

Running Title: CARTER

Crisis of Confidence:  
Presidential Decision-Making  
In the Carter Administration

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# Carter

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## Main Characters

(In order of appearance)

### Jimmy Carter

A naval officer and peanut farmer from the small town of Plains, Georgia, Jimmy Carter served as the 39<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, assuming office on January 20, 1979. On his way to the White House, President Carter served as a Georgia State Senator and as the Governor of Georgia. A deeply religious man of the Southern Baptist faith, Carter often taught Sunday school in his hometown before assuming the presidency. Sworn into office after the highly publicized Watergate scandal and President Ford's subsequent pardon of Richard Nixon, Carter promised the public an "open presidency." A micromanager himself, Carter was often criticized by the press and members of congress for his particular leadership style, which included engaging in lower level administrative work and foregoing the appointment of a Chief of Staff in favor of a more equitable approach to advisor relations. After some initial success in the foreign policy arena, including the signing of the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt at Camp David in 1978, President Carter became increasingly frustrated with congressional resistance to the adoption of his administration's domestic policy. In particular, Carter was unable to pass key energy legislation before a crisis emerged in 1979. Embattled with congress and enjoying little support from the American public, Carter convened a "domestic summit" at Camp David to answer the question of energy security and dependence on foreign oil during July of that same year. After meeting with Americans from all walks of life, Carter emerged from Camp David ready to deliver his most well-known speech entitled, "Crisis of Confidence: Energy and National Goals," on July 15, 1979. Soon after his address, the Iranian Hostage Crisis began and from that point on, much of Carter's time was spent attempting to end the crisis. After surviving a primary challenge from Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, Carter was eventually defeated by the republican candidate, Governor Ronald Reagan, in the 1980 presidential election. After his presidency, Carter devoted his life to public service and humanitarian efforts through the Carter Center, founded by the former president and his wife Rosalynn in 1982.

### William Hamilton 'Ham' McWhorter Jordan

Hailing from Albany, Georgia, Ham Jordan was one of President Carter's most trusted advisors. During the 1976 presidential election, Jordan played a central role in both strategy formulation and execution. Upon his inauguration, Jordan made the move to the White House alongside other members of the so-called "Georgia Mafia," forming Carter's inner-circle of advisors. After initially refusing to fill the post, Carter eventually appointed Jordan his Chief of Staff. The modern Democrat, Jordan distinguished himself from the Washington establishment in his

lax dress and outgoing nature. Amongst Carter's other advisors, Jordan often played a conciliatory role and almost always had the ear of the president.

#### Joseph Lester 'Jody' Powell

Powell served as the White House Press Secretary under President Carter for the entirety of his term in office. Another member of the "Georgia Mafia," Powell began working for Carter during his candidacy for the Governorship of Georgia. Like Jordan, Powell followed Carter to the White House in 1976. Powell was Carter's friend, advisor, and spokesman. His multiple roles made Powell an integral part of Carter's advising team. Due to his close relationship with the president, Powell is still considered, to this day, one of the most influential White House Press Secretaries to ever serve.

#### Stuart Eizenstat

During the Carter administration, Stuart Eizenstat served as the Chief Domestic Policy Adviser to the president, and as the Executive Director of the White House Domestic Policy Staff. Another member of the "Georgia Mafia," Eizenstat played a central role in the formulation of Carter's policy initiatives throughout his presidency.

#### Gerald 'Gerry' Rafshoon

Serving as White House Communications Director under President Jimmy Carter, Gerald Rafshoon concerned himself almost entirely with the president's image. In doing so, Rafshoon had a say in everything from the president's speaking style to his haircut. Rafshoon was instrumental in getting Carter elected in 1976, orchestrating Carter's campaign advertisements and communication strategy. He made the move to the White House with Carter in 1977.

#### Rosalynn Carter

In her role as First Lady of the United States, Rosalynn Carter actively shaped her husband's presidency and often had his ear when it came to decision-making. Accordingly, many of Carter's advisors courted Rosalynn when pushing for certain initiatives. Rosalynn's relationship with Pat Caddell was influential in her husband's convening of the 1979 "domestic summit," from which Carter emerged with his "Crisis of Confidence" speech. Rosalynn co-founded the Carter Center with her husband after leaving office in 1982.

### Gordon Stewart

Deputy Chief Speech Writer during the Carter administration, Stewart worked closely with fellow speechwriter Hendrik Hertzberg while at the “domestic summit.” In the end, Stewart and Hertzberg’s joint efforts produced the “Malaise Speech,” as it is commonly known today. At the summit, Stewart and Hertzberg were charged with writing a speech incorporating input from two administrative factions, one advocating for a broader approach, the other emphasizing policy initiatives. In the end, the two produced a speech merging the two.

### Hendrik Hertzberg

After writing speeches for Governor Hugh Carey of New York during his unsuccessful 1976 presidential campaign, Hertzberg was recruited to join Carter’s team by then head speechwriter James Fallows. After Fallows’ highly publicized departure from the administration, Hertzberg assumed chief speechwriting responsibilities in the spring of 1979. In collaboration with Gordon Stewart, Hertzberg coauthored Carter’s “Crisis of Confidence” speech at the July 1979 “domestic summit.” Hertzberg was excited to incorporate pollster Pat Caddell’s broader perspective into the speech, as he believed Carter’s previous speeches on energy to be lacking in focus.

### Walter Mondale

Serving as the 42<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of the United States during the Carter administration, Walter Mondale served as a counterpoint to the pollster Pat Caddell at the 1979 “domestic summit.” In advising the president during the formulation of his July 15<sup>th</sup> speech, Mondale stressed substance over speculation. In addition, the Vice President hoped to keep Carter focused on the upcoming 1980 presidential election, but was largely unable to sway Carter with the threat of electoral defeat. Perhaps motivated by his own presidential aspirations, Mondale served as the Democratic Party’s candidate in the 1984 presidential election.

### Patrick ‘Pat’ Caddell

DNC pollster Pat Caddell becomes the Carter administration’s main creative force during the energy crisis of 1979 after his memo entitled, “Of Crisis and Confidence,” reaches the First Lady. After Rosalynn forwards Caddell’s message to the president, Carter declares his thesis “genius” and strongly advocates for the production of a speech centered on Caddell’s perception of a loss of confidence amongst Americans and an associated lack of trust in government. Caddell plays a major role at the Camp David “domestic summit,” and remains the main creative

force behind the “Crisis of Confidence” address. In this role, Caddell comes into direct conflict with Eizenstat and Mondale who advocate for the production of a speech based more on policy initiatives than broader themes.

#### Amy Carter

The president’s daughter, Amy Carter is 12 at the time of the 1979 “domestic summit.” When the president was not in meetings, he enjoyed spending much of his free time with his daughter around the compound.

#### William Jefferson ‘Bill’ Clinton

Governor of Arkansas, Bill Clinton is invited to the “domestic summit” by Carter’s advisors to provide the perspective of a fellow Southern Democrat. Clinton is identified as a rising star within the Democratic Party by both Carter and his team, and therefore is given ample time to meet with the president during the summit. Some of Clinton’s advice to Carter makes it into the final speech.

#### Greg Schneiders

An aide to the president, Greg Schneiders sends an important memo to Carter’s advisors at Camp David requesting that the president practice his speech before its deliverance on July 15. This was somewhat contentious because Carter rarely enjoyed practicing his speeches beforehand and complained that his throat became sore after too much repetition. Ultimately, Schneiders won out and Carter rehearsed intensively before going live.

CARTER (V.O.)

“The threat is nearly invisible in ordinary ways. It is a crisis of confidence. It is a crisis that strikes at the very heart and soul and spirit of our national will.”

INT. White House/Oval Office - July 3, 1979/2:00 PM

*Carter, sitting at the president's desk in the Oval Office, scribbles on a sheet of paper during a meeting with his closest advisors. He draws a central point with concentric circles emanating outward. Carter stops scribbling after completing four circles and looks up.*

JORDAN

Mr. President, the American people need to hear from you. From coast to coast, energy shortages have crippled the nation. Since your diplomatic trip to the East, the dollar has fallen and gas lines have gone violent. All the while, the press seems to concern itself with only one question, “Where’s Carter?”

POWELL

It’s true Jimmy. Press has been bad for a long time now. *The New York Post* in particular...

CARTER

Well I’m not going to let those conservative editors at *The Post* drag this administration through the mud...

POWELL

It’s not only *The Post* Jimmy. They are just the most upfront about it. Headlines across the nation are largely negative. TV stations could be worse.

*Carter gets up and walks over to the window.*

CARTER

You know, I heard today that a storm is coming in. Looks like they may even have to cancel the fireworks display on the National Mall. Cancel the Fourth of July? Can you believe that? But this storm in the media, in the hearts of Americans, now that runs deeper. After Nixon, Watergate, and Ford’s pardon, we knew it would be difficult to restore the American people’s trust in government, but we promised them an open administration, an administration that listens.

JORDAN

All the while, confidence in the government, media, and yourself is dwindling. Even worse, Americans seem less confident in their own abilities, less able to succeed in their own lives.

EIZENSTAT

What we need, Jimmy, is to present the American people with a plan, a way to decrease our reliance on foreign oil. We need to outline the specific legislative changes necessary to promote energy conservation, embolden citizens, and limit industrial waste. I mean, we are still talking about oil here, aren't we?

*Carter turns back around to face his advisors.*

CARTER

Stuart, I've given that speech five times. No one seems to listen. Ask Jody. The numbers don't lie. What makes you so sure that they will be more receptive now?

*Carter sits back down at his desk.*

JORDAN

It doesn't look like we have a choice Mr. President. Last week a pregnant woman was attacked on a gas line. This week, there were reports of a woman pretending to be with child in order to cut the line. Americans seem to be losing their heads over this shortage, Jimmy. They need to hear from the man who they *should* trust, the man who is ready to lead them through this crisis.

POWELL

I've already spoken to all the major networks. Each has prepared to block out an hour, tomorrow night, for your address.

CARTER

July 4<sup>th</sup>?

POWELL

Yes Mr. President.

*Carter spins in his chair to peer through the window at nothing in particular.*

CARTER

Have the boys been working on something?

RAFSHOON

I've given them instructions to write policy point memos. You know, on the proposals that we will need to highlight. Would you like to see them? I think I have them somewhere around here...

*Carter looks over at the hefty stack of memos waiting for him to read and answers Rafshoon.*



CARTER

No Gerry, that is fine. Just have them send the speech over when they are finished.

JORDAN

Send it over?

CARTER

Yes. Have them send it over to Camp David when they finish. I want it by tonight. I'll read it over and send back comments in the morning so that we can be ready for tomorrow night.

POWELL

Mr. President, with all due respect, you have just returned from your trip to the East. Americans have been without their president in the White House for too long now. I would not advise you to leave now for Camp David while the gas lines continue to grow. I am not sure that I can weather that media storm.

CARTER

No cameras. No headlines about my departure.

POWELL

What will I tell the press corps?

CARTER

Nothing. Let them sweat it out. We will see how New York and Boston react without a snippy headline about how the president doesn't get it. I've read the articles.

POWELL

Tell them nothing?

JORDAN

Listen, it is only for the evening. Jimmy, go to Camp David and enjoy the night. If you get a chance, try and go fishing in the morning. That should help you relax. Just make sure to take a look at the speech and be ready to go by 9pm tomorrow.

RAFSHOON

I'll have Hertzberg and Stewart work on a draft to send over by this evening.

EIZENSTAT

Jimmy, I give you my word, this address won't be like the rest of them. In it, we will demonstrate our plan to get out of this whole mess, with specifics on securing a sustainable supply of oil and it's proper allocation domestically. We will shift the blame for this shortage onto OPEC, and in doing so we can reconnect with the American people. Energy is the only thing that the nation wants to hear about, and they want to hear something concrete.

*Carter, seeming frustrated, begins to scribble on the paper again, tracing the circles over again.*

JORDAN

Mr. President?

*Carter stops tracing and looks up, directly at Jordan.*

CARTER

You know Ham, I never really got used to you calling me that.

JORDAN

I'm sorry Jimmy.

*Carter speaks to Jordan as if there is no one else in the room.*

CARTER

What to you think about this Ham? The Fourth of July? A policy speech?

JORDAN

I *know* that the American people need to hear from their president, now more than ever. There is no day more American than the Fourth. We will recapture their attention and explain to them just how we will shut up the Sheiks. We will remind them of what it means to be American without the media's filter or Congress getting in the way. We promised them a presidency that they could trust. Tomorrow night, we can restore that confidence.

*Carter gets back up and goes over to the window.*

CARTER

Tell Franklin to ready the helicopter. Someone let Rosalynn know that we will be leaving by 3:00pm. You know boys, it's been about a year since we got the Israelis and Egyptians together at Camp David to sign those Accords.

EIZENSTAT

One of the best weeks of your presidency.

RAFSHOON

A momentous event.

POWELL

We've never had better press.

CARTER

So let's give them another victory to write about. You know, I've heard it said that this whole energy crisis must be considered the moral equivalent of war. I think a night away from Washington's bubble is just what the doctor ordered. Then we'll go to battle.

JORDAN

(Smirking) Just make sure to come back from exile.

EXT. White House Lawn - July 3<sup>rd</sup> /3:00PM

*Carter and Rosalynn are shown boarding a helicopter alone (no press). The song "Heart of Glass" plays in the background as the copter departs. A montage of newspaper headlines and video footage commences. Credits are shown over these images.*

INT. Camp David/Aspen Lodge - July 3<sup>rd</sup>/Evening

*The Carters have landed at Camp David, settling in at the compound's Aspen Lodge. Tired and frustrated, the president sits at the kitchen table struggling through Hertzberg and Stewarts' draft. He reads some passages out loud.*

CARTER

"Geothermally pressured methane?" Geothermally? "The mal-allocation of gas?"  
A lot about syn-fuels but nothing specific on how to develop... or fund...

*Carter holds his head in his hands and throws down his pen.*

ROSALYNN

Jimmy?

*The First Lady comes over to Jimmy, placing her hands on his shoulders while peering over at the speech.*

CARTER

I just can't get through it Rosalynn.

ROSALYNN

You're tired Jimmy. You haven't gotten back on schedule yet. Why don't you go to bed? The real draft will be here tomorrow by 1:00PM. Gerry's got those boys working all night. I'm sure that they will come up with something better than this.

CARTER

You're probably right Rosalynn, but more and more, I feel like I should just write the damned thing myself. I wanted the full draft by tonight, full draft. Now they tell me that I have to wait until tomorrow, the day of the speech. And I don't even know if I want to give it.

ROSALYNN

You're the president, Jimmy, but you're still only one man. You just can't be everywhere, do everything. You need to trust that those around you are doing what they are supposed to.

CARTER

But that's just it Rosalynn. The papers are calling for the resignation of my entire cabinet. Leaks to the press have never been worse. I'm not sure whose side anyone is on anymore.

ROSALYNN

Jimmy, the American people are still on your side. They are just waiting for you to take charge, to remind them of why they elected you three years ago. Remember Jimmy, elections are right around the corner...

CARTER

Not that again Rosalynn, not tonight. With all these "Draft Kennedy" fundraisers going on and Reagan building his base out in California, I don't feel like going there.

ROSALYNN

Fine, I'm sorry Jimmy. We just need some rest. Everything will become clear in the morning.

CARTER

You're right hon. I'm going to head up.

*Carter gets up from his chair and kisses his wife on the cheek.*

CARTER

Are you coming?

ROSALYNN

I'll be there in a minute Jimmy.

CARTER

Alright.

*Carter walks away from the table, Rosalynn is left looking despondent, tired, and staring off into space.*

INT. Camp David/Bedroom/Living Room – July 4<sup>th</sup>/Early Morning

*Rosalynn tosses and turns in the bed she shares with the President. Thunder and rain can be heard overhead. Lightning illuminates the room. Rosalynn, unable to sleep, gets up and walks downstairs to the table where Jimmy has left the speech. She puts on her reading glasses and starts to scan the draft over. She begins to read patiently, but quickly begins shuffling through the pages as if searching for something in particular. It appears as if she does not find what she is looking for. She takes off her glasses and places them over the shuffled papers. Rain is now heard pounding overhead.*

INT. Camp David/Bedroom – July 4<sup>th</sup>/Morning

*The President and First Lady awake to the sun shining in through the window.*

ROSALYNN  
You can't give it Jimmy.

CARTER  
What?

ROSALYNN  
The speech.

CARTER  
Oh, you read it?

ROSALYNN  
I couldn't sleep.

CARTER  
And?

ROSALYNN  
It's not what this nation needs to hear.

CARTER  
Well, what do they need to hear?

ROSALYNN  
They need to hear a speech that addresses the underlying reasons why consumption is out of control, why the moral fabric of this nation is coming

undone, and how their president plans to address these issues while solving the energy crisis at the same time.

