

# PROFILE IN INCOMPETENCE



**A 10-PART SERIES ON**  

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**THE WORST PRESIDENT**  

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**IN AMERICAN HISTORY**

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**ISSUES & INSIGHTS FROM INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY\***

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In this exclusive 10-part series, IBD takes a hard look at Jimmy Carter's administration and compares it to that of George W. Bush, which Carter has called the worst ever.

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Part One

# Look Who's Talking

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 22, 2007

**Leadership:** So Jimmy Carter calls the Bush administration "the worst in history." This from the man who wrecked the world's greatest economy and made a nuclear Iran and North Korea possible.

We didn't think we'd see the day when a president-elect of France would be more appreciative of America's role in the world than one of our own former presidents.

But here is Carter telling the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette that President Bush's "administration has been the worst in history," one that has "endorsed the concept of pre-emptive war even when our own security is not directly threatened."

Later, Carter called his comments "careless or misinterpreted." But given a chance to retract, he didn't. Apparently the man whose idea of leadership was to sit in front of a fireplace and blame everything on America's "malaise" does not consider Islamofascists turning passenger jets into manned cruise missiles and flying them into skyscrapers a direct threat.

Nor does he consider himself responsible for the chain of events that gave us not only 9/11, but al-Qaida, the Taliban, Hezbollah and a nuclear Iran and North Korea.

## Iran

On taking office in 1977, Carter declared that advancing "human rights" was among his highest priorities. America's ally, the Shah of Iran, was one of his first targets, with Carter chastising him for his human rights record and withdrawing America's support.

One of the charges was that the Shah had been torturing about 3,000 prisoners, many of them accused of being Soviet agents. Carter sent a clear message to the Islamic fundamentalists that America would not come to the Shah's aid. His anti-Shah speeches blared from public address systems in downtown Tehran.

The irony, as noted by Steven Hayward of the American Enterprise Institute in his book, "The Real

Jimmy Carter," is that the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini "executed more people in its first year in power than the Shah's SAVAK had allegedly killed in the previous 25 years." Khomeini's regime was a human rights nightmare.

When Khomeini, a former Muslim exile in Paris, overthrew the Shah in 1979, he established the first modern Islamic regime, a role model for the Taliban and the jihadists to follow. And when the U.S. embassy

"The regime of the Ayatolla Khomeini 'executed more people in its first year in power than the Shah's SAVAK had allegedly killed in the previous 25 years.'"

was stormed that November and 52 American hostages were held for 444 days, America's lack of resolve was confirmed in the jihadist mind.

The wreckage of Carter's foreign policy was seen in the Iranian desert, where a plan to rescue the hostages, a plan never formally presented to the Joint Chiefs, resulted in the loss of eight aircraft, five airmen and three Marines. The rest, as they say, is history.

## Hezbollah

As we have noted, it was the Ayatollah Khomeini who introduced the idea of suicide bombers to the Palestine Liberation Organization and who paid \$35,000 to PLO families who would offer up their children as human bombs to kill as many Israelis as possible.

It was Khomeini who would give the world Hezbollah to make war on Israel and destroy the multicultural democracy that was Lebanon. And perhaps Jimmy has forgotten that Hezbollah, which he helped make possible, killed 241 U.S. Marines in their Beirut barracks in 1982.

Part One

# Look Who's Talking

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 21, 2007

(Continued)

The Soviet Union, seeing us so willingly abandon a staunch ally, invaded Afghanistan, and it was the resistance to the Soviet invasion that helped give birth to the Taliban. The Iranian revolution led to the Iraq-Iran War that took a million lives and encouraged Hussein to invade Kuwait to strengthen his position.

That led to Operation Desert Storm and bases in Saudi Arabia that fueled Islamist resentment, one of the reasons given by Osama bin Laden for striking at America, the Great Satan. Now we're about to face a nuclear Iran as we are embroiled in a war on terror.

If we'd stuck by the Shah and his successors, the history of the last 25 years in the Middle East and here at home would have been very different. As Hayward observes, the fruits of Carter's Iran disaster are with us still, spawning the rise of radical Islam, terrorism, the Taliban and al-Qaida.

## North Korea

When President Clinton first learned of the North Korean nuclear program in 1994, a surgical strike against its Yongbyong reactor might have sufficed to send Pyongyang a message that a nuclear North Korea was unacceptable.

Instead, Clinton allowed Jimmy Carter to engage in some private foreign policy and jet off to the last Stalinist regime on earth to broker a deal whereby North Korea would promise to forgo a nuclear weapons program in exchange for a basket of goodies that included oil, food and, amazingly, nuclear technology.

Along the way, Carter praised North Korea's mass-murdering dictator as a "vigorous and intelligent man." And of North Korea itself, Carter said of this habitat for inhumanity: "I don't see they are an outlaw nation."

## Cold War

Jimmy Carter also once challenged Ronald Reagan's "aggressive" and successful strategy for winning the Cold War. Perhaps he'd like to send one of his Habitat

for Humanity crews to rebuild the Berlin Wall brick by tyrannical brick. The fact is that Jimmy Carter could not have done more to damage our national security had he been a hand-picked mole planted in the White House by the KGB.

When Carter left office, the Soviet Union was on the march from Grenada to Afghanistan, control of the strategic Panama Canal had been given away, our military had planes that couldn't fly and ships that couldn't sail for lack of trained crews and spare parts, production of the B-1 strategic bomber had been canceled and our economy was in no shape to resist Soviet expansion.

Jimmy Carter, the man who makes Neville Chamberlain look like Dirty Harry, made his remarks about President Bush while promoting his audiobook series of Bible lessons for children. Jimmy, thou shalt not bear false witness against your president and country. Haven't you done enough damage? If you want to see our worst ex-president, look in the mirror.

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Part Two

# 'Malaise' Maestro

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 23, 2007

**Leadership:** When it comes to economic performance, there's no contest: Apart from the early years of the Depression, Jimmy Carter's brief tenure as president was the worst in the 20th century.

Carter's rather smug attempt to rank President Bush as the worst president ever wouldn't be so bad if it weren't so wrong. The irony, of course, is that the peanut farmer from Plains, Ga., shares that distinction with a number of other presidential mismanagers of our nation's economy.

Carter apparently has gotten so used to being called the "greatest living former president" that he's forgotten to consult the record. And what the record shows is he inherited a bad economy and made it worse — much worse — before a man named Ronald Reagan came in and changed course.

