

The Ford and Carter Years

13 October 1973: Nixon announced Ford as his choice to succeed Spiro Agnew as VP after the corruption during his tenure in office in MD broke



# 25<sup>th</sup> Amendment: '67



Never elected  
as president

Never elected  
as vice  
president



“ I am acutely aware that  
you have not elected me as  
your president by your ballots.  
So I ask you to confirm me  
with your prayers. ”

**Gerald R. Ford**

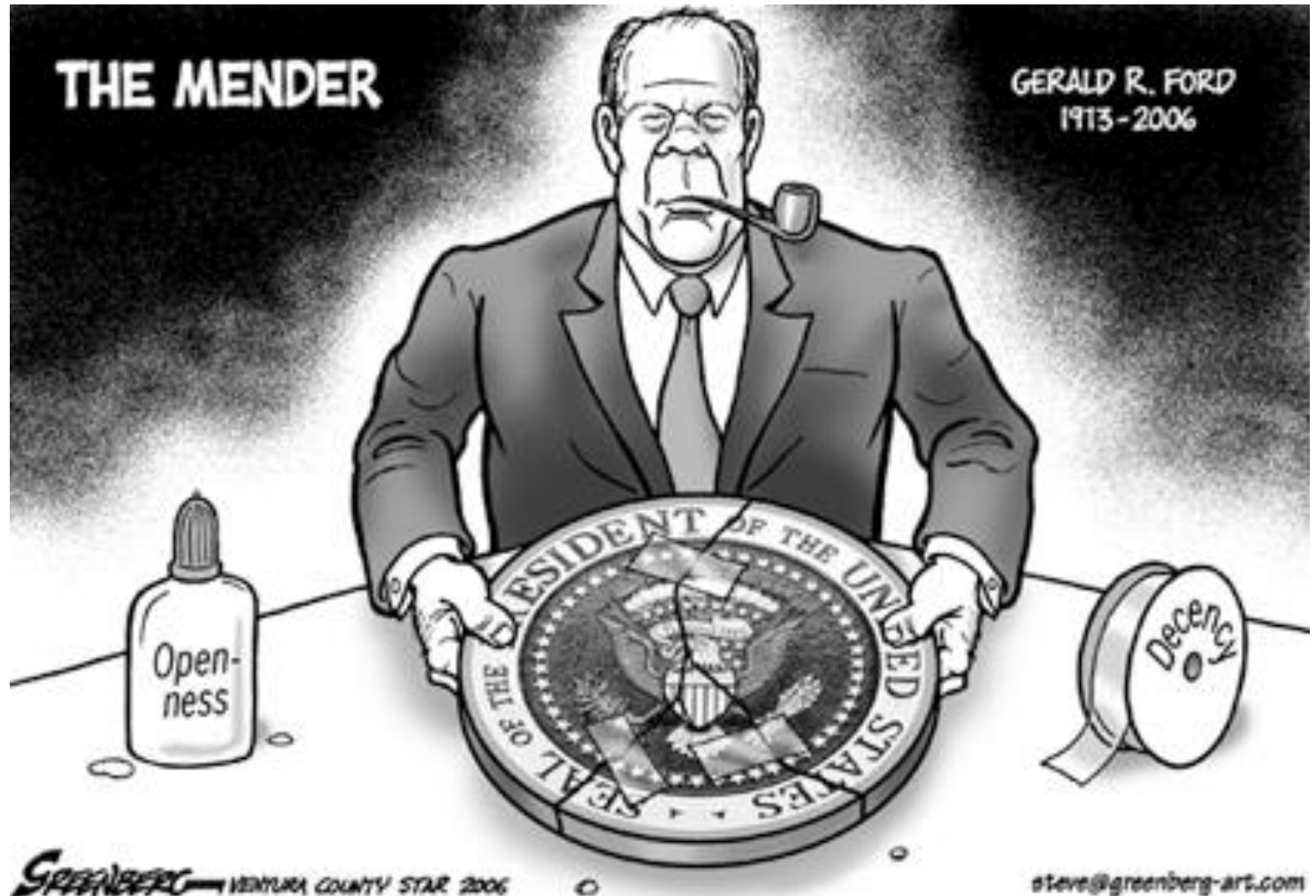
July 14, 1913 - Dec. 26, 2006

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Distrust in govt → voter apathy → Freedom of Information Act ('67)  
strengthened with the addition of the Privacy Act of '74 and the Govt in the  
Sunshine Act of '76

- Allows citizens to request govt docs to check for accuracy within the executive branch

Promotes TRANSPARENCY → Opens up meetings of many govt agencies to the public





## Ford Pardons Nixon

President Ford granted a full pardon to Nixon in '74 for any crime he may have committed

- Heavily criticized decision

## Ford as President

In foreign affairs, Ford continued the policy of détente and kept on Kissinger as Secretary of State

- 15 May '75: Battle of Koh Tang as a result of the attempted rescue of the cargo ship—the *Mayaguez*—from the Khmer Rouge