*Carter thinks it over and then responds.*

CARTER

I told them to write me a speech that got the core of the issue. The one they sent over last night is a disaster. If I go on tonight and deliver that speech the media will surely have my head.

ROSALYNN

You need to speak from the heart Jimmy. Millions of Americans are waking up today hoping to celebrate our independence, our strength as a people and as a nation, and will only find that there is no gas at the station, no independence from OPEC. We need to recapture the hopes and dreams of average Americans, those same Americans that put you in the White House in the first place. Because, you know Jimmy, it is their strength that will push us through this whole crisis in the end.

CARTER

I'm going to cancel it.

*Carter gets out of bed and starts to dress.*

ROSALYNN

How will Jody and Stewart take the news?

CARTER

I'm more concerned about Walter. He's been growing more and more concerned since the Fallows article in *The Atlantic*...

ROSALYNN

James should have just kept his mouth shut...

CARTER

Well he didn't, and now all those Washington insiders think I'm unfit to lead. Then they go ahead and feed it to the American people on the nightly news.

ROSALYNN

But Jimmy, none of that matters anymore. The American people need you now more than ever before. You have to get back in touch with their struggles, with their desires. Remember when we were on the campaign trail? We used to sleep in the homes of supporters, we used to write thank you notes to well wishers, and

we were loved. We need to get back to that. Go out and see the people, hear their concerns.

*Carter goes over to look out the window.*

CARTER

Well how can I reach them Rosalynn? The press filters everything I say and Congress won't get behind anything we do...

ROSALYNN

You know Jimmy? Caddell's memo has been on my mind for a long time.

CARTER

The manuscript? I think he may have been on to something there.

ROSALYNN

Exactly Jimmy, and every word he wrote came from the heart. There's just no denying that. Now I think that you have let the boys push and pull you in every which way for far too long now...

CARTER

Well, I have felt pigeon-holed lately Rosalynn, but that doesn't answer my question.

ROSALYNN

Here's how you do it Jimmy, invite them here. Speak to them. Listen to them, not as their leader, but as their equal. But don't just invite your advisors, Jimmy. Don't just invite the Washington crowd. Call on average Americans, leaders, and common folk alike. That way you can take the real pulse of the nation.

CARTER

That's not a bad idea, Rosalynn, but do you think that I could really afford the time at Camp David? With all that is going on with the energy crisis and rumblings in the Middle East, I'm not sure that I can stay away for that long. Plus, you know Ham has a full schedule for me starting tomorrow morning, I'm meeting with the Governors at some convention or other in Louisiana.

ROSALYNN

Jimmy, I think the better question is, do you really think that you can afford going on this way? Do you think that you can get everything done without a clear focus? Why don't you make them come to you for once Jimmy. Hey, I'll go to Louisiana in your place. Lord knows I need a vacation.

CARTER

You're right Rosalynn. You're always right.

ROSALYNN

That's why they pay me the big bucks Jimmy.

CARTER

(Joking) I'm feeling a little lighter already.

ROSALYNN

Just make sure you call the boys before you take off.

CARTER

I'll call Walter in a little while. (Peering out the window) You know? I think that rain has stopped. Maybe I can get out on the lake for a bit.

ROSALYNN

So you're going fishing Jimmy?

CARTER

Yeah, Rosalynn, you know I think it's about time to get to the bottom of this whole thing.

ROSALYNN

Just be careful, Jimmy. Oh, and leave the damn cameras behind. (Jokingly) We don't need another hare scare.

CARTER

(Laughing) I've got OPEC, stagflation, and rampant consumerism on my plate and now I have to watch out for rabbits. Some job this presidency is. Some job.

*Carter exits the room.*

INT. White House – July 4<sup>th</sup>/Mid-morning

*Rafshoon, Stewart, and Hertzberg meet to discuss the second draft. Stewart and Hertzberg have worked through the night.*

RAFSHOON

How's it coming boys?

STEWART

Eizenstat would be proud, but it seems to be lacking something.

HERTZBERG

It's lackluster. Why were we given only 24 hours notice? I've been up all night reading memos from every executive office in existence, but have found nothing of any substance to go on here.



RAFSHOON

Hendrik, you'll have to make due with what you have now. Remember, the American people need to hear something concrete.

HERTZBERG

But that's just it, Gerry, we don't have anything concrete. Unless Schlesinger has been keeping something from us, we've got nothing. All I have here are vague attempts at policy that you and I both know to be completely out of the president's control. You can't fight over-consumption with energy initiatives, just like you can't fight OPEC with fluff about morality. Unfortunately, we don't have either here and you didn't ask me to write two speeches.

RAFSHOON

The president needs the completed draft by 1:00PM. I would suggest that you two get together on this and give me something that Eizenstat and Mondale can get behind.

STEWART

We'll do our best. I just don't know if we can reverse these trends with one speech, at least not this one.

RAFSHOON

Just keep writing.

*Hertzberg shakes his head and turns back to his typewriter.*

EXT. Camp David/Lake – July 4<sup>th</sup>/11:00AM

*Carter paddles out onto the lake, fishing rod in hand. He is shown peering off into the sky. He closes his eyes and recites, to himself, his favorite bible passages.*

CARTER (V.O.)

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (II Corinthians 16-18).

“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God” (Romans 8, 18-21).

INT. Camp David/Aspen Lodge – July 4<sup>th</sup>/Midday

*Jimmy comes in from outside. Rosalynn is busy preparing lunch.*

CARTER

Hey Rosalynn, that smells fantastic.

ROSALYNN

Oh its just soup Jimmy, and I made you a sandwich. There is salad ready on the table.

CARTER

Now I remember why I married you.

ROSALYNN

(Jokingly) Well with the rate your advisors are going, I'll be out of here by next week.

CARTER

I spoke to those who were considering divorce, and none had any interest in you. I think they were afraid that you would make them into better men.

ROSALYNN

(Laughing) Come on Jimmy. Let's eat. You'll need the energy.

CARTER

For what?

ROSALYNN

Your backhand has been looking a little shaky lately...

CARTER

Please, that ball in tiebreak was out. Walter is just losing his eyesight.

ROSALYNN

Yeah, that's good Jimmy. Blame it on the Vice President.

*Both laugh before going to the table and beginning to eat. They are happy. Carter seems emboldened by his decision to cancel the speech.*

INT. Camp David/Aspen Lodge – White House/West Wing [telephone conversation] – July 4<sup>th</sup>/1:00PM.

*From the Aspen Lodge, Carter calls his advisors at the White House to inform them of his intention to cancel the speech.*

CARTER

Hello? Ham?

JORDAN

Good afternoon Jimmy.

CARTER

Same to you. How is everything going back there in Washington?

JORDAN

They are hoping that the storm won't get to us, although I can see some clouds "a brewin'" as we used to say back in Plains.

CARTER

It's clear, blue skies out here Ham.

JORDAN

Any luck with the fish?

CARTER

Very relaxing, but no bites.

JORDAN

That's alright, Jimmy. You have bigger fish to fry tonight.

CARTER

Now about that Ham...

JORDAN

Jimmy, I have Walter, Jody, and Gerry here with me.

*The White House advisors and VP greet the President in unison.*

MONDALE

Now Jimmy.

CARTER

Good afternoon, Walter. How is Joan doing?

MONDALE

Just swell, Jimmy, thanks. I wanted to congratulate you on deciding to give a speech focused on the specifics of our little energy crisis. We will be able to capture the momentum from this speech to claim upcoming victories in California, as our good buddy Governor Brown sorts out the energy companies, and on the East Coast, where tension in the energy market is beginning to subside.

CARTER

That's good to hear, Walter. How much of that stabilization was due to our policies?

MONDALE

Well... You know, Jimmy, these things are very difficult to gauge. It appears as if the odd-even license plate scheme is helping a bit. But when there is so much uncertainty in the global energy market, and with fluctuations in the dollar occurring daily, I'm just not that sure.

JORDAN

Not to mention the press is covering some guy in Pennsylvania who is complaining that the odd license plates get to fill up on both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> some months. Needless to say, I think he had an even plate.

CARTER

(Deflated) Now that is what I feared. We have spent so much time on this, I mean Schlesinger spent three months of his life writing this administration's energy policy, and The Hill has held us up so much that we can't even claim a victory when one is due. Even worse, we would be able to solve this whole crisis if Congress and the media would just stay out of it for once.

MONDALE

You're right, Jimmy, but James wrote in a vacuum. He has an entire executive department at his disposal and the Energy Secretary chose to go write the whole damn thing himself. I, let alone Congress, could hardly figure out what was in that thing. And if I was still on The Hill, I would not have been able, in good conscience, to vote on a piece of legislation that I didn't even understand. You see, Jimmy, that is why this speech tonight will get us back on the right track. If the public buys into the specifics of your address, we will be able to put pressure on Congress to enact our plan into law.

CARTER

Did you read the speech Walter?

MONDALE

Well, I have not gotten the chance to yet, but Gerry has assured me that Hendrik and Stewart have been up all night preparing the second draft...

CARTER

Did you take a look at any of the memos?

MONDALE

I read a few. Why do you ask?

CARTER

Because they're lacking, and the speech that you guys just sent over is as unimpressive. I could barely get through one of the drafts last night and Rosalynn agrees. It's a disaster.

RAFSHOON

Now Jimmy, I'll have you know that Hertzberg initially shared some of your concerns, but I read the final copy and think that it is exactly what we are going for.

CARTER

I'm not going to read it, Gerry, I already know what's in it.

*The White House advisors grow increasingly worried.*

MONDALE

What do you mean you aren't going to read it?

CARTER

I'm canceling the speech.

MONDALE

What? A president can't cancel an address. It's unheard of! Now Jimmy, you can't just not read the speech. You have to go on in a few hours. Why don't you just take the speech down by the lake and give it a quick glance? I am sure that you will find that it has the right approach, content, and message...

JORDAN

Jimmy, I have to agree with Walter. The speech will be exactly what we need. Give it a look over and we will do the same. When you are finished, give us a call back and we can take a look at making any necessary changes...

MONDALE

This way we can all help to make sure that the speech you deliver is the best possible.

CARTER

...Boys, I don't think you understand me. I'm just not going to go ahead with this speech.

MONDALE

Mr. President, you can't be serious...

CARTER

Cancel it.

MONDALE

Cancel it? Jimmy we have the editors of *The Post* breathing down our necks. Our numbers are in the tank and we just can't afford to waste anymore time. The midterms were a sign Jimmy, if we don't start moving here we won't be able to get going for next year...

CARTER

Walter, I'm more concerned with the current state of affairs than I am with elections. We won't win any if the American people do not trust that when I speak to them, I speak the truth.

MONDALE

The truth? Jimmy we are talking about energy policy points here. What does the truth have to do with it? I'm sure that Gerry had the boys check the facts on these programs, and Stuart wrote most of them...

CARTER

I'm talking about a truth more important than energy. I'm talking about the current state of this nation, of its people. I'm talking about the over-consumption, the divorces, the 'me-decade.'

MONDALE

Jimmy, I'm not sure how any of that has anything to do with energy policy. Now, you need to just take a look at that speech and get back to Washington in time to deliver it this evening. If you stay away, holed up in Camp David, I'm just not sure that I can keep the reporters at bay. What kind of message would it send to the administration? To the American people?

CARTER

I don't think that I'm making myself clear enough. I am not going on tonight. I am not going on with that speech. I need something more.

RAFSHOON

But, Mr. President, I have already asked every major network to set aside an entire hour for your address. For an administration with a 25% approval rating and tough media relations, this move just does not make any sense. God knows what they will fill the timeslot with, that disco crap? And Jimmy, you know those guys over at *The Post* will have a field day with that one.

CARTER

For the last time, I don't give a damn what they do at *The Post*. I've had it up to here with *The Post*. I already watched a newspaper bring down a presidency in this nation, and I'll be damned if I let *The Post* do it again. At this point Gerry, I couldn't care less if I anger the press. They cause me enough grief as it is.

RAFSHOON

But even worse than angering the press, this is going to hurt your image, Jimmy. Right now, the American people are looking for strength. This move will be perceived as weakness, at least by the media. We all know you, Jimmy, but the American people seem to have forgotten the straight-shooter they elected. If you give the speech, we can regain some of that confidence.

CARTER

Hey you said it, Gerry. Our numbers are in the tank and I'm not sure that we can go any lower. We've even passed Nixon at this point. With all due respect, I'm not all that concerned with my image at the moment.

JORDAN

Jimmy, if I may. I'm not sure that canceling the speech is the most appropriate course of action. We've never cancelled anything before, not in the Governors Mansion, not on the campaign trail, not in the White House. What will the American people think if on July 4<sup>th</sup> their president cancels his address to the nation? That just won't be very American.

CARTER

You know what wouldn't be very American Ham? Going on tonight and telling the nation that same thing I did the past five times I spoke to them.

MONDALE

Now, Jimmy. I can understand that you are passionate about this, but you just can't cancel the speech. Maybe you are still a bit jetlagged from your trip to the East.

CARTER

(Angered) No Walter! I feel fine. And I'm just about done with this phone call. Cancel the speech and that is final.

MONDALE

You cancel this speech Jimmy, I'm not sure that we can recover...

CARTER

Recover? I'm not concerned with recovering! I'm trying to lead. I'm trying to excel. Recovering is for those who are already lost.

MONDALE

Jimmy I just don't believe...

JORDAN

Jimmy, are you sure that you do not want to go on tonight with the speech?

CARTER

Cancel it.

JORDAN

Alright, Jimmy, I'll let everyone know.

MONDALE (O.S.)

Now what is this shit?

RAFSHOON

I don't agree with it, but I will notify the networks. That is easy enough. But what will Jody say when he faces the press in a few hours?

CARTER

Don't tell them a thing.

POWELL

I'm sorry, did I hear you right Mr. President? Tell them nothing?

CARTER

Let them sweat it out.

POWELL

So, no comment?

CARTER

None.

JORDAN

Do you think that is best Jimmy?

CARTER

I know it.

MONDALE

Alright, now I can't just sit by and watch as this administration crumbles. There is too much at stake to make rash decisions. Jimmy, I think that you should come back to Washington so that we can discuss this.

CARTER

Walter, I'm not giving the speech. When we are ready to get at the heart of the problem then I'll be ready to speak to the American people.

MONDALE

I'm not sure how much more of this bullshit I can take.



CARTER

Well Walter, I'm pretty tired of bullshitting the American people. So we are both fed up. Cancel the damn speech.

*Carter hangs up.*

MONDALE

Damn it!

JORDAN

I have no idea what has gotten into him.

MONDALE

Unless Jimmy is coming up with all of this crap himself I have a pretty good idea who has been whispering in his ear.

JORDAN

Rosalynn?

MONDALE

Yes, but you and I both know that she isn't coming up with this stuff either.

JORDAN

So who? I've had it up to here with those secretaries.

MONDALE

You're looking in the wrong place.

RAFSHOON

You don't mean Caddell? The pollster?

MONDALE

Bingo. He'll be our Watergate. You just wait and see.

INT. White House/Press Room - July 4<sup>th</sup>/Evening

*The White House Press Corps is stirring. Muffled questions can be heard as Powell gets ready to address them.*

POWELL

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I have called this press conference to announce the cancellation of tonight's presidential address. I have, no further comment. Thank you.

REPORTER 1

He's gone into hiding on Independence Day? These headlines just seem to write themselves.

*Laughter.*

*A compilation of newspaper headlines and TV anchor analysis is shown on screen. Amongst those presented include the July 5<sup>th</sup> New York Post headline, "What the Heck Are You Up To, Mr. President?" These media snippets cover theories ranging from a health problem, to insanity, and highlight the intense media speculation that ensued after Carter cancelled his initial speech.*

EXT. White House - July 5<sup>th</sup>/Afternoon

*Carter's closest advisors wait by the helipad en route to Camp David. In addition to those advisors already introduced, Pat Caddell waits to see the president.*

MONDALE

I told you, Ham. Have you seen the headlines?

JORDAN

It's worse than I thought. Some papers are speculating that Carter has gone insane. The president of the United States, insane.

MONDALE

(Looking at Caddell) Has he?

POWELL

Well when we won't comment on the president canceling an address to the nation, those are the type of headlines you should expect.

MONDALE

I'm not sure how much more of this the American people can take.

JORDAN

Now Walter, we are going to be alright. I'm sure that Jimmy is calling us to Camp David for a reason. He probably has started on a new draft of the speech. We can tell the press that he was ill.

MONDALE

That's great. Lie to the American people. (Sarcastically) I can't remember what happened when Nixon tried that.

CADDELL

Better than lying to them with that speech you sent over to last night.

MONDALE

Excuse me?

CADDELL

You and I both know that the problems this nation currently faces run deeper than the energy crisis. Why tell the American people otherwise?

MONDALE

Pat, you don't know what you are talking about.

JORDAN

Gentlemen, lets be civil.

EIZENSTAT

But I am interested in how Pat plans on solving the energy crisis. Should we let the president deliver a speech that focuses on the decline of disco instead of policy? Would that clear everything up?