Here's where things stood in 1980, Carter's last year in office, and in subsequent periods:

- Carter: Interest rate, 21%. Inflation, 13.5%. Unemployment, 7%. The so-called "Misery Index," which Carter used to great effect in his 1976 campaign to win election, 20.5%.
- Reagan's last year: Interest rate, 9%. Inflation, 4.1%. Unemployment, 5.5%. Misery Index, 9.6%.
- Bush today: Interest rate, 8%. Inflation, 2.6%. Unemployment, 4.5%. Misery Index, 7.1%.

It's not even close. The only question is: Why did things get so bad under Carter? And that's a long story. The fundamental reason, however, is he made mistake after mistake, blinded by the leftist rhetoric his party adopted after the infamous '72 Democratic Convention, when the so-called New Left seized control.

In office, Carter adopted the Keynesian economics of the time, buying into the theory that there was a reverse "trade-off" between inflation and unemployment — an idea that proved spectacularly wrong. The U.S. became mired in "stagflation," with both inflation and unemployment rising sharply.

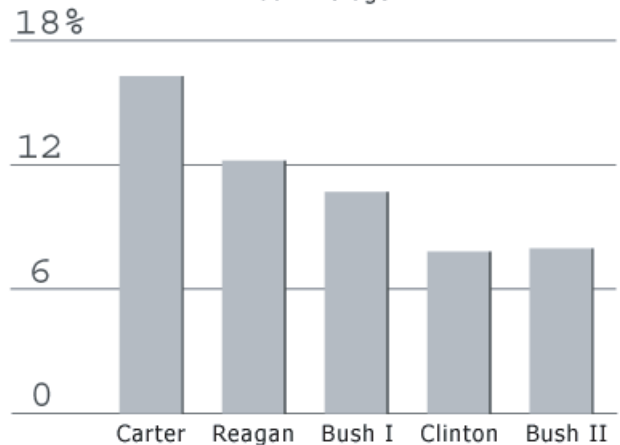
As things grew worse, Carter sharply boosted

government spending. When that didn't work, he blamed the American people. "I think it's inevitable that there will be a lower standard of living than what everybody had always anticipated," he told advisers in 1979. "The only trend is downward. But it's impossible to get people to face up to this."

## Misery Index

Inflation rate plus unemployment

Annual Average



Sources: Labor Dept., Financial Trend Forecaster

Those remarks were followed by his now-famous "malaise" speech in which he unveiled six proposals — including import quotas, windfall profits taxes and increased spending on alternative fuels — to combat higher oil prices charged by OPEC. Nothing about tax cuts. Nothing about finding more energy. In short, he told Americans to consume less, but pay more.

"We have learned that 'more' is not necessarily 'better,' and that even our great nation has its recognized limits," Carter said, borrowing heavily from the "limits to growth" movement that swept liberal intellectual circles in the '70s.

Part Two

# 'Malaise' Maestro

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 23, 2007

(Continued)

With public anger growing and his own polls lagging, Carter started wearing sweaters and encouraging us to turn down the thermostat. But his big spending didn't work. The resulting budget deficit, 12 times bigger than the one President Nixon left, gave him a serious public relations problem.

On this score, Carter might have escaped his own malaise if he had cut taxes to get the economy going again. But even with marginal income tax rates at a hefty 70%, he accepted the common wisdom that a tax cut would boost inflation and lower government revenue. He was dead wrong.

As noted in "The Commanding Heights," a leading economic history of the last century, "Carter's attempts to follow Keynes' formula and spend his way out of trouble were going nowhere."

Eventually (but grudgingly), Carter did agree to slash the tax rate on capital gains to 28% from 40%. But that didn't kick in until 1979. By then it was too late to help him politically.

Two other moves have garnered Carter praise: setting deregulation in motion and naming Paul Volcker as Fed chairman in 1979. Carter did begin deregulation, for which he deserves credit. And to be sure, Volcker clamped down on the growth in money supply, bringing on a deep recession but also killing the inflationary spiral.

Inflation, however, was already easing when Carter entered office. It was only after he named a political supporter, the late G. William Miller, as Fed chairman that prices really took off. Miller, who served only a year, is now viewed as the worst Fed chief ever.

Volcker? He wasn't Carter's choice. He was nominated only after a contingent of Wall Street power brokers, alarmed at the economy's decline, went to the White House and demanded the appointment of the well-respected president of the New York Fed.

In his last years in office, Carter spoke of an "erosion of our confidence in the future." But his failure to support the Shah of Iran led to a takeover of that oil-rich republic by fundamentalist Muslims, and a second

Mideast oil shock hammered the economy and pushed inflation to new highs.

Desperate, Carter tried "voluntary" wage and price controls. They didn't work. He tried credit controls. They didn't work. He kept oil-price controls mostly in place, and created a vast new bureaucracy — the Energy Department — that has since wasted tens of billions of dollars without creating a single drop of new energy.

The result can be seen in key indicators of American well-being. Real median after-tax income fell nearly 3% during Carter's last two years. For his entire term, productivity — the fuel for future growth in standards of living — rose a miserable 0.6% a year.

That's why, when candidate Ronald Reagan said, "Ask yourself if you're better off today than you were four years ago," the answer came back a resounding "No."

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Part Three

# Carter Planted Seeds Of Al-Qaida

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May24, 2007

**Leadership:** After being told over and over by President Jimmy Carter that America's ability to influence world events was "very limited," the Soviet Union believed him and invaded Afghanistan. And al-Qaida was born.

Carter had the perfect "anti-slogan" for a post-Watergate presidential campaign: "I will never lie to you."

Unfortunately, Carter based America's relationship with the Soviet Union on the delusion that the Russians would never lie to him. He infamously expressed shock that Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev lied to him during a "hot line" phone call following the Russian invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

But signals of weakness to the communists from the worst, most naïve president in American history began days after inauguration:

- "As I understand your highly important speech in Tula, the Soviet Union will not strive for superiority in arms," Carter wrote Brezhnev in January 1977, less than a week after his inauguration.

- In the same letter, Carter told the communist dictator of America's and the Soviet Union's "common efforts towards formation of a more peaceful, just and humane world," adding, "I hope that our countries can cooperate more closely in order to promote the development, better diet and more substantive life" of the world's poor.

Global diet, it turned out, was not Brezhnev's chief priority.

By the time Carter and Brezhnev were literally kissing and hugging one another at the signing of the SALT II accords in Vienna in June of 1979, there already had been a KGB-assisted communist coup in Afghanistan more than a year earlier.