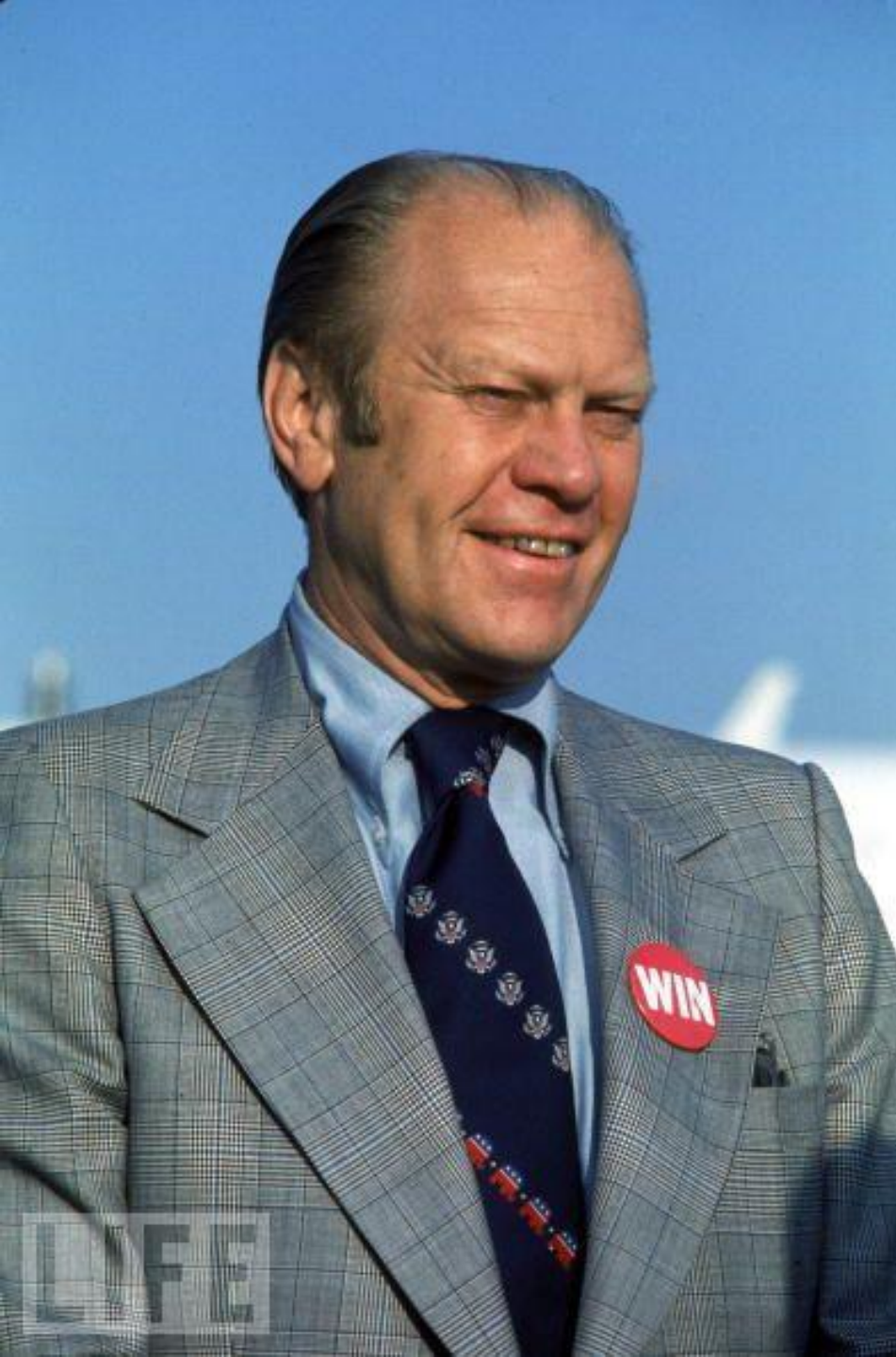


Cartoon by Draper Hill, © 1974, The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, TN. Used with permission.



# South Vietnam Falls to Communism 29 April '75





1974: Ford attempted a public campaign that urged Americans reduce spending by driving less, carpooling, using less electricity, etc. in order to “Whip Inflation Now”

Caused factories to close →

Consumer demand for goods drops →

Unemployment rises



# The Helsinki Accords

## 1 August 1975, Finland

- 35 nations (mostly NATO & Warsaw Pact countries)
  - Agreement reached dealing with issues of territorial boundaries, trade and exchange across the “Iron Curtain,” promised to uphold basic human rights and freedoms
  - Expansion of the détente policy in the Cold War
- SALT II

Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty

Refraining from the threat or use of force

Inviolability of frontiers

Territorial integrity of States

Peaceful settlement of disputes

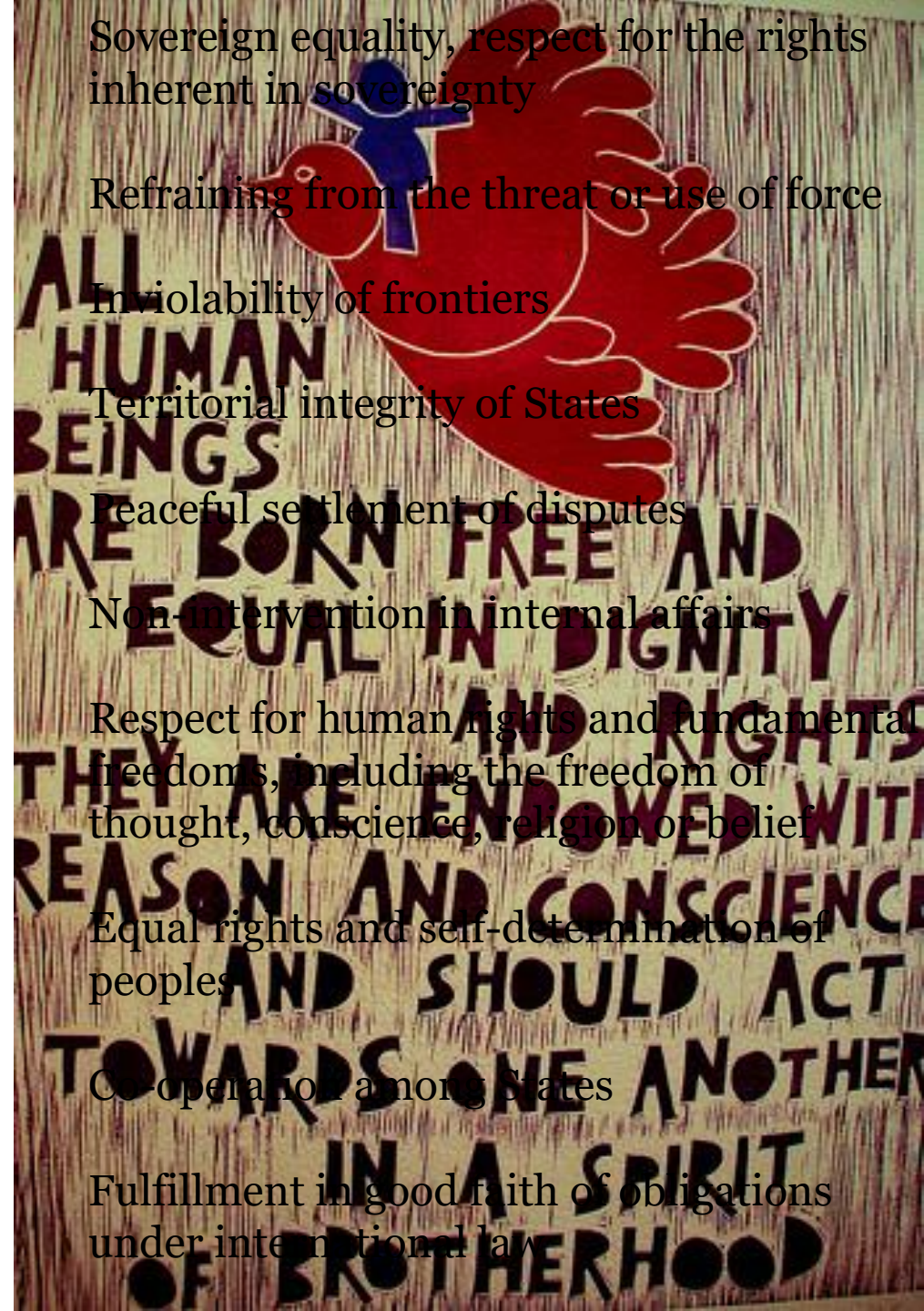
Non-intervention in internal affairs

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief

Equal rights and self-determination of peoples

Co-operation among States

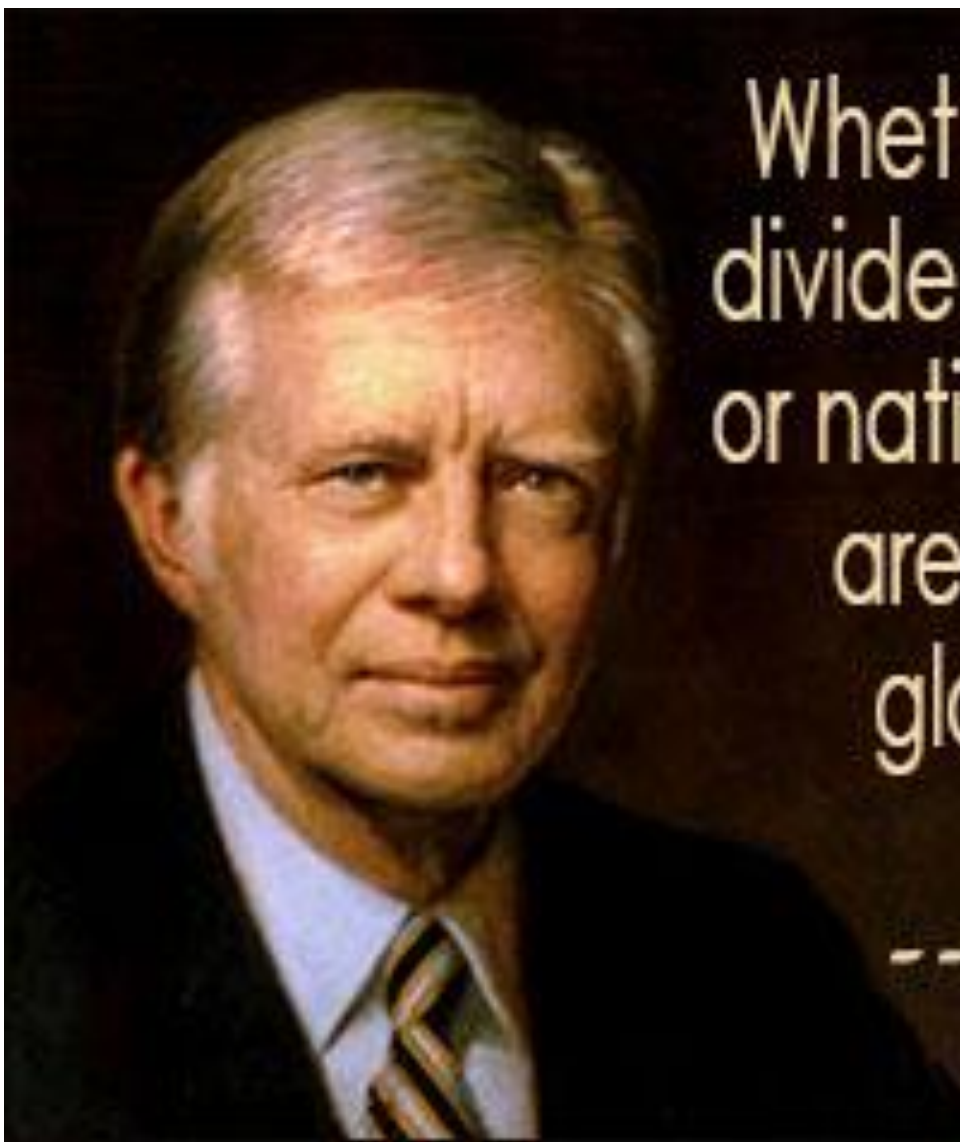
Fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law





Leonid Brezhnev: Soviet General Secretary after Khrushchev's removal; in office from 1964-1982





Whether the borders that  
divide us are picket fences  
or national boundaries, we  
are all neighbors in a  
global community.

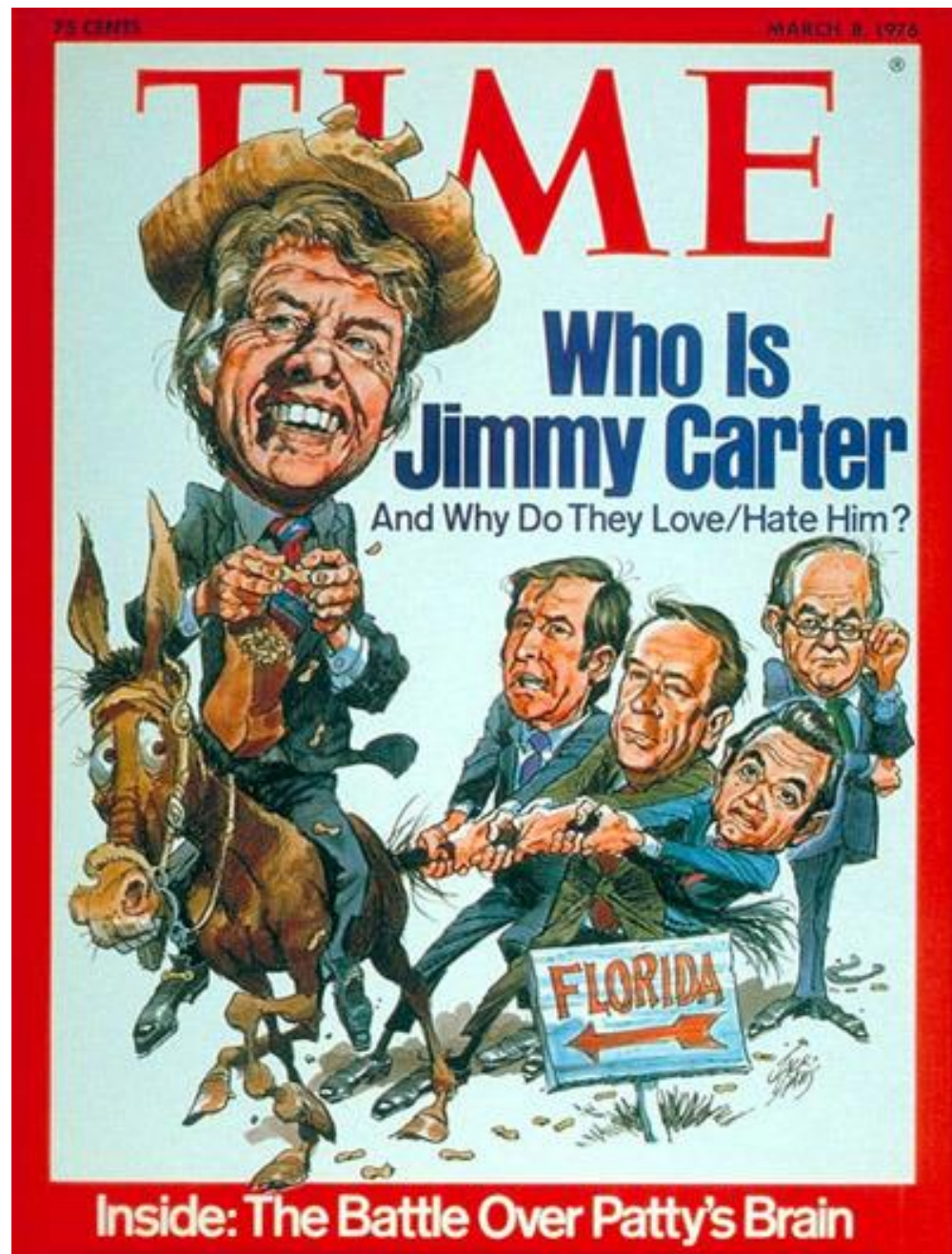
-- Jimmy Carter



A political “outsider”  
– Worked in his favor during the election,  
but not during his  
time in office

- Came across as deeply religious, a simple, honest “good ole boy” from the Georgia