CADDELL

Only if you were planning on further distracting the people from their real problems.

RAFSHOON

I had Hendrik and Stewart work all night on that speech, I'd love to see what you could come up with.

CADDELL

I wasn't always a pollster Gerry. (Laughing) I wrote for the Crimson.

RAFSHOON

Hard-hitting I'm sure.

JORDAN

Now boys...

*The helicopter starts up and the men make their way towards it. During flight, the camera focuses on Caddell as he peers out the window.*

INT. Camp David/Laurel Lodge - July 5<sup>th</sup>/Evening

*President Carter and First Lady Rosalynn greet the White House advisors at Camp David in the Laurel Lodge. This building will serve as the headquarters for the upcoming*

*domestic summit. All meetings with invited guests taking place at Camp David over the next 10 days are held here.*

CARTER

Gentlemen, I first want to thank you for meeting me. We have done great things at Camp David in the past, and I hope that faced with this energy and moral crisis, we can come together to find the correct course of action in order to restore the American people's confidence in their president. I know now that Americans need to hear more than just talking points. They are waiting for a leader to tell it to them straight. We, as a nation, deserve that. So, I have summoned you to Camp David to help me find the best way to achieve that goal.

MONDALE

Now Jimmy, let me start off by apologizing for my frustration yesterday. I hope that my passion hasn't gotten in the way of getting down to business. Now, I have spoken with Schlesinger and he is ready to move forward on a new energy plan...

CARTER

Thank you, Walter. I appreciate your determination, but I do believe that I am looking to address something more important than energy in my next speech.

MONDALE

Mr. President, with all due respect...

JORDAN

Jimmy, headlines were very negative this morning and leaders in Congress have phoned me more than once to check on your status. Americans are worried about their president.

CARTER

Ham, I appreciate your concern, but I believe in the strength of the American people. They will survive. Maybe it's better that Americans see their President getting away from Washington for a change. It sure is a stuffy crowd.

ROSALYNN

Well it's what we campaigned on. We promised an administration untainted by the special interests and lobbyists.

CARTER

And that is what we will give them. So, in order to deal with these issues, I am proposing that we hold a domestic summit here at Camp David. We will invite Americans from all walks of life. Ham, I want you to start scheduling meetings with elected officials, private citizens, prominent religious figures...

MONDALE

Wait a second. How long would this summit take? You aren't really considering staying away from Washington while gas lines continue to grow, while truckers run wild on the open highway? The nation is falling apart and you want another vacation? Well you just got back from one, and it does not seem like Congress is going to get around to ratifying that treaty you made with the Japs anytime soon. Why do you think that this summit will be any more successful?

JORDAN

How long are you thinking?

CARTER

Anywhere from a week to 10 days.

RAFSHOON

Jimmy, we could have a new speech ready by tomorrow evening. We won't need 10 days.

CARTER

But I will. I'll need enough time to meet with average Americans, to hear their concerns. That is what will write the speech. Their stories.

EIZENSTAT

With all due respect, Mr. President, meeting with everyday folk will not change the speech's content. Only talks between us and James can do that.

CARTER

See Stuart, that is where you've got it wrong. You and Walter don't seem to quite understand the gravity of this moment. Americans are searching for answers. But not only to the question of energy security, they need answers to the questions they have to ask themselves in the mirror each and every night. In my next speech, I will address those fears.

RAFSHOON

Ok, so say you take your 10 days to meet with average Joes. What will we tell the press? Don't you still get the paper out here?

CARTER

(Laughing) Actually Gerry, I canceled the subscription.

MONDALE

Mr. President, I don't believe this is a time for humor! I've heard of four to five Draft Kennedy movements springing up just in the past few days. Brown seems to be getting a handle on the situation in California, and we have to start thinking about a potential primary challenge from either one of them.

CARTER

Let Kennedy run. I'll whip his ass. And I beat Brown in California last time around. Walter, you should be more concerned with the long-term state of our nation instead of worrying about elections.

MONDALE

(Growing furious) But I am concerned with the long-term! Do you want this country falling to Reagan, the B-movie star and product peddler? Do you think that we will be better off then? Because I don't. I know that we are in big trouble once that day comes.

CARTER

And that is why we need to change the focus of our administration. I will not deliver another stump speech about vague energy plans we all know to have little chance of being accepted by Congress.

JORDAN

So what is your plan Jimmy?

CARTER

To hear from my people. To learn about their daily lives, their perceptions of the government, and their struggles. With that information, we will construct an address that will completely transform the dialogue between president and people.

MONDALE

So you want these guests to write the speech for you? I mean, what are we doing here?

CARTER

In a way, yes Walter. I do want the conversations that I have over the next week to shape the focus and aim of my address.

POWELL

Few administrations have been so open. This actually could score some points with the press.

RAFSHOON

Yeah Jody? You think that this will be good for the president's image.

POWELL

It couldn't hurt.

MONDALE

It couldn't hurt? It couldn't hurt? Just imagine if Kennedy had taken a vacation during the Cuban Missile Crisis? Or if Roosevelt went to Camp David while the

Germans were marching through Paris? No, I don't agree. I can't. Jimmy, you need to be a president!

CARTER

(Calm and resolute) That is exactly what I am going to do, Walter, be the president that the American people deserve.

MONDALE

Jimmy, what happened? You leave for Japan and everything is going well enough. You come back and now this. You cancel a speech and now you don't even want to be in the White House. What is really going on here?

*Rosalynn glances over at Caddell. Seeing this, other advisors look Caddell's way.*

EIZENSTAT

(Speaking to Caddell) Why are you so quiet Pat?

CADDELL

Well gentlemen, I think that I can answer some of your questions.

*Caddell rummages through his bag eventually finding his manuscript "Of Crisis and Confidence" and places it on the table.*

MONDALE

Now what in the hell?

CADDELL

Remember when you asked for memos on the current state of affairs...

RAFSHOON

Pat. This could be 50 pages long...

CADDELL

78 to be exact.

RAFSHOON

Why didn't you show this me?

CADDELL

Actually, I figured that you all would react to my ideas in precisely the same way you just did. So instead, I consulted a higher power.

JORDAN

God?

CADDELL

The first lady.

*Rosalynn takes the president's hand.*

ROSALYNN

It's true. Patrick came to me a few months ago and we spoke about the themes in his memo. It was complete with figures to back up his claims. I thought that it was something the I should show Jimmy.

CARTER

(Reassuringly) I read it and thought that it was just genius.

MONDALE

Wait just a minute. You are telling me that for the past few months Caddell has been advising the President and First Lady behind our backs? Well I guess that is what you get when you don't have a Chief of Staff to filter out the crap before it reaches the president.

CARTER

Now, Walter. My 'wheels on a spoke' approach has produced one of the most open administrations yet. From my advisors to cabinet secretaries, everyone has equal access.

MONDALE

And that is why nothing gets done. (Growing angrier) Do you think Nixon could have even figured out Watergate if he didn't have Ehrlichman and Haldeman building the "Berlin Wall?"

EIZENSTAT

I'm more interested in hearing what sort of genius ideas Pat has for us.

CADDELL

Well Stu, I'll let the president speak for himself. I just wrote what we have all felt, what we have seen on the television, what we have all read in print. Materialism, consumerism, and the 'me decade' mentality have suffocated the American people. For the first time ever in our nation's history, more Americans believe that our best days are behind us. Now tell me Stu, do you think they are just concerned about a few Sheiks?

EIZENSTAT

I will not be spoken to like that by a mere pollster. You should be grateful that we plucked you from the DNC as it is. Now why don't you keep your ideas to yourself and let the big boys do the talking?



CADDELL

I'm sorry, Stu. I just can't do that. Not when my ideas are...

EIZENSTAT

Your ideas are bullshit! I beg your pardon, Rosalynn.

ROSALYNN

With all due respect Stuart, I believe in Patrick. You should read his memo. It gets at the very heart of America's problems.

EIZENSTAT

I assure you, Rosalynn, I would have read it if I had known that it existed.

CADDELL

(Slyly) So my ideas aren't bullshit?

RAFSHOON

No, they're apocalyptic!

JORDAN

What do you think, Mr. President?

CARTER

I agree with my wife, Ham.

RAFSHOON

So it's settled? We will go ahead with this domestic summit?

JORDAN

It's going to take some work, but I think that I can move some of your schedule around.

POWELL

What will I tell the press?

RAFSHOON

We can send in some White House photographers to shoot the president getting down to business. You know real Kennedy 'rolled up sleeves' stuff.

JORDAN

Sounds workable.

MONDALE

Now wait a second. Why are we giving into Pat? We advise the president too. Don't you want to hear what we have to say?

CARTER

I have listened Walter, but I believe in Pat's vision. I have reflected upon it for some time now. Yesterday, out on the lake, I felt something. I realized that in order to alleviate the most prevalent ills, we must combat those which we cannot see. For those are the most crippling. See, Walter, Pat really gets that.

MONDALE

So you think some half-baked scheme to talk to a few people here and there is enough to make real change?

CARTER

We don't have many other choices, now do we Walter?

MONDALE

So what is your plan, Jimmy? What will you say? Tell the American public all they've done wrong? Scold them for their wicked ways?

CARTER

I will tell them the truth. We have all made mistakes.

MONDALE

But the public doesn't want to hear about mistakes, especially their own. We can't write a speech that castigates the American people. It won't work.

CARTER

You know what won't work, Walter? Telling them that everything is going to be be fine. I'm tired of it.

JORDAN

It's getting close to midnight, Jimmy. What do you want me to do about your governor's meeting tomorrow?

CARTER

Send Walter in my place. Call a few up here as well.

ROSALYNN

I can go too Jimmy.

CARTER

Fine.

JORDAN

So it's settled?

CARTER

Make the phone calls and then let's get some sleep. We'll have our work cut out for us in the morning.

Int. Camp David/Laurel Lodge - July 6<sup>th</sup>/Evening

*To kick off the domestic summit, Carter meets with eight governors summoned from the Louisiana convention. Rafshoon and Jordan sit outside of the meeting and comment on the current state of affairs.*

RAFSHOON

How's it going Ham?

JORDAN

Not well Gerry.

RAFSHOON

What's wrong?

JORDAN

I'm not even sure that the governors know what they are supposed to be talking about.

RAFSHOON

Well, what has Jimmy told them so far?

JORDAN

He is going by the book. Pat's book.

RAFSHOON

So, all is lost?

JORDAN

No, I don't think so Gerry. We just need to speak to Jimmy alone.

RAFSHOON

Well that's going to be tough now Ham, now that Caddell is shacking up. You know he only brought one change of clothes. I overheard Carter telling him that he wants him here the entire week.

JORDAN

You heard him Gerry, genius.

RAFSHOON

Oh the hell with that. You and I both know that the American people don't need to hear their president scold them. Its not Sunday school in Plains anymore Ham. We're talking about the most powerful man in the free world.

JORDAN

I just wish Pat, or the First Lady, would have let kept us in the loop. Especially Rosalynn. You know how much clout she has with the president. No matter how persuasive you and I can be, Rosalynn will always have the final say. She always has. If she had said anything about meeting with Pat, it would have explained so much. Would have hinted at why Jimmy has been so withdrawn ever since coming back from Tokyo.

RAFSHOON

You know what Ham, that is Carter's biggest mistake.

JORDAN

Going to Tokyo? You know he had to attend that summit...

RASHOON

No, Ham, I'm not talking about Tokyo. Jimmy's biggest mistake is allowing everyone equal access. We were shooting for the most open administration ever, and we've succeeded, but where has that left us? We have a pollster calling the shots. Stuart is fuming and Walter is pulling his hair out.

JORDAN

Jimmy took Walter around the camp for a walk before he left for the conference. I think that he is feeling better about things now.

RAFSHOON

Did you hear anything about that?

JORDAN

Walter did well.

INT. Governor's Conference/Louisiana - July 6/Evening

MONDALE

"The other day, I was listening to an interview on the radio with a lady that lived right next to the stricken Three Mile Island. The reporter asked her whether she was worried about living so close to this dangerous facility. She said, "Oh, no. I know it's safe because even the president of the United States came by here the other day." The reporter said, "Why do you think that makes it safe?" She said, "Because if it were dangerous, they would have sent the vice president." And here I am."

Int. Camp David/Laurel Lodge - July 6<sup>th</sup>/Evening

RAFSHOON

That's good. Did he come up with that one himself?

JORDAN

I think he actually did.

RAFSHOON

(Laughing) Maybe he has a little more in him than we give him credit for.

JORDAN

(Joking) Now, let's not get carried away Gerry. Did you see that suit he was wearing yesterday?

RAFSHOON

Well not everyone can get away with running the White House in a windbreaker.

JORDAN

I guess being from Georgia does have its benefits.

RAFSHOON

And that's why you should be Jimmy's chief of staff.

JORDAN

Now Gerry, we've been through this before. Jimmy likes his 'spokes-on-a-wheel' method. He wants everyone to have equal access. He doesn't want to be another Nixon. He wants to restore some legitimacy to the office.

RAFSHOON

Come on Ham, what is that 'spokes-on-a-wheel' crap? All I see is a president too concerned with being open to get anything done.

JORDAN

Gerry, I have to disagree with you there. Jimmy is taking charge on this energy crisis, and he straightened out the Israelis and Egyptians just a year ago. The first peace between Egypt and Israel since Je...

RAFSHOON

Jerimiah, yeah, he's told me that a hundred times. The reality is, the Accords were signed a year ago, and Jimmy even had to fly out there to make sure Sadat kept his word.

JORDAN

It's the biggest success we've had to date.

RAFSHOON

Well I think that its time for another Ham. You've seen the latest polls. We're lower than Nixon during Watergate! Nixon!

JORDAN

I know Gerry, I know.

RAFSHOON

The only way to move forward is for Jimmy to make some changes, or you and I both will be out of a job sooner rather than later. Even worse, we will lose out on the opportunity to accomplish everything that we ran on, to leave our mark on history.

JORDAN

What are you suggesting?

RAFSHOON

First, you need to take over as chief of staff. No more of this 'top advisor' crap. That way we can get Congress back on our side. You could help Jimmy focus on the bigger picture and not get so bogged down on the day-to-day stuff. This isn't the governor's mansion in Georgia.

JORDAN

Come on Gerry. Jimmy ran everything when we were still in Georgia. Now he has really worked on delegating...

RAFSHOON

(Excitedly) Delegating? Ham, give me a break. Jimmy still has to clear his desk by the end of the day. Do you know how many memos cross his desk a day? Hundreds. If we had you in there as chief of staff, you could take care of half of those, because you and I both know that the majority are just crap. We can't have Jimmy worrying about who will use the White House tennis court that afternoon, or choosing the music played in the hallways. I know that he was an engineer, but this micromanaging is getting ridiculous.

JORDAN

Maybe Jimmy could use some help filtering all the information that gets to him.

RAFSHOON

You'd be the perfect man for the job, he trusts you Ham. He always has.

JORDAN

Do you think really it's that easy? We can make one change and get this ship back on track?

RAFSHOON

We have to start somewhere Ham. Now if this speech works out, and lord knows I'm praying that Jimmy can pull this one off, we may be able to re-brand the president as a real go-getter. You know, tackling the issues instead of just talking about them. That's why I've got the White House photographers in there right now taking pictures of Jimmy meeting with those governors. We have to make it at least look like he's got this under control.

JORDAN

Will they make tomorrow's papers?

RASHOON

I'm not sure. Maybe Jody could answer that. It does seem a little late though. I'm sure that we can get Walter and Rosalynn in somewhere though.

JORDAN

You're right though Gerry, we need to convey some semblance of confidence to the American people. I just wish that everyone were on board with the message we are trying to send.

RAFSHOON

Although annoying, I think that Caddell is the least of our problems. Who knows if anyone will even bother to watch the speech? Lord knows they haven't tuned in to the last four. No, we shouldn't worry about Caddell, Jimmy will come to his senses eventually. Now the cabinet, that's another issue. The secretaries are completely out of control. We can't get anything done if Congress realizes that we can't keep Schlesinger and the rest of them in line. It makes Jimmy look incompetent. No one is on the same page, and where do you think all of the leaks are coming from? Not you or I. We gave the cabinet free reign and now we've lost them. Look, James wrote our entire energy policy by himself. He didn't consult Eizenstat and barely asked the president what he thought. No wonder I can't get Stewart and Hertzberg to write a speech that works. The public may be tuning Jimmy out, but that's because he doesn't have anything real to say anymore.

JORDAN

So you do agree with Pat then? Change the perspective?

RAFSHOON

No. Fire the cabinet. Jimmy should ask for their resignations right away.

JORDAN

Don't you think that the American people will be suspicious when the president just starts letting his top officials go?

RAFSHOON

They're asking for it. I've read two editorials in just the past week calling for Jimmy to restructure his cabinet. I say we fire them all.

JORDAN

A wholesale resignation? Reagan and *The Post* will have a field day.

