that in our system of government, we simply cannot get things done unless we reach across the aisle. And a candidate who said I'm willing to talk to the opposition and I'm willing to come to compromises, number one. Number two, someone who says the most important thing in the United States, the thing that distinguishes our democracy is respect for the rule of law, respect for our institutions, and restoring that respect is critically important, so that's the second thing. The third thing is to say we are a country of 320 million people; we're unbelievably diverse; and it's important for a president to unite, not to divide the country, not to create division and stoke differences for political gain. I really think that would be a message that would resonate very strongly with a lot of people, republicans and democrats.

Griffith: That's...certainly that's a message that resonated in the wake of the death of President George Herbert Walker Bush, right, that's been so much praise of him.

Eizenstat: So, I mean, look, I don't want to pretend to be a best friend with George H.W. Bush, but I had a significant relationship with him in several areas, Marie. First was when he was the CIA director, he is the one that briefed President Elect Carter in the transition; I was the only staff person permitted to be briefed and that was my first interaction with him. Second, going into the presidency I created something called the American agenda, a bipartisan group that Ford and Carter co-chaired, and we presented to president elect, George H.W. Bush in 1988, a recommendation, bipartisan recommendations of foreign and defense domestic policy. And then number three, and this was so typical of him, so when he sought congressional authority to send American troops into the first Gulf War, what I call the good Gulf War, Saddam Hussein invades Kuwait, Bush wants to send troops there. And he decides he wants Congressional authorization and the Democrats are strongly against it. So, I help create a group of Democrats, along with Congressman Solarz, and we raised money and we worked with the White House to lobby Democrats to support giving Bush that authority. And in typical gracious fashion, he had Steve and me for a private reception in his personal residence. I still have a picture in my den of the two of us. He, like Carter, was a ferocious campaigner. He ran a very tough race against Dukakis, for example, very tough.....but he governed from the center and on budget issues, on environment, he reached across the aisle as we did in many of our so...I only wish, and I think it will last a nanosecond unfortunately after the funeral when we'll go back, but if people could just be reminded of Bush's legacy of bipartisanship, of respect for institutions, of respect for those we differ, it would make a huge difference and again I really do think that it would touch a very responsive chord for people looking for a candidate who can restore that kind of bipartisanship.

Griffith: Well that seems like a wonderful place to close. Please bring your questions to the Ambassador out there when you buy his book and come meet him....

Audience Member: [starts speaking before Eizenstat gets a chance to speak] Just one question...I saw that President Carter was at the service today in Washington. How is his health?

Eizenstat: Okay so the question is, he was at the service, how is his health. I saw him, as I mentioned, November 11th, for an hour in his home. So, here's somebody that's 94; he had, three years ago, metastatic melanoma, which had spread to his brain and liver and other things. I went down to see him in Atlanta about a week or so after he announces this and a day before he was going to get his first immunotherapy, not chemotherapy, immunotherapy, which is a new precision medicine DNA based thing. I can assure you I won't be around to see it, but my grandchildren certainly will and maybe my children. It's precision medicine; you avoid chemo which kills good and bad cells. He got it at Emory and three years later, totally cancer free. Totally cancer free. He's done everything. And it's now being used for lung cancer; I was in Sarasota a couple of days ago and someone used it for...successfully for intestinal cancer. It doesn't work; it's just in its infancy for everybody. But his health is remarkable. He's still building homes for Habitat and tomorrow night I'll be in New York at the 92nd Street Y and he'll be coming in by Skype from Atlanta hopefully. And so, he's just remarkable. He's still fly fishing and hiking and the like.

Griffith: Great. Thank you. Please join me in thanking Ambassador Eizenstat. [Audience claps]

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