But the U.S. under Carter wouldn't, and according to the Carter administration couldn't, act to change that or much of anything else in the world:

- Carter had already announced to Russia and the world in his June 1977 Notre Dame speech that "we are now free of that inordinate fear of communism

which once led us to embrace any dictator who joined us in that fear."

- The New York Times admiringly noted that "the Carter Administration has remained completely calm regarding the coup in Afghanistan, where the leaders of a small, communist party took power in Kabul," adding that, "Ten years ago, every communist victory was considered a clear defeat for the United States. Today, the majority of Americans believe the world is more complex."

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"Impotence, in fact, was a badge of honor in the Carter administration."

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Impotence, in fact, was a badge of honor in the Carter administration. According to British historian Paul Johnson, "The only point on which Carter's men agreed was on America's declining ability to control events." To whit:

- Cyrus Vance, Carter's first secretary of state and one of the architects of Vietnam policy in the Johnson administration, believed "we can no more stop change than Canute could still the waters."

- Carter National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski believed "the world is changing under the influence of forces no government can control."

- Carter himself, speaking to reporters in January 1979 about the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, a little less than a year before the Soviet invasion, assured the world, "Certainly we have no desire or ability to intrude massive forces into Iran or any other country..."

Carter promised: "This is something that we have no intention of ever doing in another country. We've tried this once in Vietnam. It didn't work, as you well know."

Part Three

# Carter Planted Seeds Of Al-Qaida

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 24, 2007

(Continued)

Even Democrats revolted. Shortly before the invasion, onetime Hubert Humphrey foreign policy adviser and future UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick formed the Committee on the Present Danger to warn America of the consequences of diminished U.S. power.

So setting the stage for the Russian invasion of Afghanistan was a president who:

- Repeatedly made it clear he blindly accepted Soviet lies.
- Declared over and over that the U.S. doesn't have the ability, never mind the will, to intervene militarily anywhere in the world.
- Proved America's weakness by allowing and assisting the fall of a pro-American regime in Iran, and doing nothing about the Soviet-backed April, 1978 coup in Afghanistan — plus withdrawing support for the Somoza regime in Nicaragua, leading to the Cuban-backed Sandinista revolution in July, 1979.

The Carter administration had made it crystal clear to the Kremlin that the U.S. would do little if anything to oppose the brutal influx of tens of thousands of Soviet troops that began moving into Afghanistan on Christmas Eve in 1979.

They were right. Carter's tepid response to the aggression was:

- An ineffectual grain embargo.
- A boycott of the Moscow Olympics that hurt American athletes more than anyone.
- An announcement from the president in an address to the nation shortly after New Year's in 1980 that "Fishing privileges for the Soviet Union in United States waters will be severely curtailed."

The invasion enraged Osama bin Laden, who went to Afghanistan to join the resistance. There, he met Palestinian radical Muslim scholar Abdullah Azzam, whose slogan was "Jihad and the rifle alone: no negotiations, no conferences, no dialogues."

According to author Lawrence Wright's Pulitzer Prize-winning history of al-Qaida, "The Looming Tower," "Bin Laden revered Azzam," who would travel to Saudi Arabia and hold "recruiting sessions in bin Laden's apartment, where he magnetized young Saudis with his portraits of the suffering of the refugees and the courage of the Afghan mujahideen."

Azzam "provided a model for the man (bin Laden) would become," writes Wright.

Together, bin Laden and Azzam founded the mujahideen base Maktab al-Khidamat, or the Afghan Services Bureau. Afghanistan is also where bin Laden met Ayman al-Zawahiri, who would help him found Maktab's successor group — al-Qaida.

Unintended consequences are a common feature of world history. As Jimmy Carter takes snipes at the current president, Americans should not forget that Carter's insistence that America must be weak led directly to Islamic mass murderers becoming powerful enough to slaughter thousands of innocent Americans — and to their current ambition to incinerate millions of us.

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Part Four

# Iran: Carter's Habitat For Inhumanity

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 25, 2007

**Leadership:** In the name of human rights, Jimmy Carter gave rise to one of the worst rights violators in history — the Ayatollah Khomeini. And now Khomeini's successor is preparing for nuclear war with Israel and the West.

When President Carter took office in 1977, the Iran of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was a staunch American ally, a bulwark in our standoff with the Soviet Union, thwarting the dream held since the time of the czars of pushing south toward the warm waters of the appropriately named Persian Gulf.

Being an ally of the U.S. in the Cold War, Iran was a target for Soviet subversion and espionage. Like the U.S. in today's war on terror, Iran arrested and incarcerated many who threatened its sovereignty and existence, mainly Soviet agents and their collaborators.

This did not sit well with the former peanut farmer, who, on taking office, declared that advancing "human rights" was among his highest priorities. The shah was one of his first targets. As he's done with our terror-war detainees in Guantanamo, Carter accused the Shah of torturing some 3,000 "political" prisoners. He chastised the shah for his human rights record and engineered the withdrawal of American support.

The irony here is that when Khomeini, a former Muslim exile in Paris, overthrew the shah in February 1979, many of the 3,000 were executed by the ayatollah's firing squads along with 20,000 pro-Western Iranians.

According to "The Real Jimmy Carter," a book by Steven Hayward of the American Enterprise Institute: "Kho-meini's regime executed more people in its first year in power than the Shah's Savak had allegedly killed in the previous 25 years."

The mullahs hated the shah not because he was an oppressive dictator. They hated him because he was a secular, pro-Western leader who, in addition to other initiatives, was expanding the rights and roles of women in Iran society. Under Khomeini, women returned to their second-class role, and citizens were arrested for merely owning satellite dishes that could pick up Western television.

Khomeini established the first modern Islamic regime, a role model for the Taliban and jihadists to follow. And when the U.S. Embassy was stormed that November and 52 Americans taken hostage for 444 days, America's lack of resolve was confirmed in the jihadist mind.



**Top:** Iranian terrorists who held 52 Americans hostage in 1979 bragged that a U.S. led by Jimmy Carter could not 'do a damn thing' about it. **Bottom:** Wreckage of Carter's failed hostage rescue.

Part Four

# Iran: Carter's Habitat For Inhumanity

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 25, 2007

(Continued)

On Nov. 4, 1979, some 400 Khomeini followers broke down the door of the embassy in Tehran, seizing the compound and the Americans inside. The hostage takers posed for the cameras next to a poster with a caricature of Carter and the slogan: "America cannot do a damn thing."

Indeed, America under Carter wouldn't do much. At least not until the 154th day of the crisis, when Carter, finally awakening to the seizure of U.S. diplomats and citizens on what was legally American soil, broke off diplomatic relations and began planning economic sanctions.