RAFSHOON

Who cares about Reagan? It will be a cold day in hell before we swear in a B movie star...

JORDAN

Wait, I think I hear them coming out.

*Governors start to exit the Laurel Lodge. Carter can be heard thanking them from inside.*

CARTER (V.O.)

Now gentlemen, I want to thank you all for coming on such short notice.

*As the governors walk by Rafshoon and Jordan, they overhear some conversation.*

GOVERNOR 1

Now what kind of self-deprecating crap was that? He is going to tell the American people that he has failed them?

GOVERNOR 2

Boys, I'm not really sure what we are doing here.

GOVERNOR 3

I'd rather be in Louisiana with Mondale.

GOVERNOR 4

Or in Cape Cod with Kennedy. (Laughter)

*The Governors exit. Rafshoon and Jordan make their way into the Laurel Lodge. Jimmy is pouring over pages of notes on a yellow legal pad. White House photographers shoot away.*

JORDAN

So how did it go, Jimmy?

CARTER

Very well Ham, very well.

JORDAN

(Uneasily) That's good to hear.



CARTER

You know, I get the sense that they really felt it, that they understand the message we are trying to send. At first, a few of them were confused, but after I told them about Pat's ideas they caught on.

RAFSHOON

(To the photographers) Thanks, that will be enough. How quickly can you get them to the papers?

PHOTOGRAPHER 1

Not until tomorrow. We have to get this developed and then proofed...

RAFSHOON

Just do your best to have them in as soon as you can.

PHOTOGRAPHER 2

No problem Gerry.

RAFSHOON

Jimmy, you look a little tired.

CARTER

(Fidgeting) The meeting went a little longer than I had expected. How did Walter and Rosalynn do?

JORDAN

Very well. Walter even came up with a pretty funny opening all on his own.

CARTER

(Slyly) I knew he'd come around. It's the Catocin air.

RAFSHOON

It sure is something.

JORDAN

Now Jimmy, why don't you go get some sleep?

CARTER

I will. Don't you boys go and start worrying about me. That's Rosalynn's job, and tonight, I have the lodge all to myself.

JORDAN

(Slyly) Just don't go too crazy Jimmy. You know you have a big day tomorrow. You wouldn't want Rosalynn coming back and finding us up having a hell of a time.

CARTER

(Laughing) I know, I know. "Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world. She walks into mine."

*Jordan and Rafshoon start to make their way to the door.*

JORDAN

Goodnight Jimmy.

RAFSHOON

Sleep well Jim.

CARTER

Thanks boys, see you in the morning.

*Rafshoon and Jordan exit, leaving Jimmy alone with his notes.*

INT. Camp David/July 7<sup>th</sup> – Evening

*On the second day of the domestic summit, Carter meets with an assortment of individuals in the Laurel Lodge. Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO is present. Robert Keefe, a prominent businessman, and Barbara Newell, president of Wellesley College also attend. Sol Linowitz, US ambassador who worked on the Panama Canal deal, Jesse Jackson, John Gardiner, and Clark Gifford, presidential advisor, round out the group.*

CARTER

I hope that my advisors let you know, everything said here this week at Camp David is off the record. I want you to give it to me straight. Each of you has been summoned here to provide his/her perspective on how my administration has been handling a whole host of issues ranging from the oil crisis to dealings with Congress and the press. So don't be shy.

GIFFORD

If it's alright Jimmy, I think that I'll start.

CARTER

Sure Clark. Go ahead.

GIFFORD

Thank you Jim. Now you all know that I've been around for a long time. Started under Truman and have been advising presidents ever since. Jimmy, I've known you for a while now, helped you out when Bert was in a bit of trouble. And I know that your Georgia Mafia isn't too keen about my establishment persona, but when I advise, I advise from decades of experience. So I ask you this Jimmy, why

have you really called us all here? There doesn't seem to be any rhyme or reason as to why you've chosen the people now sitting here. Now, I'm up for a nice steak and shrimp cocktail as any other Washington insider, but the nation is wondering where its president has gone.

CARTER

Clark, I have brought you here to talk about the issues at hand and to discuss the failings of my administration in dealing with them.

GIFFORD

Well Jimmy, you didn't need to call us all the way out here to do that. Don't they still give you the paper? Your cabinet is out of control. You have no central authority in the White House. And worst of all, you don't carry yourself with the confidence befitting the president of the United States.

CARTER

Well, Clark, I mean, I...

GIFFORD

And why are you taking notes? Shouldn't you have someone else to do that? I hope that you aren't still micromanaging like this in the White House.

CARTER

We are dealing with a problem much bigger than the day-to-day affairs of the White House so let's get into that...

GIFFORD

With all due respect, Jimmy, the day-to-day affairs of the White House are exactly what brought down the Nixon administration. Why couldn't they take down yours too?

CARTER

We are talking about a crisis that is bigger than Watergate.

GIFFORD

Bigger than Watergate?

CARTER

Yes Clark. We are dealing with the unraveling of the moral fabric that has set this nation apart from all others since it's founding. Americans just don't seem to believe in themselves anymore, let alone trust in their president.

KIRKLAND

If I may, Mr. President?

CARTER

Go ahead Lane.

KIRKLAND

The American people are tired. Working class families wake up every morning only to find that there isn't enough gas in the car to get them to where they have to go. Inflation is fostering ridiculous spending habits, and the average American just doesn't know who to trust anymore. They should be able to trust their president, but polling shows otherwise. The real issue here, Mr. President, is that you are dealing with complex and intricate problems that the average Joe simply doesn't have the time to grasp. They just want to know that tomorrow will be better than today. Can you still give them that?

CARTER

That is exactly why I have decided to address the nation about the broader ills we face.

KIRKLAND

Excuse me sir. I'm not following.

CARTER

In my next address, I want to talk to the American people about the lives they lead, about the decisions they make. I want to restore their trust in government, and tackle the current moral crisis gripping this nation.

KIRKLAND

Moral crisis? You mean disco?

CARTER

It's more than disco Lane. It's the divorce rate. It's parents letting television raise their kids. It's the young adult that buys on credit and amasses a debt from which they can never recover. It's the personal choices that Americans make that lead to our dependence on foreign oil, our apathy, and our distress.

KIRKLAND

So you are going to blame the American worker for OPEC?

CARTER

No Lane, but I am going to talk with them about how their actions have emboldened the sheiks.

KIRKLAND

Now, I'm not so sure that message will be well received.

JACKSON

If I may interrupt, gentlemen? How are you going to tell working families, better how are you going to tell the poor that they are the problem. How are you going to look them in the eyes and scold them for their wicked ways? You and I both know, Mr. President, that God loves us all as equals, but you and I both also know that for too long in this country minorities have been treated like second-class citizens. So when you get on the TV, and tell a single mother in the Bronx that she is the reason there isn't any gas at the station, just remember that she won't believe a word of it.

CARTER

Its true Jesse, you and I are both religious men, and because we are both religious men, you know that once and a while people need to hear a message that scares them, something that helps to show them the light. I am going to deliver that message.

JACKSON

But which America are you speaking to Jimmy? The America filled with upper-class folk that waste and spend until they are blue in the face, or are you talking to the America filled with men and women who get up every morning just to put enough food on the table to get their family through the day? Now, I have to commend you, Mr. President, on your dedication to the integration movement and I know that you are a kind-hearted man, but if you tell those working-class individuals that they are the problem, especially the minorities, they may just tune you out forever.

CARTER

So what should I do Jesse?

JACKSON

You need to tell it to them straight, Mr. President. You need to be bold. Tell them about the social ills that plague this nation, but also remind them of their own strength. Be forthcoming with the failures of your own administration.

CARTER

Its tough to be forthcoming Jesse when I have the media spinning everything.

JACKSON

That's why I like this speech idea. Take the mass media out of the equation. If they want to spin it, let them spin it afterwards. If you really believe in Caddell's ideas, you won't have a problem conveying them to the American people.

GARDNER

I remember the dinner we had in late May where Pat Caddell first let us know about his memo. At first I was very skeptical, but now I realize how badly your

administration needs to address both the issues at hand and its mishandling of the crises, first oil, but now moral as well.

CARTER

What would those be John?

GARDNER

If I may, Mr. President, your administration is disorganized and factious. Take James Schlesinger. He has contributed very little to your efforts to combat the oil crisis, but parades around Washington like he is the guru on energy affairs. We both know that Eizenstat has written much of your talking points for the past four energy speeches and has come up with many of the programs now in use. But with Iran up in arms, we won't be sure about a secure energy supply for some time. Revolution has overshadowed the deal your administration cut with OPEC to keep prices down. The Shah, who we helped to put back on the throne, just isn't there anymore to call the shots.

CARTER

Iran sure is presenting a problem. Even worse the Shah is sick and looking for somewhere to escape to, away from the Muslim world. But, I am working on the sheiks, and I think that we will start to see some depression in oil prices globally...

JACKSON

Mr. President, our vital organs are stretched out along the fence, and OPEC has the knife.

GARDNER

If I may be frank, Mr. President, James should be let go. Since we are still off the record, I personally hold him responsible for the failure of your energy program at a time when Congress was more ready to listen.

NEWELL

Mr. President, gentlemen, if I may interrupt, I remember the night that you were elected very well. It was tough to get my students to class the following morning. There was a sense that we were electing a president who truly understood us, an outsider to the Washington elite, my apologies Clark.

GIFFORD

No offense taken Barbara.

NEWELL

And now, Mr. President, the apathy of the 'me-decade' has infiltrated college campuses across the nation. Students do not watch the nightly news anymore. They don't read the papers either. They have lost all faith in their governing institutions, and its not just the college kids either. I have friends, academics, who

have turned towards other pursuits simply because they no longer believe that anything coming out of Washington is in their best interest. You didn't start the fire Jimmy, Nixon and Ford took care of that, but now it's your responsibility to restore some faith in the presidency.

CARTER

Go on Barbara.

NEWELL

I believe that you must make the loss of faith in governing institutions a central focus of your address. You need to talk with the American people about the way they view government, and about the way government views them. That is of course what you ran on, trust.

CARTER

What do you think, Robert?

KEEFE

All of this uncertainty has been horrible for the markets. The dollar is falling by the hour, and stagflation grips the nation. You have to realize, Mr. President, that this nation is, in many ways, similar to a business. You are the CEO, and like any good CEO, you need to convey confidence in your workers, your product, and your future. And I'm not sure that you have shown any confidence at all...

CARTER

Now Robert, it just isn't that simple.

KEEFE

It is that simple. You need the American people to buy into what you are offering and your administration just isn't selling anything that great lately. We've already spoken about the cabinet, but how about your closest advisors. I saw Powell and Jordan before we began. They look horrible. Overworked and without direction. Eventually, the responsibility to steer the ship falls on your shoulders Mr. President.

CARTER

That is why I have called you here. To talk about where we go next.

LINOWITZ

Mr. President, we worked together on the Panama Canal deal. I admired your attention to detail throughout the entire process, but you seemed to lose focus when dealing with the realities associated with ratifying treaties in Congress. I think that you are in sort of the same boat nowadays. You have convened this domestic summit, but what are you trying to achieve away from Camp David?

CARTER

I am trying to reconnect with the people Sol.

LINOWITZ

Which people Jimmy? We could have held this meeting over the phone in Washington. Ham told me that you met with eight governors yesterday, but canceled your appearance at their conference in Louisiana. The press had a field day with that one. Not only are they not sure who you are meeting with, which adds an unnecessary air of secrecy to the proceedings here, they are criticizing your choices. It seems like you have lost sight of the big picture, opinion polls and the like.

CARTER

I assure you Sol, I have not lost sight of anything. As for the polls, there isn't much use crying over spilt milk. Now the important numbers, Pat gave me those.

KEEFE

What numbers?

CARTER

(Hesitating) ...Numbers that show the American people have lost faith in their government. Numbers that show, for the first time in our nation's history, more Americans believe that the next five years will be worse than the past five years.

JACKSON

You didn't need to read Caddell's book to figure that out.

CARTER

But I did read Pat's book, and believe in it.

JACKSON

I do too, Mr. President, but you need to make sure that any address you make doesn't talk down to the American people.

CARTER

That was never my intention. Listen, I think that we are getting a bit off-track. Maybe it is time to call it a night...

GIFFORD

Jimmy, I fell off of my bike today. I hadn't ridden in 63 years. There isn't much time to ride bikes in Washington. I just couldn't figure out the breaks. Apparently, you have to do that with your hands now. Well anyway, I tore a hole in the seat of my pants, but I must have bumped my head too because I think that you are about to do something very disturbing. You are going to address the American people and tell them that they are wrong. And not only is that not very good for your chances at reelection, its completely out of character for a US president. Look at



Lincoln, FDR, and Kennedy. They made the strength of the American people the central focus of their greatest speeches. Now you want to tell them that they are spoiled? That this country no longer stands for everything they once believed in? I know that you aren't getting your message across, but this just isn't the right way to get that done. It's suicide.

CARTER

So, if I've heard you all right, some of you believe that I need to make the address. Others believe that it will kill my chances at reelection. Some of you want me to keep the message broad. Others are looking for more tangible solutions. None of you believe in my administration, and almost all of you are pretty critical of my leadership style. Lady and gentlemen, I hope that you now realize the pressures associated with my office. Everyone wants something different. No one is satisfied. Thank you all for coming to Camp David on such short notice. I hope that you enjoy the rest of your evening. That'll be enough for the night.

EXT. Camp David - July 8<sup>th</sup>/Morning

*Amy Carter, age 12, plays with her father outside. The sun is shining as the two prepare for a swim in the compound's lake.*

AMY

Dad?

CARTER

Yes Amy.

AMY

I miss Misty Malarky Ying Yang.

CARTER

Amy, I don't think that Misty would have much fun out here at Camp David. You know, she has really taken to the White House.

AMY

Come on dad. There are so many little mice for her to catch out here.

CARTER

But isn't the White House Misty's home? Don't you think that she belongs there?

AMY

Maybe, but she could always go on a vacation.

CARTER

But, what would happen if Misty got lost out here? She wouldn't know the way back.

AMY

Cats always know the way back.

CARTER

Really Amy? How so?

AMY

Cats remember everything. They use their sense of smell to find their family. For Misty, that's you and me dad.

CARTER

So it's that easy? If you get lost, all you need to do is follow your nose back home?

AMY

For cats, daddy.

CARTER

What about for you and I?

AMY

Well, I don't know dad. Who do you know that is lost?

CARTER

Oh, no one Amy. Just wondering.

AMY

Well, if you do find someone that is lost, all you need to do is to tell them to go home and I'm sure that they will find the way.

CARTER

It's that simple?

AMY

Yes dad, it's that simple.

CARTER

Well then why didn't I think of it?

AMY

You're too busy to be worried about lost cats.

CARTER

Maybe you're right, Amy. But today I still get to spend the day with you. After our swim we can finish watching Wimbledon. Do you want to be a tennis star when you grow up?

AMY

I'm going to be an artist.

CARTER

What about a politician?

AMY

No way! I want to get some sleep. Wanna race?

CARTER

What are the stakes?

AMY

If I win, Misty gets to come to Camp David next time.

CARTER

But what if I win?

*Amy jumps into the lake.*

AMY

(Shouting back at her father) I'm not too worried about that dad!

INT. Camp David/Aspen Lodge - July 8<sup>th</sup> /Morning

*Rosalynn, back from the conference, watches television while Jimmy and Amy are swimming. Various labor leaders, part of the Draft Kennedy movement, are calling for the Senator to run for president.*

LABOR LEADER 1

We are here today to call on Senator Ted Kennedy to run for president of the United States.

LABOR LEADER 2

We are tired of the leadership of this nation. The problem isn't the people. It's the president.

LABOR LEADER 3

For too long now we have waited to see if President Carter could get it together. We now know that he can't. We don't even know where he is or what he is up to.

On Monday, we sent out 50,000 flyers to potential donors, and are very proud to see that Senator Kennedy is now beating Carter in his home state of Georgia.

ROSALYNN

Oh, no...

*Carter and Amy, back from their swim, walk towards the lodge. Rosalynn shuts off the TV before they enter.*

AMY

We made a bet. You have to tell her.

CARTER

(To Rosalynn) Oh alright. She's bringing the cat next time!

ROSALYNN

What?

AMY

Dad and I raced and I won so next time we come to Camp David I get to bring Misty too!

CARTER

She cheated Rosalynn.

ROSALYNN

Amy, you remember who makes the household decisions around here? How about you go fix yourself some toast and we can talk about this later.

AMY

Fine mom.

*Amy walks away sulking.*

CARTER

What's the matter Rosalynn? We were only joking around.

ROSALYNN

Jimmy, you didn't tell me that Kennedy was polling higher than you in Georgia.

CARTER

Now those numbers are premature...

ROSALYNN

Jimmy, I just saw a press conference. You have labor leaders jumping ship and throwing their support behind Kennedy. Kennedy, who isn't even running yet.