- Passionate about human rights issues





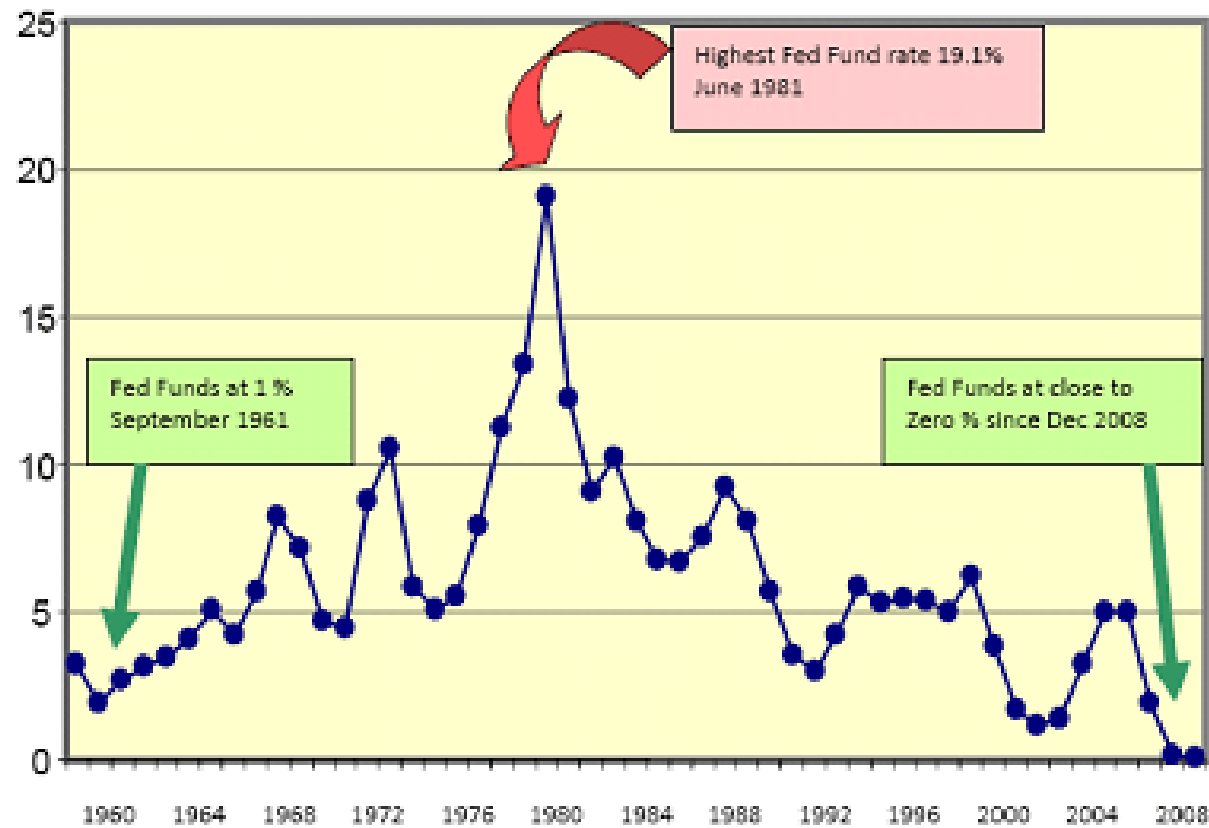
Amnesty Plan '77 – offered a group pardon to men who avoided military service in Vietnam or deserted the military → heavily criticized

# Challenges Facing the Nation

## The Economy and Energy

- Carter wanted to ease dependence on foreign oil through energy conservation, developing new energy supplies, and loosening govt regulation of the American oil industry
- Asked Americans to conserve energy
- Promoted the development of alternative energy sources
- Carter and the Federal Reserve began to raise interest rates to try to help with inflation

Fed Funds Rate 1960 to 2010



Data Source: Federal Reserve

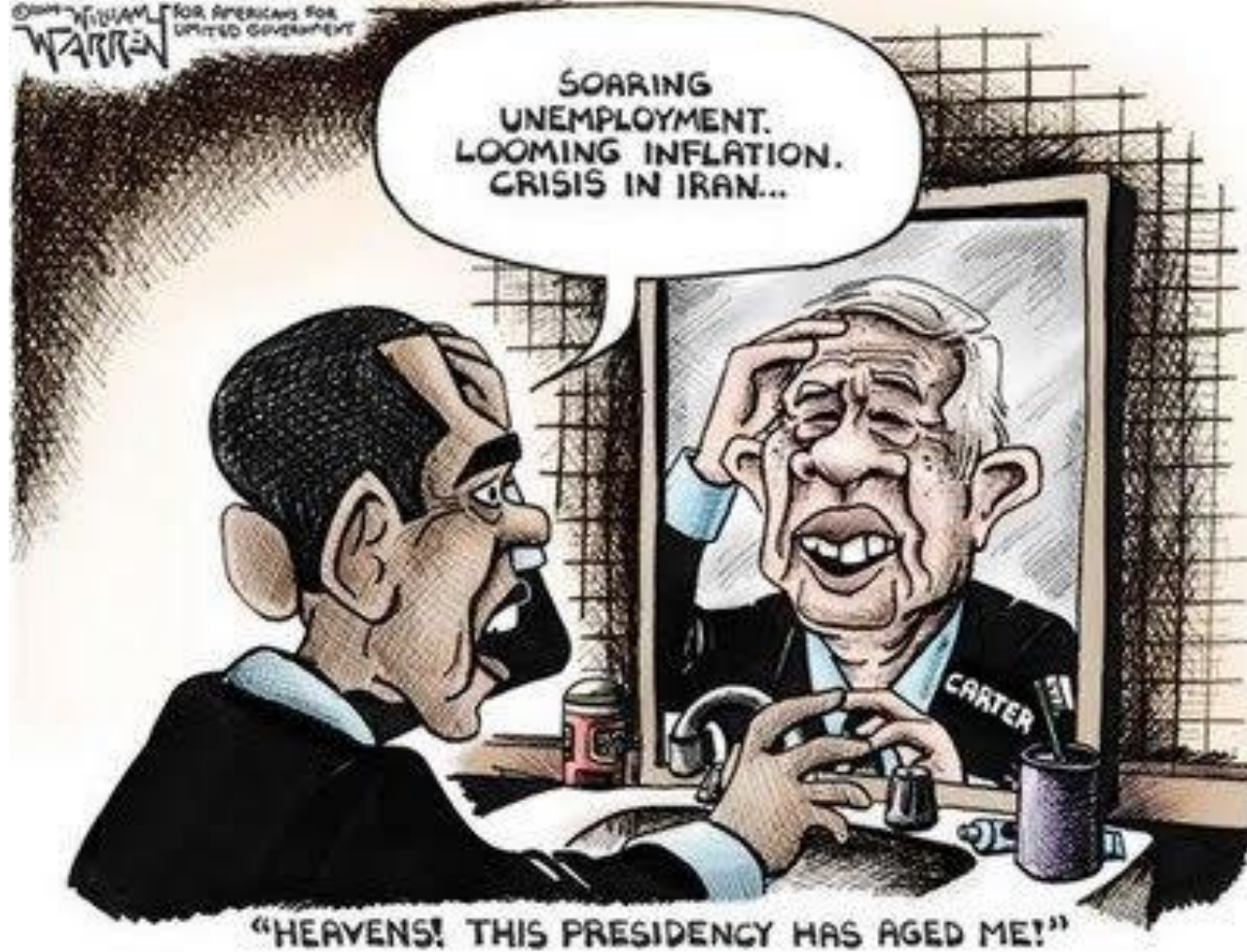
Chart: © Gramercy Capital Management Corp 2010