When Carter got around to hinting about the use of military force, Khomeini offered this mocking response: "He is beating on an empty drum. Neither does Carter have the guts for military action nor would anyone listen to him."

Carter did actually try a military response of sorts. But like every other major policy action of his, he bungled it. The incompetence of his administration would be seen in the wreckage in the Iranian desert, where a plan to rescue the hostages resulted in the loss of eight aircraft, five airmen and three Marines.

Among the core group of hostage takers and planners of the attack on our embassy was 23-year-old Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who learned firsthand the weakness and incompetence of Carter's foreign policy, one that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Reid are now attempting to resurrect.

According to then-Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, Ahmadinejad was among the hostage takers and the liaison between them and prominent Tehran preacher Ali Khomeini, later to become supreme leader of the Islamic Republic.

The shah was forced into exile and on the run from Morocco to Egypt, the Bahamas, Mexico and finally Panama. In July 1979, Vice President Walter Mondale and National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski told Carter they had changed their minds about offering the shah permanent asylum. Carter's response was: "F\*\*\* the shah. I'm not going to welcome him here when he has other places to go where he'll be safe."

In October 1979, the shah, gravely ill with cancer, was granted a limited visa for treatment at the Cornell Medical Center in New York. He would die in Cairo in

July 1980, an abandoned American friend. Our enemies took notes.

If the shah remained in power, it isn't likely the Iraq-Iran War, with upward of a million casualties on both sides, a war that saw Saddam Hussein first use mass-murder weapons, would have taken place.

Nor is it likely there would have been a Desert Storm, fought after Hussein invaded Kuwait to strengthen his strategic position. That led to bases in Saudi Arabia that fueled Islamofascist resentment, one of the reasons given by Osama bin Laden for striking at America, the Great Satan.

Khomeini introduced the idea of suicide bombers to the Palestine Liberation Organization and paid \$35,000 to PLO families who would offer up their children as human bombs to kill as many Israelis as possible.

It was Khomeini who would give the world Hezbollah to make war on Israel and destroy the multicultural democracy that was Lebanon. And perhaps Jimmy has forgotten that Hezbollah, which he helped make possible, killed 241 U.S. troops in their Beirut barracks in 1982.

The Soviet Union, seeing us so willingly abandon a staunch ally, invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, just six months after Carter and Russian leader Leonid Brezhnev embraced after signing a new arms-control treaty.

And it was the resistance to the Soviet invasion that helped give birth to the Taliban. As Hayward observes, the fall of Iran, hastened by Jimmy Carter, "set in motion the advance of radical Islam and the rise of terrorism that culminated in Sept. 11."

Writer Christopher Hitchens recalls a discussion he had with Eugene McCarthy. A Democrat and former candidate for that party's presidential nomination, McCarthy voted for Ronald Reagan instead of Carter in 1980.

The reason? Carter had "quite simply abdicated the whole responsibility of the presidency while in office. He left the nation at the mercy of its enemies at home and abroad. He was quite simply the worst president we ever had."

Quite simply, we concur.

Part Five

# Carter's Red Carpet

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 29, 2007

**Leadership:** On President Jimmy Carter's watch, more territory was lost to tyranny than at any other time since Yalta. And he'd have us return to those thrilling days of yesteryear.

Old communists must still be reminiscing about the good old days of the Carter administration. Thirty years ago next month, our worst president proudly proclaimed: "We are now free of that inordinate fear of communism which once led us to embrace any dictator who joined us in that fear."

And as Carter rang the dinner bell, the evil empire was listening.

Not that Carter was above embracing dictators. In June 1979, at the signing of the Salt II accords in Vienna, he kissed Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev on each cheek. Surprisingly, they did not break into a waltz.

A few short months after that, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Carter expressed shock, saying "I can't believe he lied to me."

As we have noted, it was Carter's proudly displayed naivete that gave Brezhnev a green light to engineer a KGB-assisted coup in April 1978 and a full-scale invasion on Christmas Eve 1979. Less than a week after his inauguration, Carter had written the communist dictator: "As I understand your important speech in Tula, the Soviet Union will not strive for superiority in arms." Or use them, Jimmy?

More recently, Carter also kissed Fidel Castro when he trekked to give aid and comfort to that communist thug. No doubt they reminisced about the days when Carter initiated diplomatic relations with Castro's Cuba, looking the other way as thousands of Cuban troops tried to impose Marxist rule in Africa.

Carter's policy consisted of doing nothing while Castro kept Cuban soldiers fighting in Angola and sent 16,000 more to Ethiopia to support the Marxist Mengistu regime. Others were scattered throughout the continent — from Guinea Bissau to Burkina Faso to Sierra Leone to Mozambique to Zimbabwe.

While Carter sat in his thick sweater in front of a

fireplace complaining of our "malaise," the Soviet Union was using Cuban troops as a sort of communist foreign legion to plant the hammer and sickle around the world.

Castro sent 50,000 troops to aid the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola and fight the pro-Western anti-communist forces of Jonas Savimbi's UNITA in its efforts to foist communism in the former Portuguese colony. At one point, Cuban troops were stationed in 20 sub-Saharan African nations.

**"A few short months after that, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Carter expressed shock, saying 'I can't believe he lied to me.'"**

Invoking the same "human rights" doctrine he used to topple the Shah of Iran and usher in the dawn of the Islamofascists, Carter withdrew support from the Somoza government in Nicaragua and facilitated the coming to power of the Marxist Sandinistas in 1979.

Almost immediately, the Ortega brothers allied themselves with their Cuban communist brethren to help launch and support Cuban-inspired insurgencies in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Costa Rica.

Carter cut off aid to El Salvador, which was fighting a communist insurgency, but he welcomed the Sandinista takeover of Nicaragua and gave Daniel Ortega's dictatorship more than \$90 million in aid.

In 1979, Castro protegee Maurice Bishop staged a military coup to overthrow the democratically elected government of Grenada. He immediately sought Castro's aid in building airfields. Ostensibly for the tourist trade, the fields could accept high-performance military aircraft, including Soviet-built long-range bombers.

Part Five

## Carter's Red Carpet

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 29, 2007

(Continued)

On Oct. 25, 1983, President Reagan sent 5,000 U.S. troops to liberate Grenada. They engaged roughly 800 Cuban troops and found enough military equipment to equip thousands of soldiers, perhaps as many as 10,000 to 20,000.

Castro sent weapons via Cairo to the Marxist National Front for the Liberation of South Yemen on the strategic Horn of Africa. South Yemen was briefly the only declared communist state in the Arab world. A permanent communist satellite there would have posed a strategic threat to the Suez Canal and oil shipments from the Middle East.