CARTER

He's been losing weight.

ROSALYNN

I found that stupid magazine, *People*, lying around. I don't want it in my house. Ted is on the front cover, Jimmy. They made him look like a rock star instead of a murder...

CARTER

Now we don't know what happened that night in Chappaquiddick.

ROSALYNN

Alright Jimmy, we always knew you would have to run against the Republicans, but now you'll have to run a primary campaign as well? With labor leaders backing Kennedy, how are we going to get Pat's message across to the American people?

CARTER

Rosalynn, don't worry about Ted. I am confident that I can beat him.

ROSALYNN

But they are angry Jimmy. People think that you have moved too far to the center, that you have not delivered on your campaign promises.

CARTER

They want you to get things done, but they always want them done their way. The liberal wing of the party can get as frustrated as they want, I don't have a choice anymore.

ROSALYNN

What do you mean? You don't have a choice anymore?

CARTER

When I was elected, I had the hopes of a nation behind me. Two years of dealing with Congress, OPEC, and the media have chiseled away at that.

ROSALYNN

But what choice are you talking about?

CARTER

The choice to lie, to tell everyone that everything is going to be alright. If the liberals can't stomach the truth, then let them live with Ted in Camelot. I'm going to lead this nation back from the brink, and let me tell you Rosalynn, it's just not going to be a fairytale.

EXT. Camp David/Lake - July 8<sup>th</sup>/Evening  
*Caddell sits by the water with his manuscript. Rosalynn approaches.*

ROSALYNN

Hello Patrick.

CADDELL

(Standing) Mrs. Carter, how are you?

ROSALYNN

Oh please, do sit. I'm doing well Patrick. How are you?

CADDELL

Just fine Mrs. Carter.

ROSALYNN

Patrick, please just call me Rosalynn. We've been through this before.

CADDELL

(Shyly) Alright, Rosalynn. How have the meetings been going? (Chuckling) I think Mondale gave the order to keep me away.

ROSALYNN

Don't be silly Patrick. Walter will come around eventually.

CADDELL

Is the president still happy with our message?

ROSALYNN

Jimmy is going ahead with your version of the speech. He told me again after he met with that group last night. You know, Gifford and the bunch.

CADDELL

That's good to hear.

ROSALYNN

Patrick, I wanted to ask you something, but never had the chance. Why did you write that memo?

CADDELL

Because I needed to.

ROSALYNN

Needed to?

CADDELL

The way I see it Rosalynn, there are only a few moments in this life where we are given the opportunity to become something greater than ourselves. For me, this was one of those moments.

ROSALYNN

You know Pat, Jimmy will be the one giving the speech, not you.

CADDELL

And that's just fine. My job was only to show him the light. So long as Eizenstat and Mondale don't get in the way, I've accomplished that.

ROSALYNN

And that will be your mark on history? This speech?

CADDELL

No, I won't be remembered, but it will be your husband's. If he tells the American people what he needs to, he will be forever remembered for it.

ROSALYNN

I just can't shake the feeling that it could be too late.

CADDELL

It's never too late to redeem oneself. It isn't too late for any of us. The American people are still looking for their messiah. Lets give it to them.

INT. Camp David/Laurel Lodge - July 9<sup>th</sup>

*Carter and Rosalynn meet with Congressional leaders. Tip O'Neill (speaker of the house), Senator Robert Byrd, Senator Ted Stevens, Senator J. Bennett Johnston, and Senator Toby Moffett attend.*

CARTER

Gentlemen, I want to thank you for taking time away from your vacations to meet with me here at Camp David. Over the past few days, I have met with an assortment of Americans to find solutions to both the energy crisis and the broader ills currently plaguing our society. But I have called you specifically here to discuss the current oil crisis and the ways in which Congress can help alleviate the problem. I am concerned that The Hill has become increasingly resistant to my administration's efforts to lead the way on energy.

*O'Neil lights up a cigarette and pats the president on the back.*

O'NEILL

Don't worry, Mr. President. The rationing plan will make it through Congress if you just push a little harder this time. It seems to be working in some states, and we are simply running out of options. You need to sell it as a joint effort though. You know, Americans helping other Americans.

CARTER

Well the rationing program that James worked on failed in the House. Why do you think that it would work this time?

O'NEILL

The House, well Congress in general, was upset that James never consulted the leadership during any stage of that policy's formulation. We were bitter, but we simply cannot afford that bitterness anymore. Our districts are up in arms about this whole energy crisis. People are calling for our heads. I think that the democrats recognize that, for better or for worse, our fate is linked to the fate of this administration.

CARTER

I want Congress to get behind my administration's energy policy. I want Congress to realize that without rationing, however controversial, we will face an even larger problem. And it's not just rationing, we have to look long term towards the development of more sustainable energy sources. I've even installed solar panels on the roof of the White House. I am ready to lead the way. All I need to know now is that Congress will support broader efforts to make this nation more sustainable, and more secure.

O'NEILL

I think that people will vote for it. At least, I know that I can get the votes. I don't think that individual members of Congress will be especially excited about it though.

CARTER

Why not?

O'NEILL

The legislation is complex. It's difficult to sell that to their constituencies. It also means sacrifice. The average American may have a hard time cutting back when most believe that our nation's energy woes mainly result from OPEC and your administration's inability to deal with the cartel.

CARTER

But we need legislation that is comprehensive enough to solve the problem. You just can't have it both ways. And as for OPEC, we are dealing with it.



O'NEILL

And that's why it will be easier to pass anything on energy if you involve Congress in the earlier stages. Get the leadership wedded to the legislation and you will see how quickly Congress comes around.

CARTER

Alright Tip, say that we can get something passed relatively quickly. Say we stem the bleeding. Where do we go from there?

O'NEILL

We get rid of Schlesinger and the other cabinet secretaries holding us up. Jimmy, when you were elected, we were an overwhelming majority. We had a mandate. We spoke about passing universal healthcare. We wanted to increase jobs in every sector of the economy. We spoke about issues of party discipline. Well discipline comes from the top. You need to get your administration on the same page before I can get the House to follow suit...

BYRD

(Interrupting) You know what you need Mr. President, more coal. We in West Virginia, hardworking Americans, can provide that for you. We can wean ourselves off of foreign oil by investing in coal production here in the United States. Lord knows we have enough here to finally shut up those sheiks.

CARTER

What are you suggesting Robert? Alter the entire energy infrastructure of the United States.

BYRD

We don't need to alter anything. We currently use coal throughout this nation in every which way. What I am suggesting we do is empower the same American people that have lost confidence in your administration. Show them that they are good enough to succeed.

CARTER

How is this different from a pet project Robert?

BYRD

(Hesitating) A pet project? I beg your pardon Mr. President. I am trying to help you find domestic solutions to the energy crisis. I simply believe that increased coal production must be central to any energy policy moving forward. We have to use the resources already here in the United States.

CARTER

I'm not sure about the cost of implementing a program of that scale. In addition, coal is dirty to extract. We should just let the sheiks do it.

BYRD

Mr. President, you and I both know that we will have to make the move away from foreign oil sooner than later.

STEVENS

If I may, Mr. President, Alaska can provide enough oil for the entire country if we just step up drilling. That is going to cost money up front, but we'll save tons in the long run.

CARTER

Go on Ted.

STEVENS

It is speculated that Alaska has much more oil than previously known and we have all the necessary infrastructure to begin boosting production. All we would need from Congress is the go-ahead. You know, deregulate the energy market, loosen some environmental restrictions.

CARTER

Listen, you've all seen the Draft Kennedy movement.

*The room becomes uneasy.*

CARTER

No. It's alright. I know what is going on within my own party. If Ted already has the liberal wing in his back pocket, I don't think I can further alienate them by drilling in national parks.

STEVENS

With all due respect Mr. President, you may no longer have a choice.

MOFFETT

I disagree, Mr. President. We cannot relax environmental and industry standards. We need to better regulate the oil industry to make sure that energy companies aren't running up huge profits in a time of scarcity. We need to be certain that some of the largest companies in the United States still remember who they serve.

CARTER

Are you talking about California?

MOFFETT

I'm talking about California, yes. But I'm talking about the culture of deregulation fostering on the right. Reagan gets on the airwaves every week and calls on everyone to slash taxes, slash regulations, and slash government. If you start deregulating, Mr. President, that isn't a move to the center, that's a ticket out of the White House.

JOHNSTON

See that's where you have it wrong Toby. What we need to do, Mr. President, is relax existing restrictions on energy companies to help foster the development of synthetic fuels. Sure, we could increase our coal or oil output, but that's not a sustainable policy in the long-run. No, we need to let the free market allocate our existing supplies and keep an eye on the future of energy security, which means the development of syn-fuels. Think of how easily we could deal with Iran, with Saudi Arabia, if we weren't dependant on their oil. We wouldn't have to take anymore crap from OPEC.

MOFFETT

Bennett, you are starting to sound like a republican, no offense Ted.

STEVENS

None taken. I think he's right.

JOHNSTON

The liberal wing is only concerned with ideology, when more often than not, its reality that forces our hands. Sure, we still make a choice, but we don't have the luxury of making that choice inside a vacuum. That's why we were so put off by James' policy. He did not consider the obstacles to its implementation. There is very little room for ideology in real politics.

MOFFETT

But without a direction, we are lost.

CARTER

(Softly) We are lost.

STEVENS

What was that Mr. President?

CARTER

We are lost Ted. We, as a nation, are lost.

O'NEILL

What do you mean Jimmy?

CARTER

Gentlemen. Let's leave our politics at the door for a moment. Do you believe Ted, that drilling for more oil in Alaska will solve our short-term energy problem? Or do you Toby believe that saving some arctic wildlife is more important than stemming an economic collapse? With all due respect Senator Byrd, I don't think that increased coal production will solve anything either. And Tip, I'm not so sure that we can get that rationing program passed as easily as you think. No, I asked you all here to find non-partisan solutions to the energy crisis, and all I have are

personal opinions and pet projects. Can we sell that to the American people? Just tell them that we didn't find any common ground? I don't think so. And if all that you can agree on is that James should be let go, I think that this meeting has come to its conclusion.

O'NEILL

Alright Jimmy. Sorry we couldn't be more helpful.

*The congressional leaders exit. Carter turns to his wife.*

CARTER

Rosalynn, can you get Caddell here as soon as possible?

ROSALYNN

I sure can, Jimmy. Are you alright?

CARTER

I'm tired Rosalynn. Just plain tired.

INT. Camp David/Firepit - July 9<sup>th</sup>/Evening

*Carter and Caddell meet to discuss the summit.*

CARTER

They just don't seem to get it Pat.

CADDELL

What do you mean Mr. President?

CARTER

All they do is rail against my administration, my ability to lead. They just don't see the big picture.

CADDELL

They don't get paid to see the big picture, Mr. President.

CARTER

What does that mean Pat?

CADDELL

Only you can rise above all that.

CARTER

Above what?

CADDELL

Above the pettiness. You are the president of the United States. Only you represent every man, woman, and child in this great nation. Only you can truly lead us through this time of crisis.

CARTER

I understand that Pat. But over the past few days, I've tried to reach out to everyone, to hear their voice. I feel as if we are all writing this chapter in my presidency together.

CADDELL

This script wasn't written for Byrd or Gifford. It wasn't written for Ham or myself. This is your opportunity, and yours alone, to become the president that this nation needs. The leader we have been searching for.

CARTER

It just doesn't seem like they care anymore. I can only lead a horse to water Pat.

CADDELL

Great leaders do so in times of darkness, in times of crisis. It's easy to lead when everything is going well. This is your chance to show what true leadership really is. That is why everyone has stuck around Jimmy, why you were elected in the first place. Everyone believed that you would speak for us in the twisted up world of Washington politics. You simply cannot back down now.

CARTER

That's not what I am thinking Pat, it's just so difficult to tell them everything when they only have ears for my mistakes, my shortcomings.

CADDELL

We are all put on this earth to serve a purpose. Keep yours in mind, Mr. President, and all of your fears will melt away.

INT. Camp David/Laurel Lodge - July 10<sup>th</sup>/Midday

*Today, Carter meets with labor leaders, businessmen, and economists. Governor Clinton of Arkansas sits in on the session, called to Camp David by Carter for advice. Clinton is identified as a rising star within the Democratic Party, and also as a fellow Southerner. His input is greatly sought by Carter and his advisors, especially Jordan. Lawrence Klein, an expert in the field of econometrics, liberal John Kenneth Galbraith, and various others attend.*

CARTER

Ah, Bill glad you could make it. How was Louisiana?

*The two shake hands.*

CLINTON

Glad to be here, Mr. President. I wish that we could have made more progress on the energy front, but we have to start somewhere. How have you been feeling?

CARTER

Just great, Bill. And yourself?

CLINTON

I'm doing fine, Mr. President. Who are you meeting with today?

CARTER

Well that's why I called you here Bill. Today I am meeting with economists, labor leaders, and businessmen. I would love to have a fellow southern governor's viewpoint on where to go from here.

CLINTON

I'm glad to help in anyway possible.

CARTER

Good, and if Hillary will allow it, I'd like it if you could stay a few days, sit in on some meetings and speak with my staff.

CLINTON

Sounds great Mr. President.

CARTER

Great, let's get to it then.

*Carter and Clinton go into the Laurel Lodge where the panelists await their arrival. They exchange pleasantries.*

CARTER

You all know Governor Clinton? He will be joining us today.

CLINTON

(To Carter) Glad to be here.

CARTER

Now gentlemen, I have been meeting with small groups of Americans like yourself for a few days now to discuss the broader ills currently plaguing this nation, including the energy crisis. Simply put, we are looking for bold solutions moving forward. I hope that each of you will feel comfortable in providing me with your expertise and viewpoint. Of course, everything said here is off-the-record.

KLEIN

Mr. President, we are all very honored to be here today.

CARTER

Well thank you Lawrence. If you don't mind, would you start us off?

KLEIN

Sure thing Mr. President. I, as an economist, will provide you with our perspective, and it may not be what you were hoping to hear, but it's the truth. You see, Mr. President, I work with numbers. When I give advice, I look at the all the available facts in order to formulate my opinion. I don't have to deal with unions, voters, heck I don't have to look out for anyone's "best interest" so long as I keep the bottom line afloat. So I know that it may be difficult to hear, but the only way to wean this country off of foreign oil is to loosen controls on prices domestically.

CARTER

Deregulation?

KLEIN

Yes, Mr. President.

CARTER

Lawrence, as I am sure you know, my party is not deregulation's biggest fan.

KLEIN

I understand that Mr. President, but you don't have many other choices.

CARTER

I'm listening.

KLEIN

By deregulating the domestic energy market, you will allow for the free-flow of oil to areas of need. You know, there is a commonly held perception out there that big oil is hoarding reserves in order to increase profit margins during this time of crisis...

CARTER

And isn't that more the reason to regulate them?

KLEIN

Exactly the opposite. Big oil can now hide behind rationing and industry regulations to explain such practices. When one considers the general uncertainty in the larger energy market, it makes sense for oil companies to act cautiously while OPEC decides their fate.

CARTER

So how would deregulation get energy flowing domestically?

KLEIN

Competition amongst oil companies, real competition, would ensue. Instead of a race to the bottom, we would have oil companies striving to provide the best service possible to their clients, and that means better access and possibly lower prices.

CARTER

I'm still not sold Lawrence.

KLEIN

Mr. President, we aren't talking about a free-for-all, we are talking about relaxing certain restrictions, including any proposed rationing plan, that keep oil companies nervous in a time of market uncertainty. Now is not the time to project weakness, especially in the face of OPEC's attempts to control our domestic markets with their price gauging.

CARTER

Mr. Klein, I have to admit, you may be on to something here. We would need to set up a meeting with James Schlesinger, Stuart Eizenstat, and yourself to go over specifics, but I may be able to jump on board with the broader goals of deregulation.

GALBRAITH

(Flustered) Mr. President, I'm sorry, I have to disagree with Mr. Klein. Deregulation is just another excuse for big oil to make even bigger profits at the expense, very literally, of the American people. Now, unlike Mr. Klein, I have spent my entire adult life looking out for others, although I realize that the bottom line is important, it simply isn't everything.

CARTER

So what do you suggest Kenneth?

GALBRAITH

Well, I think that it is obvious Mr. President, rationing is the only way to go.

CARTER

Ken, my advisors are unsure whether rationing programs are working in the larger states, and I have to admit, a program on the national scale could require more in terms of coordination than we are currently capable of.



GALBRAITH

With all due respect, Mr. President, rationing is working in at least a dozen states. More and more governors each day are either implementing programs or seriously considering it. I'm not sure where your advisors are getting their information.

CLINTON

(Clearing his throat) If I may cut in Mr. President, rationing is an option, but it's a short-term solution to a long-term problem, and it may end up causing more irregularities in the market than we can sustain. I think that you need to take a look at both approaches and see which, if any, will be best for this nation in the long-term.