# Jimmy Carter's Speech on America's Energy Crisis

## 15 July 1979



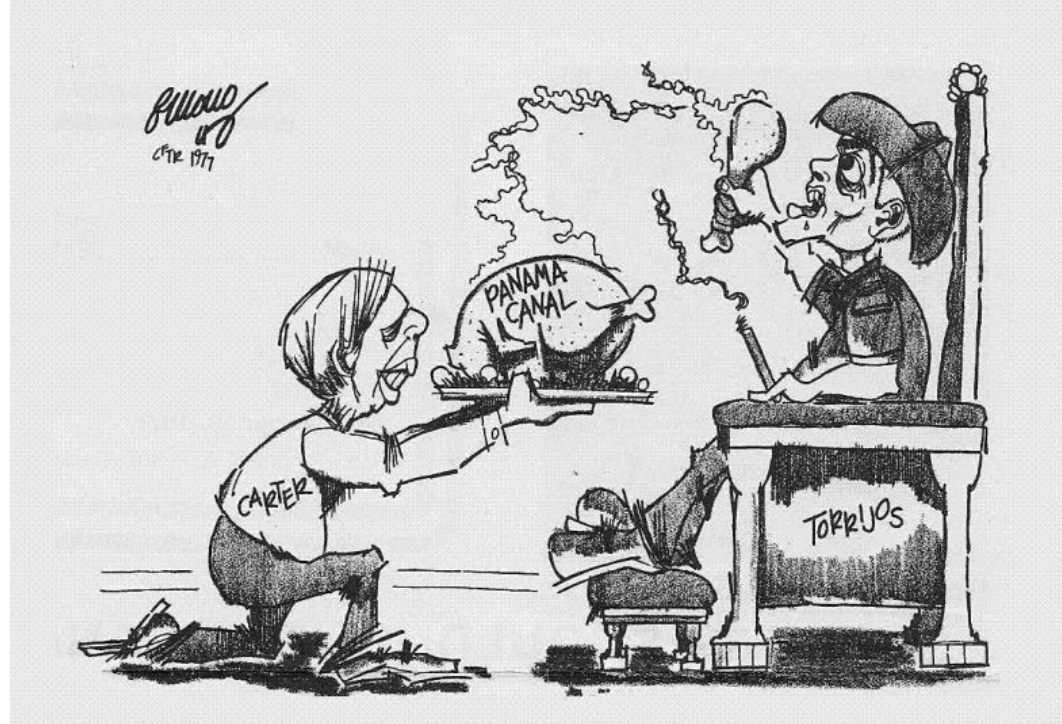
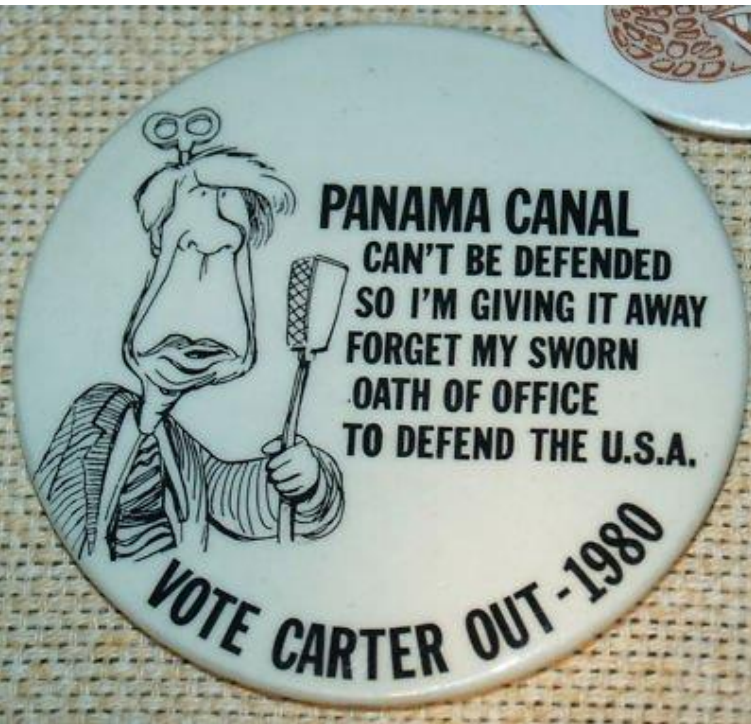


## Impact

- The economy added many new jobs to help battle unemployment
- Carter was unable to bring down inflation, in fact, it got worse
- Carter's energy policies were successful at helping reduce American dependence on foreign oil
- American production of renewable energy increased under Carter



# Carter's Foreign Policy



## Torrijos-Carter Treaties

- American control of the Panama Canal had been a source of conflict between the two countries
- Sept. 1977 agreed that Panama would take control of the canal zone by 2000
- Senate narrowly approved the treaties in '78
- For some Americans, loss of control of the canal represented a decline in American power



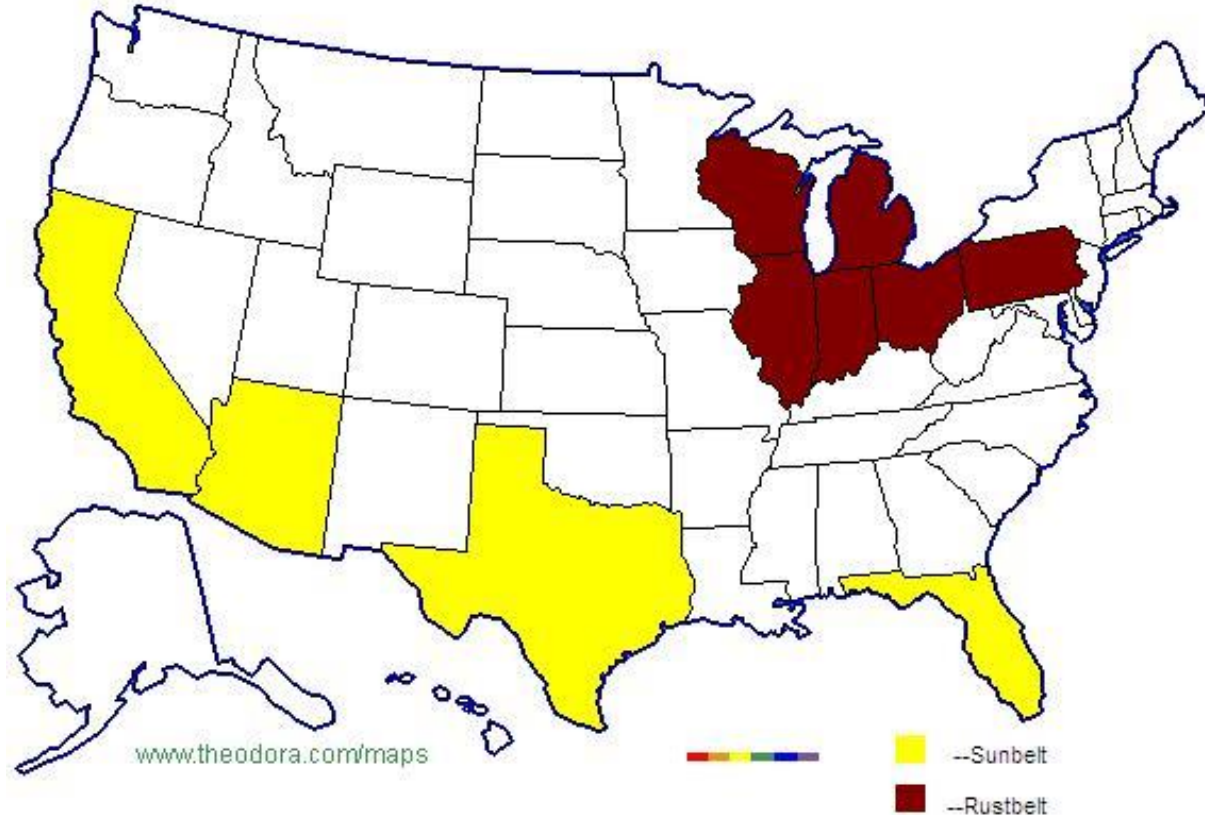
# Three Mile Island, PA '79 – nuclear plant almost enters meltdown

- Carter visits with his wife, Rosalynn, to assure the nation that the radioactive gas had been contained
- Govt temporarily stopped building new nuclear power plants



# The “Rustbelt”

- Midwestern and Northeastern local economies that had traditionally specialized in large scale manufacturing
- Area encountered several difficulties due to businesses moving to the Sunbelt:
  - Population loss
  - Depletion of local tax revenues
  - Chronic high unemployment





# Carter's Cold War Actions

## USSR:

- Carter wrote to Brezhnev about his concerns with Soviet human rights issues
- Brezhnev politely said that each country should mind their own business
- Concluded **SALT II** talks in 1979 that further limited ICBMs

## China:

- '79: formally recognized the govt of the Communist People's Republic of China
- Ended recognition of the Republic of China on the island of Taiwan