The heirs of the czars gobbled up or consolidated their hold on country after country like there was a "buy one, get one free" sale: Afghanistan, Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Grenada and Nicaragua. And it was Carter gave up control over the strategically vital Panama Canal.

Shortly before he was removed from office in massive voter expression of no confidence, even the Washington Post was editorializing about Carter's "willingness to engage with any dictator, no matter how odious."

Not just any dictator, just the Marxist kind. Lowell Ponte of Frontpagemagazine.com has suggested that if the Shah of Iran had been a Marxist friend of the Soviet Union and had renamed his country the People's Socialist Republic of Iran, Carter would have forgotten about charges of the Shah torturing political prisoners and the Ayatollah Khomeini would have died of old age in France.

Carter's naivete encouraged the Soviets to invade Afghanistan. His myopic view of human rights led him to undercut a pro-Western ally in Nicaragua. Knowing we would not resist, communism went on the march throughout the Americas and in Africa and reached its zenith.

In 1982, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Reagan's U.N. ambassador, perfectly summed up the Carter administration:

"While Carter was president there occurred a dramatic

Soviet military buildup, matched by the stagnation of American armed forces, and a dramatic extension of Soviet influence in the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan, southern Africa and the Caribbean, matched by a declining American position in all these areas."

Had Reagan not beaten Carter in 1980, there's no telling how far the unraveling of freedom would have gone.

Instead of Reagan going to Berlin to tell Gorbachev to tear down that wall, Carter in his second term might have had to go to Moscow to negotiate our capitulation in the Cold War.

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Part Six

# A Feeble President

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 30, 2007

**Leadership:** When men of strength are presented with difficult problems, their responses are firm and decisive. Jimmy Carter spent four years as president of the United States responding with weakness.

Carter's legacy is marked by a series of lame responses to historic challenges. His reputation as a failed president is well-deserved. From January 1977 to January 1981, Carter routinely let America down.

## Economic Malaise

The 1970s will not be remembered as America's greatest decade. Morale was low, inflation and unemployment were high, and the economy was ugly. When Carter took office, he had a chance to end the skid. He made it worse.

The 39th president's response to our "crisis of confidence" was not a bold move forward. It did nothing to inspire the country. It was a surrender. He had no tax-cut plan but he did increase government spending, his leftist notions only making conditions worse.

Carter's answer to his counterproductive solutions was to tell America that its best days were over. He nagged us to turn down our thermostats in the winter and turn them up in the summer, since the nation could not possibly overcome its energy problems.

"I think it's inevitable that there will be a lower standard of living than what everybody had always anticipated," he told advisers in 1979. "The only trend is downward."

In July of that year, Carter delivered what has become known as his malaise speech. It was more of an accusatory sermon. In endorsing John Anderson for president in 1980, the New Republic described the speech as "a lot of mystical mumbo jumbo." Instead of rousing the American spirit, Carter wounded it. He blamed Americans for America's problems.

"In a nation that was proud of hard work, strong families, close-knit communities and our faith in God, too many of us now tend to worship self-indulgence and consumption," he fussed.

He asked an America that was accustomed to prosperity to get along with less — which it had to do since his policies crippled an already hobbling economy.

"Instead of rousing the American spirit, Carter wounded it. He blamed Americans for America's problems."

## Iranian Hostage Crisis

Perhaps the darkest stain on a presidency that had an extraordinarily large load of dirty laundry was the Iranian hostage crisis. Carter's watery reply was to sit for more than five months before launching a rescue mission that was symbolic of his presidency: It crashed and burned.

Had Carter responded swiftly and forcefully when the Iranian radicals stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran in November 1979, Americans would not have suffered the indignity of having been so easily violated or the anxiety — magnified by daily news updates — of not knowing what would become of their countrymen.

But just as he responded weakly to at least one previous brief occupation of the embassy grounds, Carter begged for the hostages' release rather than demand it.

The initial plan was for the terrorists to hold the embassy for only a few hours. But the Iranians sensed weakness in Carter and decided to keep the Americans long term. Carter's attempts to win the hostages' release through diplomatic and economic pressure were met with scorn.

It wasn't until April 1980 that Carter opted for a military solution. The attempt failed. Two of eight

Part Six

# A Feeble President

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 30, 2007

(Continued)

helicopters that met with military transport airplanes on a desert airstrip in Iran were damaged by a sandstorm, a third while landing. The mission was aborted, but on the way out eight servicemen were killed when a helicopter collided with an airplane.

The hostages were eventually released, just moments after Ronald Reagan took office, through the so-called Algiers Accords.

Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher, a longtime Democratic party operative who was secretary of state for Bill Clinton, negotiated the deal. The Iranian terrorists got what they wanted from Carter — prestige and economic sanctions removed — and avoided having to face a more resolute Reagan.

## Energy

As he did with the economy, Carter inherited a bad situation and made it much worse.

Under the Georgia peanut farmer, the country experienced a second oil shock. His solutions included the usual tongue-wagging at Americans who were burning too much oil, creation of the Energy Department, the Synthetic Fuels Corp. and other similar silliness, and a tax hike on oil companies.

As poor as all those ideas were, the latter did the most damage. The Crude Oil Windfall Profits Tax Act, which raised far less in revenue (a mere \$80 billion rather than the estimated \$320 billion) than hoped, had a devastating effect on oil supply and did nothing to diminish OPEC's stranglehold on the U.S.

"The 1980s windfall profits tax depressed the domestic production and extraction industry," the Congressional Research Service found, "and furthered our dependence on foreign sources of oil."

This was of no help to Americans who had grown weary of long lines at service stations and the prices that seemed like they would never stop spiraling upward. Relief came only when Reagan, just one week in office, fully decontrolled oil prices — leading to a surge in oil output, lower prices and the end of 1970s-style stagflation.

Rather than press for policies that would boost domestic output, Carter took the easy route and ordered a quota on imported oil. The result — falling supply and soaring prices — was predictable.

## 1980 Olympics

When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, Carter's response was not a show of strength or a sharp rebuke, but a childish and self-serving decision that cemented the impression across the world that America had gone soft. Carter decided he would show the Soviet Union by keeping American athletes home from the 1980 Summer Olympics held in Moscow.

Hundreds of athletes who had trained for years to represent their country in the Olympics were abruptly stripped of their dreams. Any American athlete who tried to compete would have had his or her passport revoked by Carter's order. More than 50 nations joined the boycott, but its only discernible result, aside from taking the politicization of the Olympics to a new high, was Soviet medal domination in the absence of competition from U.S. athletes.