CARTER

Thanks Bill, you have a point here. Perhaps rationing doesn't go far enough, and Congress still seems a bit more resistant than Tip O'Neill suggests.

GALBRAITH

Mr. President, deregulation will be your Watergate, just another Washington insider deal to benefit big business at a great cost to the average American.

CLINTON

Now Ken, I'm not sure that you can go that far...

PARTICIPANT

(Interrupting) Mr. President, average Americans just don't believe in their government anymore. They think everything coming out of Washington is a conspiracy.

CARTER

How do you mean?

PARTICIPANT

Well, since Ken brings it up, ever since Watergate and Ford's pardon, people have distrusted Washington in a way never before seen. They'd rather watch Johnny Carson than Walter Cronkite. They'd rather go to a discotheque than spend time with their families. They'd rather read rubbish than a newspaper. And don't get me started on religious observation and moral values. There is a new divorce every day at the courthouse. Seems like you can just up and leave your family for no reason at all these days. Mr. President, I am sorry for ranting, but I just feel as if this whole crisis has more to do with what's going on in the average American home than overseas.

CARTER

Yes, I've heard that a few times now. The real question is how to change it.

PARTICIPANT

I remember when you were running for president. No one even knew who you were when you announced your candidacy. Your soul claim to fame was a spot on the Newlyweds Show. But you had a message that average Americans could get behind. You ran as an outsider, and when you were elected, hopes were high that you would change the status quo in Washington. With all due respect, Mr. President, I'm not sure if you have been able to do that, but I do know that it's never too late to start.

CARTER

What do you mean? Change the status quo?

PARTICIPANT

Mr. President, I mean changing the manner in which leaders communicate with the American people. So whether it be deregulation or rationing, the real issue here is how you sell that solution to the American people. Will you simply state the facts like my friend Lawrence would advise you to do, or would you take an ideological bent like Ken's? Either way, Mr. President, you will still tell the same old story, nothing transformative will occur. Americans will get board halfway through the address and turn the channel. And its not because what you are saying isn't important or right, it's because you are simply dictating, not leading. No, a leader would take a different approach.

CARTER

And what approach would you suggest?

PARTICIPANT

Excuse my French, Mr. President, but you need to cut through the crap and get to the heart of it. Whether that be dealings with OPEC, American materialism, or policy, tell it to Americans the way it really is. I personally believe that there are better things to talk about than policy, and if I was speaking to the American people as their leader, I would take that opportunity to say something of substance. Otherwise, you will let another chance to truly lead go by, and this entire summit will have been for naught.

CARTER

Gentlemen, now we're getting somewhere.

INT. Camp David/Laurel Lodge - July 10<sup>th</sup>/Evening

*In the evening, President Carter meets with prominent religious leaders nicknamed the "God Squad." Amongst others, Robert Bellah a sociologist from the University of California at Berkeley, and Marc Tanenbaum of the Jewish faith attend. Speechwriter Hendrik Hertzberg sits in on the meeting.*

CARTER

Good evening. I have invited you all here in Christian fellowship. We are meeting to discuss the moral implications of American society. We are here to discuss the ways in which we can move forward from this ethical crisis towards a brighter future. I hope that you all feel welcome here.

TANENBAUM

We are overjoyed to listen to your thoughts. Thank you for inviting us here, on what will be a historic interaction between religion and presidential politics.

PASTOR 1

How are you feeling Mr. President?

CARTER

I am happy and content. I have everything that I will ever need. The good lord's abundance has been kind to me. I do however feel lonely in my isolation from the American people.

PASTOR 1

What has kept you isolated from them?

CARTER

The media. This whole energy crisis. Congress has not helped.

PASTOR 2

So, Mr. President. You are afflicted with ills over which you have no recourse?

CARTER

It is my responsibility to deal with them, for the betterment of this nation and for the wellbeing of its people.

PASTOR 2

And do you feel as if you have been successful in dealing with them?

CARTER

I do not. To be honest with you all, I feel lost. I...

TANENBAUM

(Interrupting) I hope that you will all excuse me, but to borrow a saying from the New Testament, this cross is not for you to bear alone.

*All nod in agreement.*

CARTER

How do you mean?

TANENBAUM

You are the president of the United States, the most powerful man in the free world. The decisions that you make can uplift men or send them to their graves, but all great leaders must draw their strength from the people. So when I say that this cross is not for you to bear alone, Mr. President, I mean simply that it is not your job to suffer for our collective sins. It is your job to lead us through the darkness they have created.

CARTER

Go on Marc.

TANENBAUM

You are taking charge, Mr. President. We all can see it. You have asked us here to reconnect with your people, in a manner never before seen from a US president. Furthermore, it is symbolic that we are at Camp David, the exact place where you fostered Middle Eastern peace. You have done so much, Mr. President, and now it is time for us to help you forward.

CARTER

So, where do we go from here?

TANENBAUM

We are moving from a time of abundance into one of growing scarcity. Americans, who view themselves as God's chosen people, are having difficulty with this transition from indulgence to restraint. In the end, it will come down to a question of moral will. Can we, as a nation, move forward united? Or will we perish in selfish consumerism as we search, in vain, for happiness in the continual accumulation of material goods? In short, Mr. President, are we ready to change who we are and what we stand for?

*The participants nod in agreement. Carter scribbles hastily in his notebook.*

CARTER

You said moral will? A question of moral will?

TANENBAUM

That is the only question. When the night is darkest, can we still make the right choice?

CARTER

I believe in the strength of the American people. We have banded together before, in the name of the common good, to weather the storm.

TANENBAUM

But this crisis, as you've said, runs deeper than any exterior storm. No. This is a current that churns deep within, and only when we get to that depth can the healing begin.

CARTER

(Repeating as he jots down notes) ...healing begin...

TANENBAUM

(Interrupting) Mr. President. Like Moses venturing into the wilderness to receive his first principles, you are on your own noble quest.

*Carter puts down his notes, and looks over the table at Tanenbaum. This last comment has struck a chord with the President.*

CARTER

Marc, I do not know what to say.

TANENBAUM

Yes you do, Mr. President. Yes you do.

*Bellah, looking at his own notes takes off his glasses and places them on the table and begins to speak.*

BELLAH

If I may, Mr. President, you need to frame Marc's remarks in terms of the covenant. From the time of the Puritans, Americans have been asked to band together in ways that transcend self-interest. They get that.

CARTER

You mean American exceptionalism?

BELLAH

Call it exceptionalism, call it religious imagery, whatever you call it, it will strike a chord with the American people. No matter how materialistic, consumerist, or unethical our society may get, everyone understands redemption. Every time that our nation has faced war, or its moral equivalent, our leaders have invoked the language of the covenant. Washington, Lincoln, and Roosevelt understood the importance of its symbolism for the American people.

CARTER

Is this one of those moments?

TANENBAUM

Most certainly Mr. President. Unlike anything we have faced before. There is no outright war, no external enemy to demonize. No, you are charged with leading the American people in an internal cleansing.

CARTER

Gentlemen. You know that I have taught Sunday school back in Plains, so I am partial to it, but I am afraid that the larger American people may be turned off by such religious overtones in a presidential speech.

BELLAH

So instead of covenant, you could say contract. Call on Americans to honor the contract they've made with one another under the stars and stripes. It's been done before.

CARTER

(Becoming animated) Yes Robert, you're right. Look at us. At this table alone we have four different belief systems represented. What keeps us together though, is our devotion to God and our love for this nation. Why couldn't the rest of the country get on board with that message?

BELLAH

I believe they would.

TANENBAUM

I'm sure of it.

CARTER

Maybe there should be mention of OPEC as well.

BELLAH

There should be, but I wouldn't advise that you blame OPEC for all of our problems.

CARTER

(Thinking) Now that would be extremely hypocritical Robert. We never like it when other nations meddle in our affairs, but we do it all the time. Talk about calling the kettle black.

BELLAH

(Taken aback) That's exactly the type of presentation we are looking for. Neither Nixon nor Ford would have ever uttered those words, but Mr. President, you are different. You can tell the truth.

PASTOR 1

And you know, Mr. President, it is the truth that shall set you free.

CARTER

(To all) But how much can the American people take? The Vice President is worried about castigating the public, about scolding them...

BELLAH

(Interrupting) It's time they are given what they deserve. (pause) A teaching president.

CARTER

A teaching president?

BELLAH

Like none other before.

PASTOR 2

And you will be remembered forever for it.

CARTER

(To himself) A teaching president...

INT. Camp David/Cabin - July 10<sup>th</sup>/Evening.

Caddell and Hertzberg meet to discuss Carter's speech.

HERTZBERG

Pat, I just sat in on Jimmy's meeting with the "God Squad."

CADDELL

How did that go?

HERTZBERG

We are ready to do big things with this speech Pat.

CADDELL

What did they say?

HERTZBERG

Well Tanenbaum got the conversation started with some religious imagery, you know, Carter is Moses and all that, but then Bellah took over...

CADDELL

From Berkeley?

HERTZBERG

Exactly the one. He was able to turn what those religious leaders were saying into something relatable for the broader public.

CADDELL

And how did he do that?

HERTZBERG

Pat, he took your ideas and framed them in the language of the covenant.

CADDELL

Wow. That is good.

HERTZBERG

And you know what the best part about it is?

CADDELL

What?

HERTZBERG

It isn't another crappy policy speech that Eizenstat and Rafshoon routinely shove down my throat. You know, I wasn't the least bit upset when Carter cancelled the first speech. It was terrible.

CADDELL

It was a waste of time.

HERTZBERG

Did you read it?

CADDELL

No Hendrik, but I know what was in it. (Picking up his manuscript) Now this is the speech that Carter must give. Anything else would have been a waste of time. And now, we are closer than ever to righting this ship, both the administration and the country. After this speech, everything will change.

HERTZBERG

You really believe that Pat?

CADDELL

I know it. There is no other way.

HERTZBERG

Well then let's get started. Carter has given me the green light for an initial draft.

CADDELL

Good. We need to get enough in there before Eizenstat or the Vice President get to it.

HERTZBERG

Walter is going to throw a fit.



CADDELL

Yeah he will. (Laughing) Thank god he's only the VP.

*Caddell and Hertzberg get to work.*

INT. Camp David/Cabin - July 11<sup>th</sup>/Morning

*Members of the Georgia Mafia huddle around a TV set as anchors report on the imminent fall of "Skylab," a US-based satellite/space station.*

RAFSHOON

The sky is falling boys.

JORDAN

I just don't believe it.

EIZENSTAT

Better believe it Ham, it's coming down.

POWELL

Huh, I wonder where it's going to land?

RAFSHOON

Three Mile Island and now this? We just can't ever catch a break.

POWELL

And you'll have the conservative media wondering if the Soviets shot it down.

EIZENSTAT

That's crap Jody.

POWELL

Of course it is. We all know that.

JORDAN

But what does it mean for Jimmy?

RAFSHOON

Oh, we'll release a statement from the president soon enough. All it means is that Jimmy is missing yet another momentous event while here at Camp David. I sure hope that those meetings are going well, he sure keeps us away.

JORDAN

He wants honesty from the guests.

EIZENSTAT

Seems like a strange time for secrecy Ham.

JORDAN

I don't know, I...

RAFSHOON

Regardless, we need to realize that Pat's won this one. Jimmy is going ahead with his version of the speech.

JORDAN

Has he said that?

EIZENSTAT

He told Hertzberg last night. Pat and Hendrik were up most of the night working on a rough draft.

POWELL

But don't you usually oversee speechwriting Gerry? (To Eizenstat) And aren't you in charge of policy talking points?

EIZENSTAT

It seems like Jimmy is calling all the shots now.

POWELL

So where do we go from here?

EIZENSTAT

We watch them. A draft of that speech will have to come out in the next few days. When we get that, we edit it for content. We get as much policy in the final copy as we can.

POWELL

Do you think that will work?

RAFSHOON

It may be our only shot.

JORDAN

Now I know that this may sound crazy, but did any of you ever take a second to think that Pat may be onto something here?

EIZENSTAT

Oh no. They've gotten to you too?

JORDAN

I just think that the time for a speech like Pat's may be upon us.

POWELL

You know, media speculation has been mounting. We'll get big numbers whenever Jimmy decides to give an address.

RAFSHOON

About the best thing the press has done for us in two and a half years.

POWELL

(Slyly) They are a wily bunch Gerry.

JORDAN

I just think that, right now, we have a chance to regain their trust.

EIZENSTAT

Yeah how? By scolding them?

JORDAN

Well I hope it will be nuanced than that.

EIZENSTAT

Well we've lost the opportunity to make sure of it. Now, we have to sit around and wait to see what Pat can come up with. Is this a fall from grace or what?

POWELL

Looks like we are going the way of Skylab gentlemen.

JORDAN

Now I wouldn't go that far.

EIZENSTAT

Oh, it's easy for you to say that Ham. You haven't heard some of meetings. You have some very powerful people in there calling for our heads. And no matter what, Jimmy wouldn't let you go. You'd probably be promoted.

JORDAN

Stuart, relax. We are going to make it through this thing just fine. Have a little faith, alright?

EIZENSTAT

(Calming down) I'm sorry Ham. It's just this damn camp. You know Begin hated it.

JORDAN

But we got him to sign the damn papers, didn't we? And we'll get the same result this time too.

POWELL

Sure Ham, so long as Skylab doesn't fall down on us first.

INT. Camp David/Laurel Lodge - July 11<sup>th</sup> /Midday

*President Carter meets with Governor Clinton in the Laurel Lodge. The moment is somewhat surreal, President asking Governor for advice, but Clinton is eager to oblige.*

CARTER

Well Bill, you've been here at Camp David a few days now. The last time that we got to spend some time together was at that meeting with business and labor leaders. Have you been enjoying your stay otherwise?

CLINTON

Yes, Mr. President and thank you for your hospitality. You'll have to thank Rosalynn for me as well.

CARTER

Thank you, she'll appreciate it. Now Bill, you and I are both Southern folk. And I was in your shoes just a few years ago, so I hope that you can speak candidly with me today. You are a rising star in the Democratic Party, Bill, but that is not the reason I have called you in particular here to Camp David. I have done so to get the opinion of someone who I know to have the best interest of the American people at heart.

CLINTON

Well I thank you very much for those kind words Mr. President, I am very honored that you have chosen me to attend your summit.

CARTER

So tell it to me like it is Bill. That is, of course, why we are here.

CLINTON

(Frank) Mr. President, you are in deep trouble.

*Silence.*

CARTER

How do you mean Bill?

CLINTON

Have you seen the recent polling numbers? They're worse than Nixon's during Watergate, and he committed a felony. I've been invited to numerous Draft Kennedy fundraisers and have felt some political pressure to go. Reagan is more of a threat than I think you are taking him to be, even though the election is a ways off. So not only are the American people frustrated with you, they now have alternatives.

CARTER

Do you really think that Kennedy poses a threat?

CLINTON

Of course I do. With Ted, you have a potential primary opponent who can split this party in two. He has the name and the political engine to make a run at it. Now I've heard that you aren't concerned about Ted, that you will 'whip his ass,' but you won't. You probably will beat him, Mr. President, but not with a mandate to lead the party over the next four years, and that's if you can still beat the Republicans next year. So yes, Kennedy poses a huge threat, if not in the primary, then in the general election. Americans won't be all that eager to vote for an embattled president who has been dragged through the mud by members of his own party. That's just not the kind of message you want to send.

CARTER

So, what are you saying Bill?

CLINTON

If I may, Mr. President, I'm asking you to realize the importance of this moment in the larger context of your presidency. The speech that you will deliver in the coming days will mark a turning point in your administration for better or for worse.

CARTER

I get it Bill. That is why I have called for this domestic summit.

CLINTON

But the American people don't understand that. They aren't here. Have you even met with any average citizens? Has there been any media coverage of the summit? I sure haven't seen any reporters over the past few days.

CARTER

Well not yet, but I am planning on...

CLINTON

Meet with them Mr. President. No matter what I or anyone else at this summit tells you, you need to hear from the people first. They are the ones you will have to sway with this speech, not congressional leaders or advocates who have already made up their minds. And whether you like it or not, the media is your only hope

at reaching them until you give your speech. This whole disappearing act has gotten many people, both inside and outside of Washington, very concerned.

CARTER

I will get Ham Jordan on it right away. I never meant to scare the American people by coming to Camp David. I just knew that I'd do my best work here.

CLINTON

But once again, Mr. President, we don't live inside your head. We have no way of knowing what you are thinking, especially if you go away for 10 days while truckers shut down towns across the nation protesting oil prices. They blame you Mr. President, and you aren't there to defend yourself. So, you're fighting a battle that you haven't even shown up to.

CARTER

I can't be everywhere Bill. You must know that. So what if I sent Mondale and Rosalynn to the Governor's conference? Was that so bad?