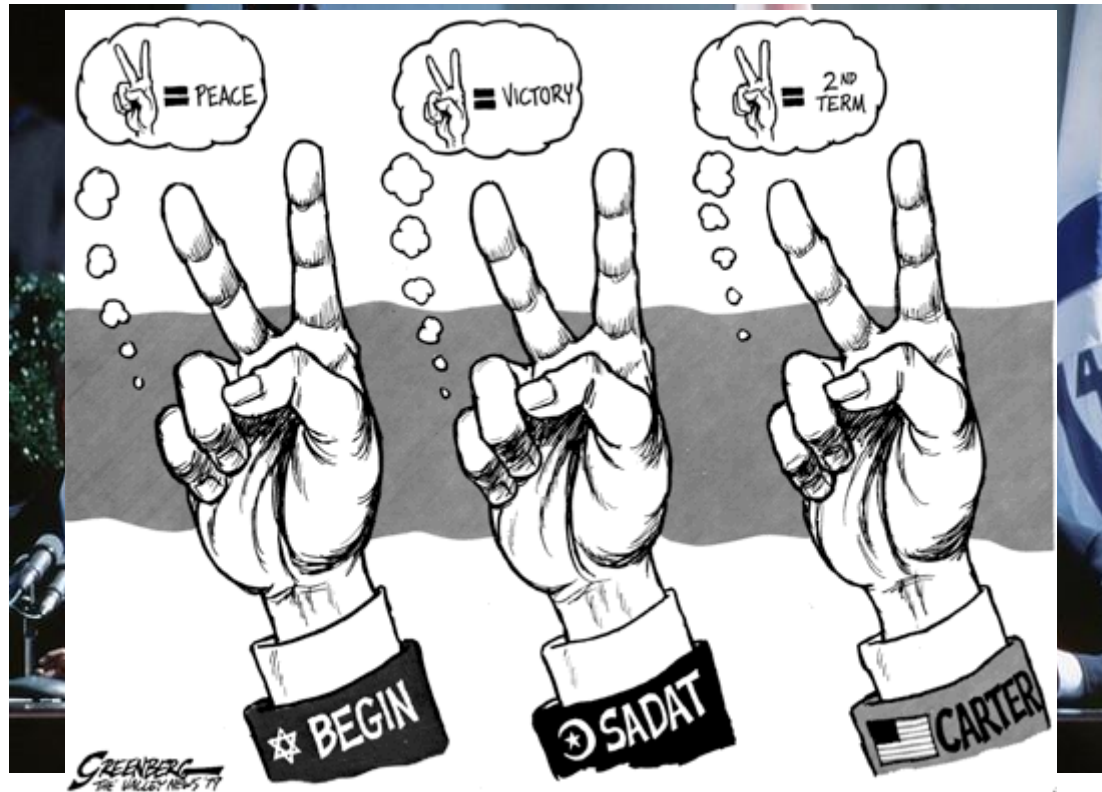




# Carter & the Cold War

- **SALT II Treaty:**  
never ratified due  
to the Soviet  
invasion of  
Afghanistan
- U.S. responds by  
boycotting the  
1980 Olympics in  
Moscow





## Camp David Accords

- Greatest foreign policy achievement in Carter's Admin.
- Conflict between Egypt and Israel continued; Egypt would not recognize Israel and Israel continued to occupy Egyptian territory
- Carter guided Anwar el-Sadat and Menachem Begin to a historic agreement that came to be called the **Camp David Accords**
- Begin and Sadat won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979





*Carter receiving the Nobel Prize in 2002 "for his decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to promote economic and social development"*





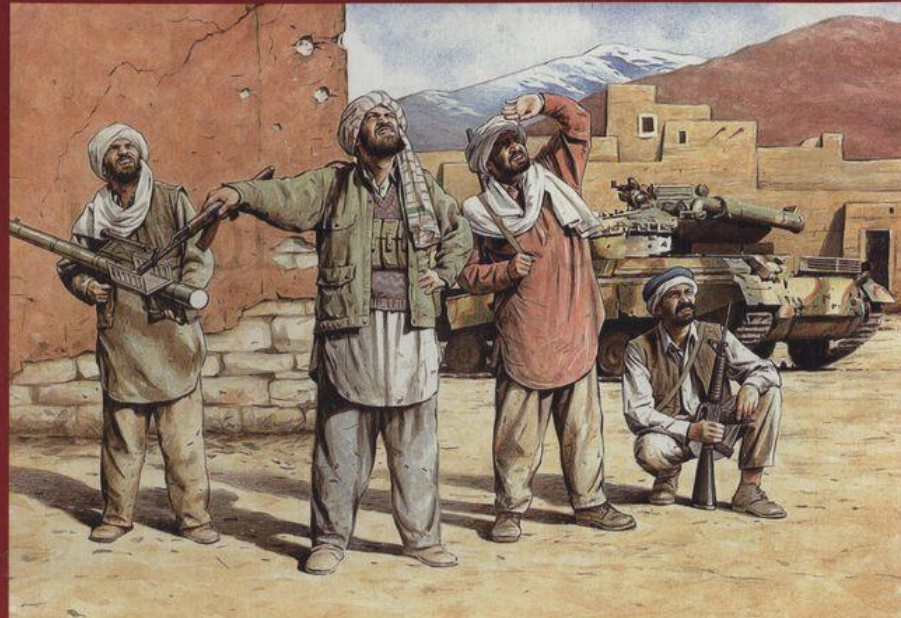
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## SOVIET-AFGHAN WAR, 1979-1988

### Mujahideen

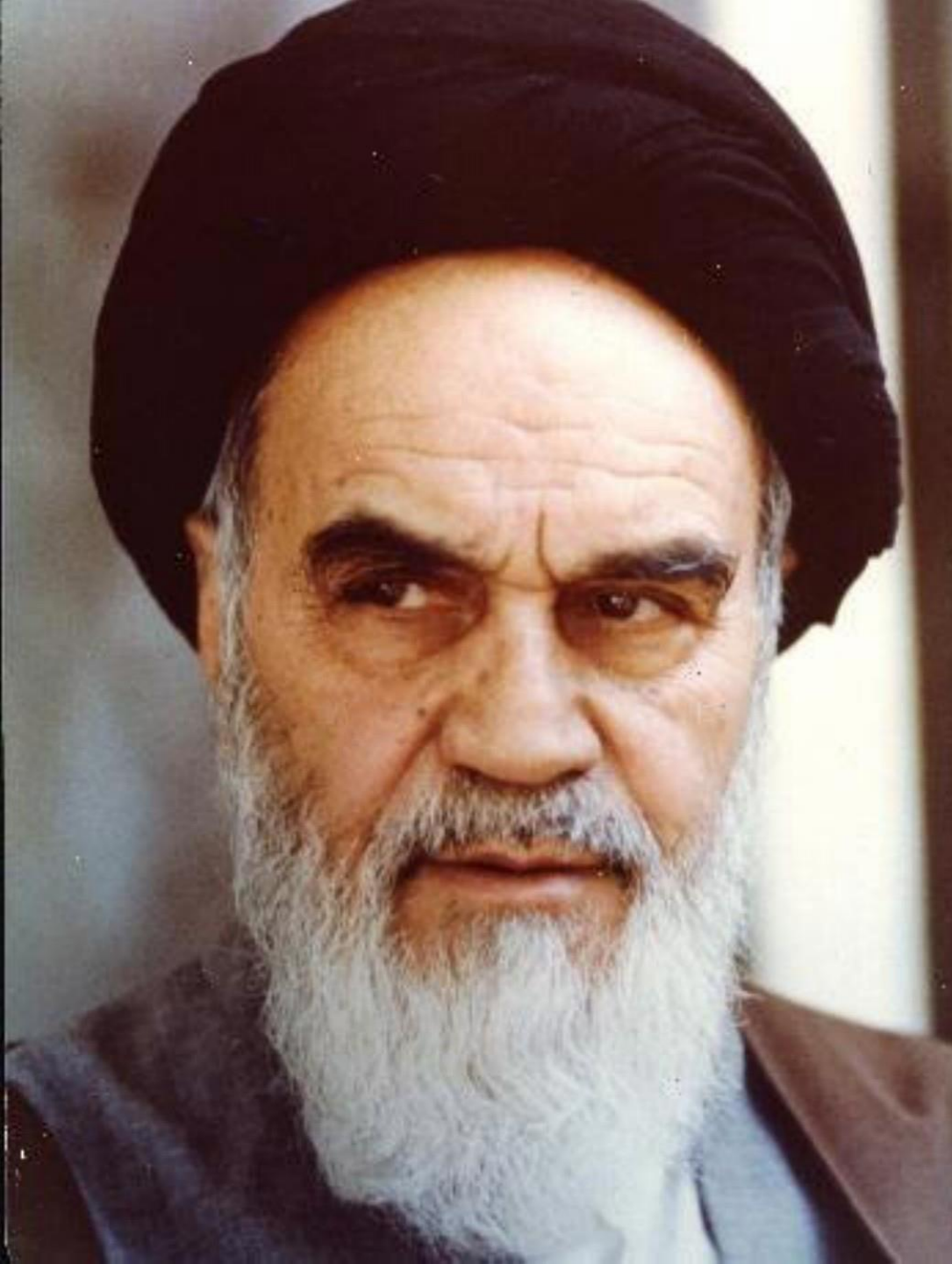
20<sup>th</sup>  
CENTURY  
LOCAL  
CONFLICTS