Oh, yes — Carter also began a limited trade embargo against the Soviets, killing the Russian wheat deal, which was intended to increase trade with the USSR. and ease Cold War tensions. U.S. farmers and their families who relied on the deal were hurt more than the Soviet apparatchiks whom Carter imagined he was punishing.

Four years, four weak responses to major events. This is the legacy of the failed presidency of Jimmy Carter.

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Part Seven

# Friend Of Dictators

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 31, 2007

**Leadership:** In foreign policy, Jimmy Carter proved his presidency the worst ever by subordinating U.S. interests to his vague "human rights" policy. All he did was enable dictators to take him to the cleaners.

Carter had barely settled in at the White House in 1977 when he set about establishing his presidency as different. Instead of leading with the pragmatic idealism that marked most successful U.S. presidencies, the former governor of Georgia said he would base his leadership on a new, ill-defined concept of "human rights." Or so he imagined.

History shows that shift came at a high cost. Not only did it obscure Carter's duty to put U.S. interests first, the policy politicized a principle that was easily used by dictators Carter dealt with to undermine U.S. interests and abuse their citizens.

In a bad coda, Carter's "human rights" policy enabled him to continue his own mischief well beyond his presidency.

Carter started with an essentially flawed premise: weakness is strength. To show his seriousness, he cut the U.S. defense budget by \$6 billion, signaling to global predators our lack of resolve.

Carter gutted America's intelligence services, proudly telling America (and its enemies) of his executive order prohibiting assassinations. It only emboldened America's enemies.

Carter also undermined key U.S. alliances by killing off the B-1 bomber and neutron bomb programs, not even bothering to tell our allies. German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt read about it in newspapers.

In the absence of power to back policy, all that buttressed Carter's policy were sanctimonious words. Dictators took advantage of him.

Some examples:

- In Cuba, Carter made secret moves in 1977 to establish diplomatic relations with Fidel Castro, justifying it in a State Department directive as a move to advance human rights. Castro knew about this. Unfortunately, neither oppressed Cubans nor U.S.

voters did. Net result: Castro got the diplomatic attention he sought, but no human rights appeared in Cuba.

- In Panama, dictator Omar Torrijos, who seized power in a 1968 military coup, intimidated Carter in 1976 into giving up the Panama Canal, a U.S. sovereign territory since 1914. Torrijos secretly warned Carter he had a general named Manuel Noriega who already had

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**"Carter started with an essentially flawed premise: weakness is strength."**

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prepared plans to destroy the canal if Carter didn't hand it over. He whipped up mobs to demonstrate. Carter caved, telling outraged Americans his weakness was all just "human rights."

- Later in his presidency, Carter showed no such courtesies to Nicaragua's democratically elected president, Anastasio Somoza. Because Somoza was unpopular with Marxist radicals who had learned to shout "human rights abuses" against him, Carter withdrew U.S. support from our ally. Carter was first to greet the Marxist Sandinistas who overthrew Somoza, inviting them to the White House and handing them \$118 million in U.S. aid. At that point, a real dictatorship began, costing Nicaragua a decade of development and igniting a long civil war. Human rights, of course, ended.

- In the Pacific, Carter withdrew troops and nuclear weapons from South Korea in 1977 and scrapped the U.S.' mutual defense treaty with Taiwan, hanging two further allies out to dry.

But for northern Asia's totalitarian dictators, the treatment was entirely different. China was rewarded with full diplomatic relations in 1979. North Korea was emboldened to launch its nuclear program. Years after

Part Seven

# Friend Of Dictators

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | May 31, 2007

(Continued)

his presidency and acting on behalf of President Clinton, Carter negotiated with North Korea to end that nation's nuclear program. And yes, he made more pious talk about "human rights." Dictator Kim Jong Il pried \$4 billion in aid from Carter for promising to end his nuclear program. Carter praised him for his "humanitarianism." After Kim took the cash, he restarted his nuclear program, this time targeting Japan and Los Angeles. Oh, and he also systematically starved millions of his own people.

- In the Middle East, Carter likewise used cash to buy phony reform from dictators. Chilly relations between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin already had started to thaw. All that was needed was a little money. Carter leapt into that role, taking credit for their historic meeting. Today, because of Camp David, Egypt and Israel are the two largest recipients of U.S. aid. In Egypt, the aid managed to entrench the dictatorship that followed after Sadat's death. What few recall, however, is that terrorist Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat refused to sign on to a peace deal. He got aid anyway. There still is no peace.

- In Rhodesia, Carter kept up sanctions begun under his predecessors. But he went further by undermining the election of Bishop Abel Muzorewa as prime minister in 1979 to protest the exclusion of candidate Robert Mugabe. In response to Carter's pressure, new elections were held, giving Mugabe the victory he has held onto as Africa's worst dictator. Thank you, Jimmy Carter.

- In Ethiopia, Carter cited "human rights" to cut arms sales to its admittedly awful dictator, Haile Mengistu. So Mengistu invited East German advisers and Cuban soldiers in, turning his nation into a Soviet vassal. Human rights in Ethiopia never happened.

- Lastly, there was Carter's post-presidency role in entrenching Venezuelan dictator Hugo Chavez. Sent to observe a rigged recall referendum in 2004, Carter let Venezuelan officials pick out the boxes he could count to validate the election and then certified it, ending democracy and creating a human-rights meltdown there.

In the Soviet Union, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko laughed at Carter's human rights record behind his back, but knew how to manipulate Carter in public. Gromyko browbeat Carter, telling him the USSR's health care and housing trumped America's. "I couldn't argue," Carter winced in his book, "Living Faith." "We each had a definition of human rights, and differences like this must be recognized and understood."

Carter's inability to distinguish intentions from results through his "human rights" policy has led to more human rights violations around the world than any dictator could have done on his own.

But he didn't just undermine human rights; he undermined the U.S. and its legitimate security interests. His legacy is the spread of tyranny, making him the U.S.' worst president for human rights.

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Part Eight

# Camp Hype

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | June 1, 2007

**Leadership:** It's often asserted that while Jimmy Carter's presidency was marred by error and incompetence, the peace deal he brokered at Camp David was an unmitigated triumph. Time to pop that bubble, too.

Carter's effrontery in calling George W. Bush "the worst" president can be traced in part to his supposed success in negotiating the Camp David accords. Signed in March 1978, that deal came about after Carter used the power of the presidency to get Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin to talk peace.