CLINTON

I beg your pardon Mr. President. I do not mean to question your decisions, I realize how handcuffed you are by the media, OPEC, and Ted's probable run. I think that you need as much help as you can get. So yes, I think that it was fine to send Mondale and the First Lady to Louisiana. The Vice President entertained very well. I do however think that it is a problem that you have gone into exile and failed to communicate with the American people as to why you left Washington, but now there is no changing that. You need to look forward towards your next speech and find the right way to frame this whole summit.

CARTER

You know what Bill? I think that you are right. There is a difference between communicating with the Washington crowd and the papers, and leading the American people. Sometimes it just all gets lumped together.

CLINTON

Why?

CARTER

Well, I like to have my hand in everything. I like to make sure that everything is taken care of the right way. You know, when I was in Georgia I practically ran the entire governor's mansion.

CLINTON

With all due respect Mr. President, didn't you have more important things to concern yourself with? Wasn't there someone there to help prioritize your time for you?

CARTER

I took care of that myself.

CLINTON

Well Jimmy, I mean Mr. President...

CARTER

Jimmy is fine, Bill.

CLINTON

Ok Jimmy. I couldn't imagine running the governor's mansion back in Little Rock, let alone running the day-to-day activities of the White House. I think that you need to designate someone to deal with those concerns for you. That way you would have more time to communicate with the American people, to bring them around.

CARTER

Some of my advisors have expressed similar concerns, especially Gerry Rafshoon who I'm sure that you have met.

CLINTON

Sure Jimmy, I've met with many of your top advisors while here at Camp David. They all seem like decent folk who have your best interests in mind. They all seem extremely loyal.

CARTER

They've always been.

CLINTON

Well, loyalty is one thing, but results are another. How do you feel they are doing?

CARTER

I am very proud of the team that I have brought to the White House. Almost all of them have been with me the entire way from Plains.

CLINTON

Forgive me Mr. President, but don't you think that is a problem?

CARTER

How so Bill?

CLINTON

For a long time now you have lacked a new perspective. I guess that is partly why this Caddell character has grabbed your attention. It isn't usual that a DNC pollster becomes the idea man behind a presidency, but I think that I can get on

board with much of his message. So let me ask you a question Mr. President. Did any of the core ideas from your new speech come from any of your Georgian advisors?

CARTER

Well no, but like we discussed earlier, they are consumed with other responsibilities. There isn't always time for Ham or Stuart to brainstorm new approaches to governing...

CLINTON

Well, shouldn't there be?

CARTER

What do you mean?

CLINTON

They're all burnt out waiting for you to lead the way, but you can't tell them how to do their jobs 24/7. You need to give them more responsibility. You need to delegate. That way they will become more engaged with the issues of governance, communication, and policy formulation instead of waiting around for direction.

CARTER

But Bill, is that really what presidential advisors should be focusing on? Formulation?

CLINTON

Jimmy, I'm not sure that you have a choice anymore. You need to reenergize them.

CARTER

They really look that tired, Bill?

CLINTON

They are consumed by their responsibilities, but not in the way you would want them to be. Right now, each advisor serves a function, and little more. That kind of operation is perfect for the factory, but it completely disregards the human aspect of governing. It just isn't sustainable Jimmy.

CARTER

But, who would take care of the White House when we are all off dreaming up new ways to lead?

CLINTON

With all due respect Mr. President, your administration is too withdrawn. It is too involved with the day-to-day activities of governing. It doesn't seem like anyone besides an outsider, this DNC pollster, is thinking long-term. Sometimes it isn't



the best-kept ship that gets to its destination, it's the ship whose captain can see through the waves crashing against the hull. Right now, you and your advisors are too bogged down to see the bigger picture, and that's a huge problem with elections coming up within a year and a half.

CARTER

Well then help me turn the page Bill. Let's forge a new way forward. Let's be bold.

CLINTON

I'd love to Mr. President, but I'd also want to know what was going in this new speech? What your goals are for its reception?

CARTER

I am going to speak with the American people about the strength of our moral will. I will speak to them about the choices that we have made and about our future options. I will talk to them about my administration's failings, and about where we are going from here.

CLINTON

Mr. President, I am completely onboard with that message, but you need to present it in such a way that easily communicates your rationale for doing so. You know, why this message now, and how it will propel us forward. So what do you want to say?

CARTER

I'm going to highlight our national loss of confidence.

CLINTON

How do you think they will respond to that?

CARTER

I am hoping that they will see the light. That they will understand how, only together, can we move forth from this current crisis.

CLINTON

Hmm, our national loss of confidence, I like it. But how are you going to make sure that they understand what you are going for? You don't want to simply highlight the problem without providing solutions, especially when it's so intangible.

CARTER

I understand Bill. That is why we will frame it in a way that resonates with the American people. I am going to speak of the covenant in terms of the social contract.

CLINTON

Seems a bit philosophical for the average American doesn't it?

CARTER

No Bill, I am going to break it down. Let them know exactly what contract I am talking about.

CLINTON

Well, which is it?

CARTER

The promise they make to one another, to this nation, when they call themselves Americans. I am going to remind them of the meaning of that promise.

CLINTON

So, Mr. President, we aren't just talking about a speech on energy anymore?

CARTER

No Bill. You and I both know that the real issue runs much deeper than that.

CLINTON

Well, if you are going ahead with this new speech, you need to be more relaxed. Demonstrate to the American people that you have confidence in your message, that you really mean it.

CARTER

I am going to do something that most presidents have never even attempted. I am going to be forthright with my own mistakes and shortcomings. Essentially the anti-Nixon. I believe that if I am asking the nation to question their own lives, it has to start with me as their leader. That is what this summit has been all about.

CLINTON

And has it been successful? Have you gotten the opportunity to reflect upon your presidency?

CARTER

I have Bill. You know, I was talking to my daughter Amy the other day. You know what her biggest concern was? Missing the White House cat.

CLINTON

(Laughing) I heard it's quite a charmer.

CARTER

(With a smile) The innocence of a child, it really puts everything into perspective, doesn't it?

CLINTON

Sure, but what are you saying Jimmy?

CARTER

Well in our conversation I realized something. If someone is lost, all you need to do is tell them to go back home. Hard work, honesty, and patriotism, that's what this nation was built and sustained upon. That's what fuels the average American home, not oil. I just need to remind them of what they already know. And I'll be the first to admit that I have strayed.

CLINTON

Well if you are going to be that honest Mr. President, you need to expect something from the American people in return. You need to ask them for their support moving forward. If you don't get that, the speech just won't change anything.

CARTER

After the speech, I believe that they will be ready to sacrifice for the greater good. Whether that means loyalty to their president or not, that is fine. But it sure will mean loyalty to one another and to the nation at large. So to answer your initial question, that is what I am looking for in terms of reception. Nothing more, nothing less.

CLINTON

I have to say Jimmy, these few days have opened my eyes. At first I was very skeptical, but now I think that this just may work. Through this address, you could write a completely new chapter, both for your own administration, but also for the American presidency. This is a crisis that we must all face together. And you, as our president, must lead the way.

CARTER

Well Bill, I appreciate everything you've said. I think that I am going to just sit here awhile and take it all in. Best wishes for your return trip home. I hope Hilary isn't too mad at me for keeping you away so long.

CLINTON

She knows how important this moment is. I will send her your best wishes.

*The two shake hands.*

CARTER

Keep up the good work Bill. You know, one day...

CLINTON

We'll cross that bridge when we get to it.

CARTER  
(Smiling) Ever the statesman.

CLINTON  
Just keep it warm for me Jimmy.

CARTER  
I sure will.

*Clinton starts to walk away, then turns back.*

CLINTON  
And Mr. President.

CARTER  
Yes Bill.

CLINTON  
Good luck.

CARTER  
Goodnight Bill.

*Carter sits behind scribbling in his notebook.*

EXT. Camp David/Highway - July 11<sup>th</sup>/Evening

*Carter, Hertzberg, Rosalynn, Jordan, Rafshoon and Caddell are shown boarding the presidential limousine headed towards a nearby airport. The final destination is Carnegie, Pennsylvania. There, Carter will be meeting with an average American family to discuss the crisis. A long traveling aerial shot is used to symbolize the transition that Carter has undergone while at Camp David. No media will be present at the meeting.*

EXT. Carnegie (Fisher Home) - July 11<sup>th</sup>/Nighttime

*The presidential limousine pulls up to the Fisher home with secret service having already cleared the location and set up a perimeter. The presidential party begins to exit the limousine and straighten themselves up. After Rosalynn fixes his tie, Carter walks up to the Fisher's door and knocks three times.*

INT. Fisher Home/Simultaneously

*Mrs. Fisher peers outside the window and runs towards Mr. Fisher and the kids, desperately trying to get them to a presentable state. There are two children, one boy and one girl, who look somewhat uncomfortable in their Sunday best.*

MR. FISHER

Janet, that's enough. I'm going to answer the door now!

MRS. FISHER

Alright Paul. Just make sure to welcome him the way I told you.

MR. FISHER

Don't worry Janet I've got it down.

EXT. Carnegie (Fisher Home) - Simultaneously

*Carter turns to Ham Jordan and asks.*

CARTER

Ham. You sure they are home? We can always go next door...

*The door handle begins to turn.*

CARTER

(Smiling) Oh alright, here we are.

*Mr. Fisher opens the door and finds the president standing on his porch.*

MR. FISHER

(Hesitating) Mr. President I...

*Mrs. Fisher runs to the door.*

MRS. FISHER

What my husband means to say is please do come in and make yourself right at home.

*Mr. Fisher glances at his wife with appreciation.*

MR. FISHER

Yes, please do come right on in.

CARTER

Well thank you very much Mr. Fisher. I've brought my wife Rosalynn with me, and a few advisors, if that is alright?

MRS. FISHER

Of course it is, Mr. President! It is a great honor to have you all at our home.

ROSALYNN

Mrs. Fisher, we are delighted to be here. Now, who do I see over there in the corner?

*Mrs. Fisher runs back to fetch her children.*

MRS. FISHER

Mr. President, First Lady, I'd like to present to you our son, James Ryan Fisher, and our daughter Ruth Juliet Fisher.

CARTER

(Shaking James' hand) That's a strong name James.

JAMES

Thank you Mr. President.

CARTER

Now why don't you call me Jimmy so that there isn't any confusion?

JAMES

Ok, Mr. President!

*Mrs. Fisher laughs nervously.*

ROSALYNN

And Ruth, I have to say I love that sweater!

RUTH

Mommy makes me wear it to church every week. I think it's scratchy. I can't wait to get home and take it off. She told me not to tell anyone that though.

ROSALYNN

(Laughing) Well then that will be our little secret. Now would you two like to show me your house? I'd love a tour.

RUTH and JAMES

Ok, sure!

*The two take the First Lady's hands and lead her away. In the background Mrs. Fisher can be seen crossing herself.*

CARTER

Thank you very much for agreeing to meet with me. It's been far too long since I've been able to meet with strong American families like yourselves. You are, of course, what keeps this nation going. I'd like to introduce you to Ham Jordan, Hendrik Hertzberg, Pat Caddell, and Gerry Rafshoon. They are some of my top advisors.

MR. FISHER

How do you do gentlemen?

*They exchange pleasantries.*

MR. FISHER

Mr. President, we are simple folk. Just trying to put in an honest day's work to keep food on the table for our kids. So, I have to ask you, why would you want to talk to us about national concerns?

CARTER

Well, I am here today to listen. I want to know what is going on in the hearts and minds of everyday Americans. So, if you'll let me, I'd like to talk for a little while. Rosalynn will be fine with the kids. Is there anywhere in particular that we can sit?

MRS. FISHER

How about the back porch?

CARTER

Now, that sounds just fine Mrs. Fisher.

*Carter and his advisors make their way out to the back porch. They find rocking chairs propped up against the side of the house and each take a seat. Mrs. Fisher comes out with lemonade. The stars have come out and there are fireflies out on the lawn.*

JORDAN

Thank you Mrs. Fisher.

RAFSHOON

It's a real treat to have some homemade lemonade.

MRS. FISHER

(Beaming) It was my mother's recipe! I hope that you'll enjoy it.

CARTER

I'm sure that it will be just fine.

MR. FISHER

Thanks Janet. So, if you'll excuse my frankness, Mr. President, what are you all here to discuss?

CARTER

Well Mr. Fisher, we are here to talk about...well *you*.

MR. FISHER

(Grinning) Well ain't that something Janet, the President of the United States wants to ask me about my life.

CARTER

Only if you'll let me.

MR. FISHER

Sure, go ahead. Doesn't happen to me everyday.

JORDAN

If I can, I'd like to ask you a question Mr. Fisher. I hear that you work in steel right?

MR. FISHER

That's right. Ham, is it? Been at the mill for some 12 years now.

JORDAN

What is the general atmosphere at the mill nowadays?

MR. FISHER

You know Ham, the mill has been down lately. So many layoffs, week after week, people just find their pink slips in their lockers. No thank you. Just some garbage about the market being down and competition overseas. You know, it doesn't seem like we have any say in what goes on anymore. I remember an America that wouldn't take crap...

MRS. FISHER

Paul!

MR. FISHER

Excuse me, Mr. President. I remember an America that took charge. Nowadays it just seems like we take what's coming to us. Yeah, it just doesn't seem like we have a voice anymore.

JORDAN

What do you mean by that?



MR. FISHER

Before, it wasn't all about making money. People cared about one another. You know, looked out for each other. Now it's a fight just to keep your job. Americans are growing antisocial, and are turning inward. Come to think of it though, I can't blame them. You have to look out for yourself, for your family, nowadays.

JORDAN

Are you scared?

MR. FISHER

You know what, I am. I'm scared that tomorrow I'll be out of job, and what will Janet and the kids do then? Lord knows I'm not looking to the government for help. Washington is as screwed up as always.

JORDAN

How do you mean?

MR. FISHER

You all play a game. You have your little victories and your lasting wars. But, none of that matters to simple folk like us. We just want to know that we have honest people over there looking out for our best interest. We want to know that you all still care about the people who elected you. And I don't just mean the president. I'm talking about Congress too.

JORDAN

Believe me Mr. Fisher, we share some of the same concerns about Congress.

Mr. FISHER

I'm sure that you do. It sure doesn't seem like they want to do anything you tell them too.

JORDAN

They can be a bit difficult to deal with, yes.

RAFSHOON

Well that's an understatement. Mr. Fisher, I wanted to just go back to the situation at the mill. You say they are laying people off.

MR. FISHER

Yup, about every week now.

RAFSHOON

So you have to watch while others pick up their pick slips?

MR. FISHER

A man I worked with for 5 years, two young kids, just like myself, was laid off last Thursday. I can't even imagine. You know they had been saving up for a vacation over the holiday weekend. Yeah, they were going to take their family to New York City to see the fireworks. He told me the other day that they will be living off those savings until he can find something else. Not like anyone else is hiring though.

RAFSHOON

That's terrible.

MR. FISHER

It is terrible, but that's not the worst of it.

RAFSHOON

What is?

MR. FISHER

The worst of it is that no one seems to find a problem in it anymore. People are just expecting to be laid off, expecting to be given the short end of the stick.

HERTZBERG

So you mean that they are just accepting it.

MR. FISHER

I'm not sure that I would say accepting it, because that implies that they are dealing with it at all. No, I'd rather say that people nowadays are just shutting down. It's easier to just turn off than deal with the fact that you don't even hold your own destiny in your hands anymore. We were always told that if we worked hard, we'd persevere. Well the American dream is dead. You can work yourself to the bone and never see the profit of your labor. That is the new reality here in America. That is why we don't care about politics anymore. That's why we are all so apathetic. None of it seems fair nowadays, so what's the point of even trying. There is a malaise of civilization.

HENDRIK

What did you just say? A malaise of civilization?

MR. FISHER

Yeah. People just don't believe in themselves anymore. Don't believe in their leaders or their country either.

CADDELL

So, you mean a crisis of confidence?

MR. FISHER

That may be a better way to put it. Malaise just seems to pack more of a punch. I think that people would remember it better that way.

HERTZBERG

I'll make note of that.

*All four scribble away in their notebooks.*

MR. FISHER

(Clearing his throat) Gentlemen. What are you writing?

CARTER

Well, Mr. Fisher, we are writing a speech of some sorts.

MR. FISHER

(Getting nervous) Are you quoting me?

HERTZBERG

If that is alright with you sir?

MR. FISHER

Well, I don't want to get into any trouble...

JORDAN

No trouble, Mr. Fisher. No trouble at all. No names or faces, just the truth.

*Mr. Fisher relaxes.*

MR. FISHER

Alright then.

CARTER

Well just one more question then Mr. Fisher, if I may?

MR. FISHER

Of course, Mr. President.

CARTER

When you say there is a general malaise of civilization, what does that mean for the future of this country?

MR. FISHER

It means that no one believes in it anymore. What future? A future where foreign oil runs our government and we are lied to over and over again? No, I don't see much of a future for my children. Looks like this country is in decline.

CARTER

Decline?