1:35  
SCALE



## Afghanistan

- Soviets invaded Afghanistan to ensure continued communist rule in the country
- The attack threatened U.S.-Soviet relations and called into question Carter's ability to respond to Soviet aggression
- Carter blocked shipment of grain to the Soviet Union and said the U.S. would boycott the 1980 Olympics
- Americans did not like the grain embargo or the Olympic boycott because they seemed to hurt the U.S. as much as the Soviet Union



← Ayatollah  
Khomeini



Shah of Iran



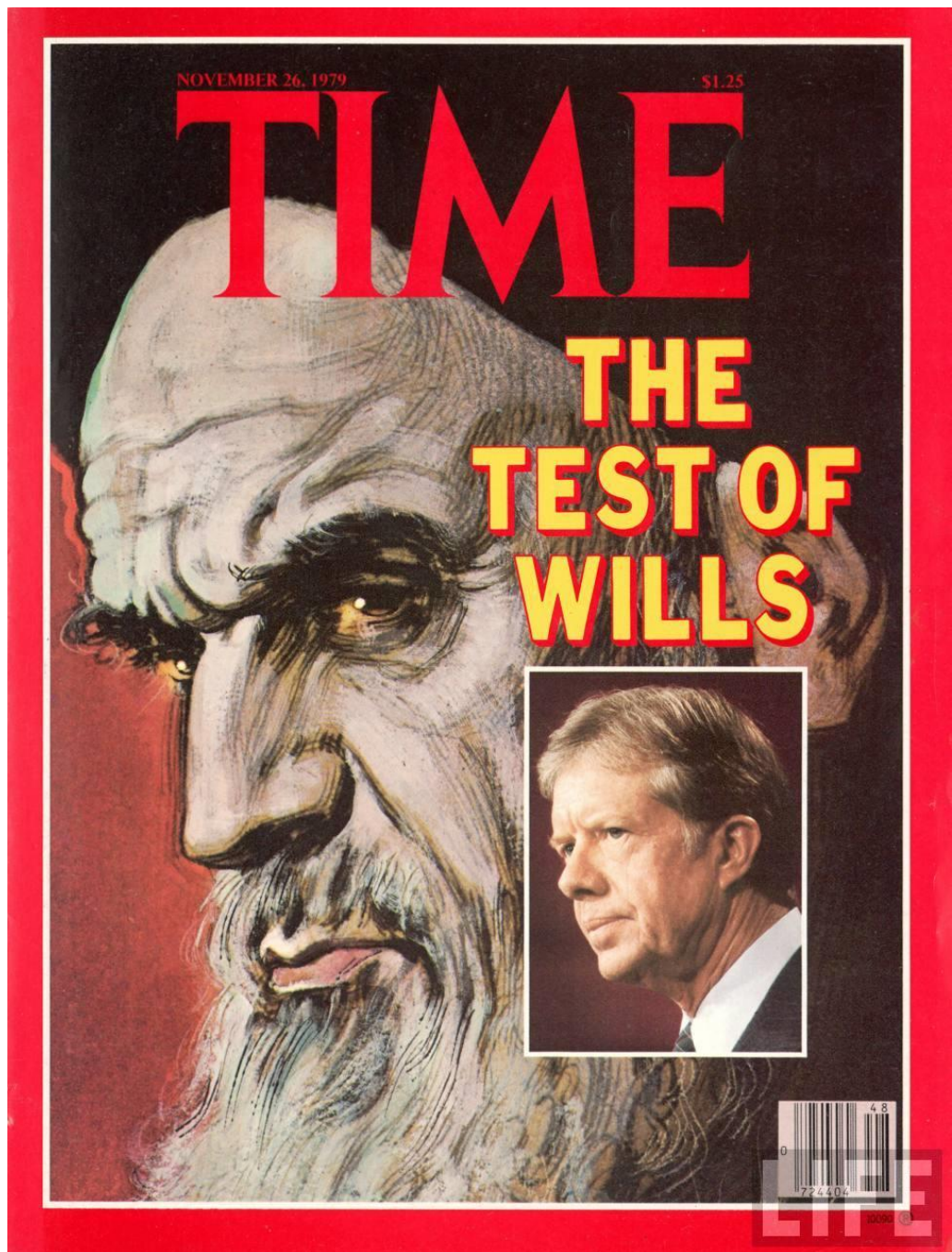
GRAPHIC/GRANT-KESTON/GETTY IMAGES

## Iran Hostage Crisis

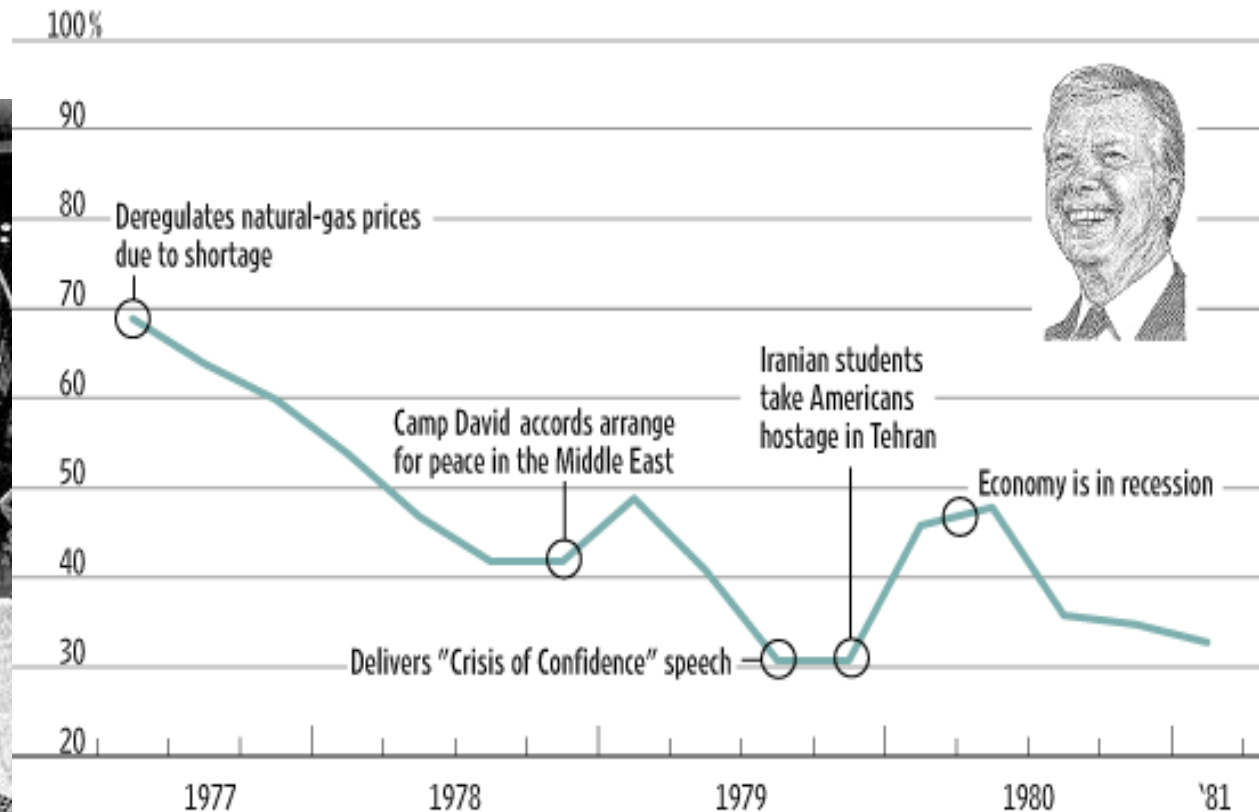
- Ayatollah Khomeini and fundamentalist Muslims seize power in Iran after the ailing Shah seeks medical help in the U.S.
  - U.S. had helped the Shah come to power in years prior with the help of the CIA (builds resentment)
- Revolution rises in the anti-American country
- Student radicals capture American citizens at the U.S. embassy and hold them hostage
- 52 Americans are held for 444 days



- The Iranian Hostage situation dragged on throughout the presidential election year of 1980