A major accomplishment, we're always told. Just ask the Nobel committee, which awarded Carter its Prize for Peace in 2002. But was the agreement as successful as billed?

Let's start with the idea that Carter brought Sadat and Begin together. He didn't. It was Sadat who made perhaps the bravest gesture ever by an Arab leader, traveling to Jerusalem and speaking to the Knesset in 1977, a year before Camp David. It cost him his life.

Carter did provide Israel and Egypt with a venue — the presidential retreat at Camp David. Problem is, the pre-arranged "deal" was struck only after it was clear that the U.S. would give massive aid to both nations to keep them at peace. As Mideast scholar Bernard Lewis would later say, "Obviously, they needed someone to pay the bill, and who but the United States could fulfill that function?"

Even today, thanks to Camp David, Israel and Egypt are the two largest recipients of U.S. foreign aid — between \$3 billion and \$5 billion a year since 1978. Despite that, only one of the two nations can be called a friend.

Two years after Camp David, Sadat was murdered by Muslim extremists angry at the deal. And today in Egypt, there are no plaques of remembrance, no great monuments to Sadat. Only anger and bitterness.

Israel did return the oil-rich Sinai to Egypt in return for peace. But the "aid" we give Egypt mostly goes to buy U.S. weapons. The average Egyptian has no democracy, and the standard of living has barely budged since 1978.

Nor has our aid bought Egypt's good will. A poll this year by WorldPublicOpinion.org found that 83% of Egyptians believe a main goal of U.S. foreign policy is to undermine the Muslim world.

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**"Even more important is what Camp David didn't achieve: a deal with the Palestinians. "**

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Also, a majority don't think al-Qaida was behind 9/11. After a landmark 2005 election, 20% of the seats in Egypt's parliament belong to the extremist Islamic Brotherhood. "Peace" doesn't describe the situation. "Cessation of hostilities" might be better.

Even more important is what Camp David didn't achieve: a deal with the Palestinians. Carter failed to get his "friend," PLO terrorist leader Yasser Arafat, to sign on to his vision for peace in the Middle East, though it meant autonomy for the Palestinians.

Why? "Peace for us means the destruction of Israel," Arafat said two years after Camp David. "We are preparing for an all-out war, a war which will last for generations." Arafat never renounced those beliefs. And today, thanks to him and his terrorist brethren, the Middle East is as full of bloodshed and hate as it has ever been.

At best, Camp David was a modest diplomatic achievement — certainly not enough to lift Carter from his position as history's worst president.

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Part Nine

# Carter's Oil Crisis

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | June 4 2007

**Leadership:** Of all the errors Jimmy Carter committed, none has earned him more well-justified scorn than his handling of the 1970s energy crisis. True enough, he didn't cause it. But he did make it much, much worse.

It might come as a surprise, but we agree with those who say it's unfair to tar former President Carter with having caused the 1970s oil crisis. He didn't.

The crisis in fact began in October of 1973, after the first Arab oil embargo, and continued for years as first President Nixon and then President Ford failed to get a grip on things.

The resulting four-fold jump in oil prices wasn't Carter's fault.

But let's be clear: OPEC ended its embargo in 1974. Despite that, government-imposed price controls on output and prices remained in place. They weren't fully removed until 1981. And that is Carter's fault.

When Carter came into office in January 1977, the price of a barrel of oil was about \$14. When he left a mere four years later, oil — the lifeblood of the U.S. and world economy — stood at more than \$35 a barrel, a 154% rise.

The resulting double-digit inflation and surging interest rates cut into Americans' real incomes. Rosy predictions that higher inflation would at least boost employment — a mainstay at the time of Keynesian economic thought — proved disastrously false. Unemployment rose, and the resulting "stagflation" became entrenched.

Worse, the rate of productivity growth, the engine for future growth in standards of living, plunged by nearly two thirds from its postwar average of nearly 3% a year.

Pressure on oil prices built early in Carter's term in office as OPEC jacked up prices. But oil really took off in 1979, after the Shah of Iran was toppled by fundamentalist Islamic revolutionaries led by Ayatollah Khomeini. President Carter's weak and vacillating support for the Shah of Iran encouraged the rebellion.

Things went from bad to worse.

With oil prices rising out of control, Carter in June 1979 canceled his vacation and gathered dozens of mostly Democratic leaders at Camp David to discuss what to do. The address to Americans that resulted, made in July 1979, became known as the "malaise" speech.

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"Carter erred in thinking the government — and not a healthy, functioning market with realistic price signals — could end the oil crisis. "

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In it, Carter suggested high oil prices weren't the problem; just Americans' tendency "to worship self-indulgence and consumption." Further, he said Americans suffered a "crisis of confidence."

He began, conspicuously, to wear a cardigan sweater. He put solar panels on the White House. He turned down the thermostat, and started burning wood in the fireplace.

None of the high-handed symbology worked, however. Later in 1979, Carter's weak response to Iran's radical regime taking 52 Americans hostage sent oil prices soaring again. Carter cut off oil imports from Iran and the mullahs imposed an oil embargo, leading to a global market panic and a surge in prices — the second oil shock of the decade.

Within weeks, gas lines formed in cities across the U.S., with cars snaking up and down streets and around city blocks. Americans left idling in gas queues felt both angry and helpless, as they watched prices soar and shortages emerge — and saw a government unable or unwilling to fix the problem.

Part Nine

# Carter's Oil Crisis

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | June 4 2007

(Continued)

And what was Carter's response? Mostly symbolic stuff. He had a number of chances to correct the situation. He didn't.

In his malaise speech, Carter had laid out six proposals to end the energy crisis. They included simply telling people to stop using so much energy, the creation of the Synthetic Fuels Corp. and a handful of other costly alternative energy schemes, and the formation of the Energy Department. Despite billions spent, none did the job.

Unfortunately, he waited far too long to do what he really needed to do: Namely, completely end price controls on domestic oil, kill off oil import quotas, and veto the Windfall Profits Tax Act.

All of those policy moves had, taken together, sharply curtailed U.S. oil output, boosting our dependence on foreign oil and giving OPEC's unelected potentates a virtual stranglehold over the world economy.

As a result, by the end of his term in office, Carter was less popular than Richard Nixon was during the depths of the Watergate scandal, with an approval rating of just 25%. Remember, Nixon had to resign or face impeachment proceedings.

It's pretty clear today that, absent any other policy changes, Carter could have prevented the second oil shock if he had only stood by the Shah — who had been a staunch U.S. ally in a sea of hostile Mideast governments for 25 years.