- The situation in Iran also drove up gasoline prices so that prices of goods in the U.S. went up and inflation soared
- Many voters held Carter responsible for the problems and the downcast mood of the country



- American morale is low, Carter's public opinion ratings are unsteady
- The U.S. hockey team beat the unstoppable Soviets in the 1980 Olympics at Lake Placid → boosts morale
- Carter's administration failed to end the period of *stagflation* that persisted throughout most of the 1970s





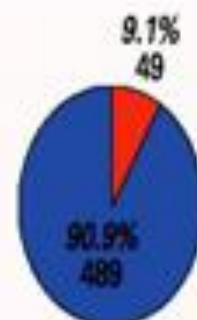
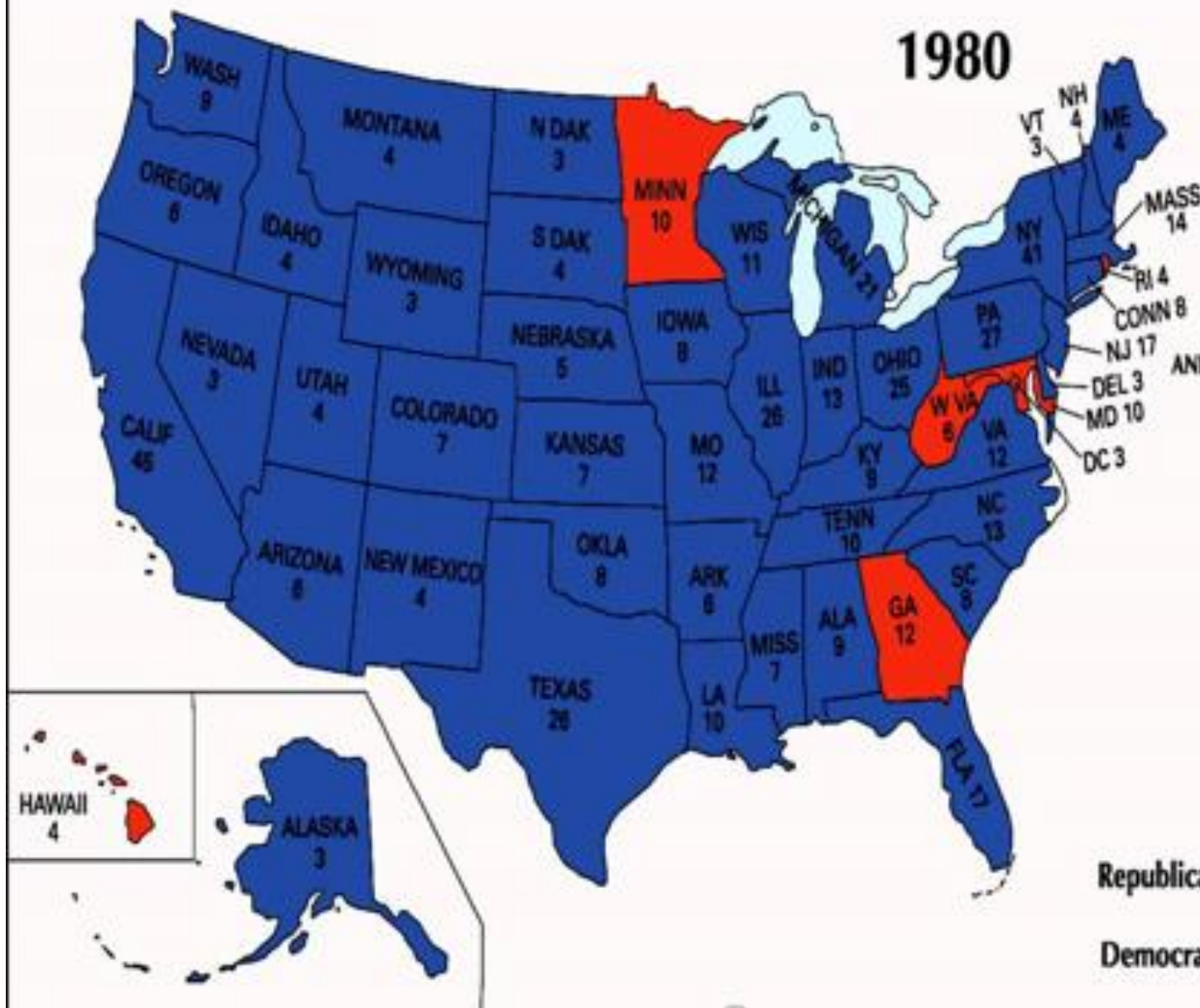
# 1980 Election



“Are you better off now than you were four years ago?”

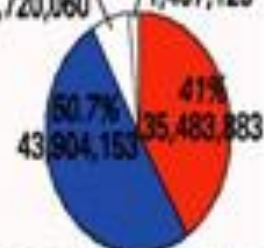


# 1980



**ELECTORAL VOTE**  
TOTAL: 538

ANDERSON 6.7% 5,720,060  
MINOR 1.6% 1,407,125



**POPULAR VOTE**  
TOTAL: 86,515,221

Republican (Reagan)



Democratic (Carter)



# A brief history of Boomer political involvement...

1968

1985

2011



The "Me Generation" is the baby boom generation during the '70s → "self-realization" and "self-fulfillment" were becoming cultural aspirations among young people, who considered them far more important than social responsibility