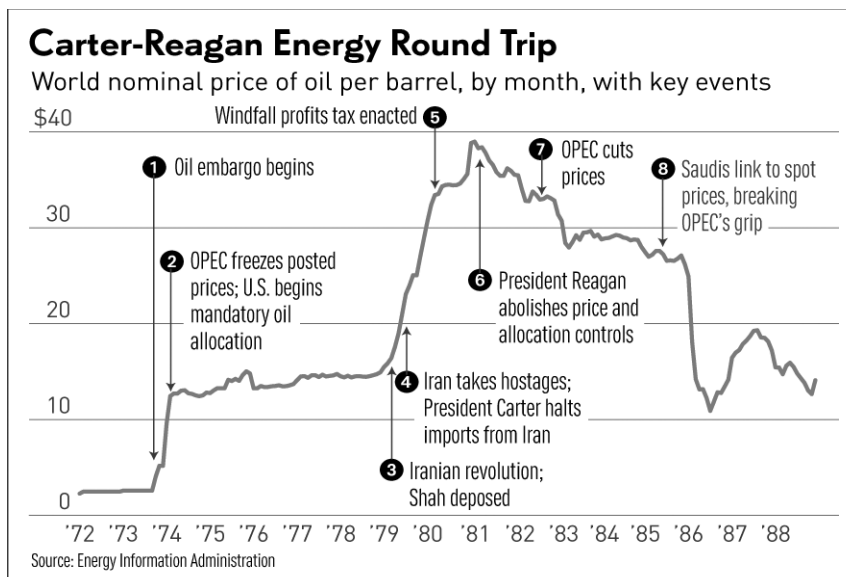
Instead, his weakness led to the upsurge in Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism across the Mideast that continues today.

Worse, Carter erred in thinking the government — and not a healthy, functioning market with realistic price signals — could end the oil crisis. It couldn't in the 1970s, and it can't today.

It's disheartening on some levels to hear many of the same proposals for our energy ills emerging from the Democrats in Congress. Have they learned nothing? Or are they just counting on average people having forgotten the misery of the Carter years?

Regardless, we know there's a way out. President Reagan, in a few bold moves within weeks of entering office, totally decontrolled oil prices. Prices peaked, the amount of oil on the market surged, and inflation's back was broken.

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Part Ten

# Carrying Over Carter's Ineptitude

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | June 5, 2007

**Leadership:** In 1976, Americans thought they were sending an outsider to the White House. Today, the same policies so thoroughly discredited by Jimmy Carter's disastrous presidency define the Democratic Party.

It's tempting to think of the Carter Administration's seemingly endless series of catastrophes as an aberration brought on by a yokel peanut farmer. In fact, the former Georgia governor's thinking as president strongly resembles that of Democrats today:

- Just as Carter lamented America's "inordinate fear of communism," Democrats today accuse the president of imagining Islamic terrorists are under the bed. (By the way, some of those "imaginary" terrorists were just caught plotting to kill thousands by blowing up New York's JFK Airport.)

- While Carter believed "human rights" was the real global struggle, not the Cold War, Democrats today reject the global war on terror. It's a "bumper-sticker political slogan," says Sen. John Edwards. We should abandon Iraq, where al-Qaida is now strongest, says Sen. Barack Obama, and "focus on the critical battle that we have in Afghanistan" — in other words, the war on terror is just a wild goose chase for the sickly (or dead) Osama bin Laden.

- As Carter refused to fight the Cold War, today's Democrats refuse to support President Bush's innovative and effective fight against terrorists — in spite of his perfect record in protecting the homeland. What Edwards calls "spying on Americans" and "torture" are the key programs that have helped foil more than a dozen terrorist plots around the world: the National Security Agency surveillance program tracking Americans' phone calls and e-mails to suspected terrorists abroad, and the CIA's foreign prisons program, allowing tough interrogation of enemy detainees.

- Carter decimated our defenses, reducing military spending to pre-Pearl Harbor levels, and told the world that America could no longer use our armed forces abroad in defense of our interests. Today, Democratic presidential candidates are slow to specify the weapons systems they intend to scrap as "outmoded relics of the Cold War," as Obama put it last Sunday, but like both Carter and Bill Clinton,

they're sure to take money from the Pentagon for spending on big domestic programs.

- Strongly reminiscent of Carter, Sen. Hillary Clinton promised to be "a president who is committed to diplomacy . . ." Carter's replacement of might with talk wreaked havoc around the world. Soon after he kissed

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"The next Democratic president may not be as naive and incompetent as Jimmy Carter. But he or she will endanger our lives by appeasing our enemies, ravage our economy by raising our taxes, and threaten the government's solvency with misguided new government programs."

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Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev on both cheeks in Vienna, Russia invaded Afghanistan (and Osama bin Laden at age 23 would go there to organize the anti-Soviet forerunner of al-Qaida). Carter removed our nukes from South Korea to better ties with communist North Korea; today, North Korea has tested a bomb and will soon have missiles to carry them to our shores. We abandoned the Shah of Iran for "human rights" offenses; today, oil-rich Tehran is a terrorist state and soon-to-be nuclear power.

- If a future Democratic president were to apply Carteresque diplomacy to the Middle East, trying to "talk" Iran out of building nukes before they could use such weapons or give them to fellow Islamofascists in al-Qaida or other terrorist groups, the U.S., Israel or some other country might pay for it by being attacked with a nuke.

- With a huge hike in payroll taxes, Carter claimed to

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# Carrying Over Carter's Ineptitude

By INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY | June 5, 2007

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"fix" Social Security and keep the system solvent until 2030; it, of course, didn't work. The system goes into the red about a decade from now. Similarly, Hillary, Edwards and Obama all plan to "fix" health care, while mostly keeping mum about new taxes. Hillary even promises "\$120 billion in savings" with her latest version of socialized medicine. Don't believe it: In 1970, Medicare cost less than \$8 billion; now it exceeds \$250 billion per year — a cost explosion none of the politicians or "experts" who fathered the program believed possible.

As Hillary noted in Sunday's debate: "The differences among us are minor. The differences between us and

the Republicans are major. And I don't want anybody in America to be confused."

No one should be. The next Democratic president may not be as naive and incompetent as Jimmy Carter. But he or she will endanger our lives by appeasing our enemies, ravage our economy by raising our taxes, and threaten the government's solvency with misguided new government programs.

We got away with presidential ineptitude in the 1970s. In an age of terror, we may not be so lucky.

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## As Carter Watched

How the Soviet Union was encircling key countries, regions and waterways during the Carter administration