MR. FISHER

Just like the Roman Empire, we all come up and we all fall down. It's only a matter of time. Just seems like our time is now.

CARTER

Our time for what?

MR. FISHER

Collapse.

*Silence.*

CADDELL

Mr. Fisher, if I may, you are a religious man correct?

MR. FISHER

Like my father before me.

CADDELL

And you go to church?

MR. FISHER

Every Sunday.

CADDELL

Good. So you'll know the answer to this question then. When Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, wasn't it just paradise?

MR. FISHER

Well of course it was. That was easy enough.

CADDELL

Oh, I'm sorry Mr. Fisher I haven't finished. So when Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, were they very happy?

MR. FISHER

Very happy indeed, they had everything they'd ever need.

CADDELL

And there wasn't any other place they'd rather be?

MR. FISHER

Nowhere in the world.

CADDELL

Well how did they know that the Garden was best for them? They hadn't been anywhere else.

MR. FISHER

You don't have to know, you just have to feel it. You have to have a little faith.

CADDELL

Exactly, Mr. Fisher, I couldn't have said it better myself. And when Moses led the Israelites through the desert for 40 years, searching for the land of milk and honey, did he ever call it quits when the going got too tough.

MR. FISHER

Well, no. He perseveres. We all know how that story ends.

CADDELL

But why doesn't he just pack it all in? Seems a lot easier than walking around a desert for 40 years.

MR. FISHER

Because he had the choice to continue on.

CADDELL

Exactly Mr. Fisher. Once again you've outdone yourself. So let me ask you one final question. When Moses, old and tired, gets to the end of his journey, knowing full well that he can never enter the Promised Land, the new Garden of Eden, why does he still lead the Israelites the rest of the way?

MR. FISHER

Because it was his destiny. Because he knew that they would go forth and prosper. That he would live on in their hearts.

*Carter sways back and forth on his rocking chair.*

CADDELL

Well isn't that the situation we now find ourselves in? Things may be bad, and I know they are, I have the numbers to prove it, but it is always darkest before dawn. With a little faith and perseverance, we will make it through this whole mess. And not only scrape by, we will do the things necessary to ensure that your children, James and Ruth have a better life than the ones we enjoy today. Because that's the true American dream, having the grit to get through the tough times

knowing that there will be a daybreak soon. Now you asked before why we are here, well we are here to make sure that average Americans can get behind that message. We are here to see if you all still believe that the man sitting here before you is the same man who can lead us through this crisis.

MR. FISHER

Well certainly, Mr. President we believe in you.

*Mr. Fisher glances at Mrs. Fisher. She nods in agreement.*

CARTER

Well thank you both, if that is all...

MRS. FISHER

Well, Mr. President, I do have something to add. Although I believe in you, I'm just not so sure that everyone else thinks that you can get the job done.

CARTER

How so?

MRS. FISHER

Well, it doesn't seem like politicians care about the little man anymore. Lord knows we need someone to get us through this whole ordeal, but no one knows where to turn.

CARTER

Go on.

MRS. FISHER

Well, I feel like ordinary people are excluded from political power.

CARTER

Mrs. Fisher, we ran on giving that power back to American families, and I have to agree with you, I don't think that we have succeeded, but I hope that with this speech all of that will start to change.

MRS. FISHER

I pray for it Mr. President. I want to know that my children will have the chance to grow up in a nation that stands for freedom and is still willing to make sacrifices to defend it.

CARTER

That's all I came here to learn. (Speaking to everyone) You see, the American dream is alive and well. Now our job will be to wake it out of its slumber. Mr. and Mrs. Fisher thank you so much for your welcome. You have given me hope.

*Carter and group are shown leaving the Fisher residence in the presidential limousine.*

INT. White House - July 12<sup>th</sup>/Evening

*Vice President Mondale and his advisor Greg Schneiders crowd around a television screen. A journalist reporting from Chicago fills the screen. A recent "Disco Sucks" rally has resulted in rioting in and around Wrigley Field.*

MONDALE

You know what Greg? I don't know who is worse, the idiots at the discos or the hoodlums who protest them.

SCHNEIDERS

Walter, the world is upside down nowadays, and there just doesn't seem like there's anything that can be done about it anymore.

MONDALE

I just don't understand what is going on with this country. You know that they stormed the White House lawn on Independence Day? They were smoking reefers or whatever those kids do. I've never seen anything like it in my life.

SCHNEIDERS

No, it seems like its getting worse by the day. What's the president planning to do about it?

MONDALE

Oh, I don't know Greg. That Caddell kid has got him all hopped up on making a speech about all of our problems, when I think that he should just stick to solving the energy crisis and move on. Now isn't the time to lecture the American people. They aren't even listening anyway. Too busy smoking pot and storming baseball diamonds.

SCHNEIDERS

Well it could be the perfect time.

MONDALE

What did you say?

SCHNEIDERS

All I'm saying is that if Americans are out of control, it could be time to rein them in a little.

MONDALE

Greg, give me a break. You think that if the president of the United States, a president with the worst approval rating in history, tells the American people that its their fault we can't solve this energy crisis they are going to come in droves to vote for us in 1980?

SCHNEIDERS

Well, no, you do have a point there, Walter.

MONDALE

And it seems like I'm the only one worried about it, but someone has to keep their eyes on the prize.

SCNEIDERS

Well have you told Jimmy?

MONDALE

Of course, but sometimes lately I just feel like the President tunes me out.

SCHNEIDERS

Is he really going to go ahead with the speech Caddell wrote?

MONDALE

Sure looks like it Greg.

SCHNEIDERS

And what do you think?

MONDALE

I think he's made up his mind. I'll support whatever he decides to do.

SCHNEIDERS

With all due respect, Walter, what do you really think?

MONDALE

I think he's losing it Greg. I think its all finally getting to him.

SCHNEIDERS

What does that mean?

MONDALE

It means that if he goes up there in a few days and castigates the American people, we will lose the chance to turn this administration around.

SCHNEIDERS

Well, can you do anything to save it?



MONDALE

I'm going to get everything into that speech that needs to be there and make sure that whatever else the president says makes sense. I've already spoken to Eizenstat. He is going over to Camp David tomorrow to look at the draft. He's assured me that he won't let Pat run away with it. I'm not going down without a fight on this one Greg, especially to a pollster. I'm the Vice President for Christ's sake.

SCHNEIDERS

Amen to that, Walter. Amen to that.

MONDALE

I just don't get it anymore Greg. You have kids storming the White House lawn, that Skylab thing fell out of space the other day, and now this riot in Chicago over disco. I mean what is really going on here?

SCHNEIDERS

I don't know Walter.

MONDALE

Well let me tell you something Greg, whatever it is I'm getting sick and tired of dealing with it. And if Jimmy thinks he is going to solve this whole thing with a speech he really is losing it.

SCHNEIDERS

Walter, you've been reading too many newspapers lately.

MONDALE

(Laughing) I think that once I'm out of a job here I can find something at *The Post*.

SCHNEIDERS

With all due respect, Walter, I'm still the one writing your jokes.

MONDALE

(Laughing) You should have seen those governors. It made their night. Maybe I'll tell Gerry to throw in some one-liners into Jimmy's speech. You think you can come up with anything in the next 48 hours?

SCHNEIDERS

Walter, in this White House? All I need's a few minutes. But in all seriousness, make sure that Jimmy gets through this speech alright. We can't have Caddell running us into the ground.

MONDALE

You're preaching to the choir Greg. Don't worry, I'll make sure of it.

SCHNEIDERS

What is Jimmy up to tomorrow?

MONDALE

(Winking) Meeting with the press.

*The two continue to watch TV.*

INT. Camp David – Laurel Lodge/July 13<sup>th</sup> – Morning

*President Carter meets with members of the press. Some prominent reporters attending include Meg Greenfield of the Washington Post, Jack Germound of the Washington Star, and Haynes Johnson of the Post. The meeting is conducted off the record, and the journalists cannot report on the progress of the summit. Typewriters can be heard offstage as Carter's advisors and writers prepare the speech.*

CARTER

Now, I know that most of you have had a rough go over the past week, speculating as to my whereabouts and well-being. I'll have you know, I was just giving you the opportunity to engage in some investigatory journalism. I hope you all have enjoyed the challenge.

*Reporters chuckle.*

CARTER

I also couldn't think of a better day for us to meet. Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. Forget about the cabinet, looks like I'll have to fire my scheduler.

*More laughter.*

CARTER

But I realize that you all aren't here to listen to the President tell bad jokes. As my people should have told you, everything said here is off-the-record. As far as I know, you all have agreed not to report on what is said here? Right? Ok. So with that being said, who wants to ask the first question?

GREENFIELD

Meg Greenfield of the Washington Post.

CARTER

Ms. Greenfield how are ya?

GREENFIELD

I'm doing well, Mr. President, but I believe that Americans want to know how you are doing. It seems eerie, transferring presidential power to Camp David. I'm not sure that has been done before. So, in short Mr. President, why are we here?

CARTER

Well when this is all said and done, please let your readers know that I am fine. Actually, tell them that I've never been in better spirits. Now I know, the move to Camp David may seem a little odd to the inside the beltway crowd, but average Americans will get it. I've had great success here, and much happiness. I simply needed to get out of the bubble so that I could think straight. Now I'm very proud of the work my team has done over the past week or so. During that span of time, I have met with over 25 Americans from all walks of life. Each in their own way has helped me to see where we, as a nation need to go from here.

GERMOUND

Jack Germound of the Washington Post.

CARTER

Hello Jack.

GERMOUND

Mr. President, where are you going from here? What is the next step? For the past week average Americans, not only journalists, have been sitting on their hands waiting for any news of their leader's whereabouts and status. It seems like you have jumped ship when things have gone sour. So my question is simply, what is going on here?

CARTER

Well Jack, I appreciate your concern, but let me make this very clear; I have this whole thing under control.

GERMOUND

What does that mean Mr. President?

CARTER

It means that in two days, on July 15<sup>th</sup>, I will be speaking to the American people, telling them exactly what that next step is. I will be speaking about the energy crisis, but more importantly, I will be talking about the moral crisis now gripping the nation as well.

GERMOUND

Did you say moral crisis, Mr. President?

CARTER

Yes Jack, I did.

GERMOUND

Could you elaborate on that a bit?

CARTER

I will be talking about the crisis that strikes at the very heart of our national will. I will be talking about reestablishing the confidence that Americans have lost, both in their leaders and in their own abilities to succeed.

GERMOUND

You are going to tell Americans that they are failing?

CARTER

Not exactly Jack. I am going to speak with Americans about the ways in which we, together, can overcome these crises.

GERMOUND

And you needed an entire domestic summit to come to that conclusion?

CARTER

It didn't hurt. Anyone else?

JOHNSON

Mr. President. Haynes Johnson of the *New York Post*.

CARTER

Hello Mr. Johnson.

JOHNSON

Mr. President, I'm sure that you have seen some of the headlines that my paper has printed over the course of the past week, but I assure you, I'm not in favor of any of it.

CARTER

A good man, what's your question Mr. Johnson?

JOHNSON

I just wanted to get your thoughts on the spectacle nature of this whole summit. The anticipation leading up to your speech has been mounting and everyone is dying to know what this final act will entail.

CARTER

I never intended this summit to be a spectacle. I've kept the media out for as long possible to guard against such misconceptions. Also, I needed to keep my guest list confidential. Besides a couple White House photographers, you are the only press to have visited throughout the entire summit. As for increased level of interest amongst Americans, I am happy to hear of it. Building trust between

government and the people is a two way process. The very fact that Americans want to hear from their President tells me that they are ready for what I have to say.

JOHNSON

Any chance you can let us know of some of that speech's content?

CARTER

Well, Mr. Johnson, I'd love to, but as with the case of every presidential speech, it is now in the process of editing. I can tell you however that this speech will be a candid dialogue between the American people and myself. Unfortunately, I cannot say anything further.

*Jordan walks into the room and motions for the president to come with him.*

CARTER

Well I think that's my signal to go. Thank you all for coming and good luck.

*Carter exits. The reporters look around at each other.*

GERMOUND

What?

INT. Camp David/Cabin - July 13<sup>th</sup>/Midday

*Caddell, Hertzberg, and Rafshoon work on the speech. They are currently attempting to incorporate Carter's notes into the draft.*

HERTZBERG

(Pouring over Carter's notes) Presidents should have to pass a handwriting test. I can barely make out some of these scribbles.

CADDELL

Just remember the broader message Hendrik and we should be fine.

*The door opens and Rafshoon enters.*

RAFSHOON

How's it coming along boys?

HERTZBERG

Very well Gerry. Nothing like those other speeches.

RAFSHOON

(Looking directly at Caddell) Well Pat, I know that I usually oversee these things but you've really taken the bull by the horns here. And I never thought that I would say this, but is there anything that I can do to help?

CADDELL

(Dumbfounded) Well Gerry, we could always use another pair of eyes when it comes to editing.

RAFSHOON

Sure, I'll send Stewart over. We can get him here in about an hour.

CADDELL

That would be great Gerry, thank you.

RAFSHOON

You let me know if there is anything else that you need.

CADDELL

Thanks Gerry, we'll let you know.

RAFSHOON

I'll go tell the president that we'll have a draft to him by this evening.

CADDELL

Sounds good.

*Rafshoon exits.*

CADDELL

What was that about Hendrik?

HERTZBERG

You've caught the ear of the president. Sometimes that's all you need to earn a little respect in their circle. If Jimmy believes in you, some of them will too.

CADDELL

(Smiling) Well I sure won't get too buddy-buddy. I don't look good in cowboy boots and they don't make any good jeans my size.

HERTZBERG

I'm getting close Pat.

CADDELL

How long is it?

HERTZBERG

15-20 minutes. Could be longer after final edits. I'm sure there will be some last minute restructuring here and there, but the skeleton is set.

CADDELL

You know what this means Hendrik?

HERTZBERG

I can finally go on vacation?

CADDELL

You just wrote the most important speech that the president will ever give. He will forever be remembered for the words you have on those pieces of paper. It's momentous.

HERTZBERG

It just feels good to write something that could matter for a change.

CADDELL

Oh, it's going to matter. Don't worry about that Hendrik. This speech is going to change everything.

INT. Camp David – Aspen Lodge/July 13<sup>th</sup> Afternoon

*Carter, Rosalynn, and Eizenstat discuss the draft.*

EIZENSTAT

Jimmy, it doesn't say anything about policy in there. I just don't believe it. They want the president of the United States to give a speech without any policy in it? It's political suicide.

CARTER

Now, Stuart, this isn't the final draft. I'm sure that we can work something out.

ROSALYNN

You know Stuart, you should go over and find Hendrik. He could help you add some policy points in towards the end of the speech.

EIZENSTAT

With all due respect Rosalynn, we are going to find ourselves with two different speeches here. Wasn't that what we were trying to avoid all along?

ROSALYNN

Stuart, I have faith in Hendrik. I'm sure that he can work something out.

EIZENSTAT

What do you think Jimmy?

CARTER

I want to keep the message broad, but adding some specifics towards the end might just work.

EIZENSTAT

I'm going to find Hendrik right away.

*Eizenstat runs off.*

ROSALYNN

You know Jimmy? You are working these guys into an early grave.

CARTER

As long as we get the best speech possible it will all have been worth it. It will have been worth every minute. You know Rosalynn? I have a really good feeling about this one. I think that I am ready to lead this nation towards a new day.

ROSALYNN

That's why they elected you Jimmy. I've never lost faith. The boys haven't either. Be the leader that this nation needs. Now and in the future. We all know that you can do it, now its time to prove it.

INT. Camp David/Barracks - July 13<sup>th</sup>/Afternoon

*Eizenstat finds Hertzberg and Stewart working on the speech.*

EIZENSTAT

I've just come from the seeing the President. He wants more substance towards the end.

HERTZBERG

What do you mean?

EIZENSTAT

He isn't happy that there is no mention of policy throughout.

HERTZBERG

There were no instructions to add in any specific policy points, all we have is Caddell's manuscript and Jimmy's notes from the conference...



EIZENSTAT

Well that's why I'm here, and it seems like just in the nick of time.

STEWART

What else does he want in there?

EIZENSTAT

Write this down. Point One: We are setting a clear goal for energy policy in the United States. Any increase in consumption must be met with equal or greater cutbacks or increases in the available, sustainable energy supply. Point Two: We will set quotas to achieve these goals. Point Three: We will increase development of sustainable sources of energy. Point Four: We will mandate that utility companies cut their oil consumption by 50% within a decade. Point Five: We will ask Congress to create an energy mobilization board, which will help to cut through red tape when dealing with matters of energy. And Point Six: We will create a bold conservation program in the United States.

HERTZBERG

(Chuckling) Is that all? I think that we should run this by Pat before...

EIZENSTAT

Leave Pat out of it! Let's look over what you took down and work on refining the language. (To himself) Over my dead body will Jimmy go up there without anything of substance to say.

INT. Camp David/Cabin - July 13<sup>th</sup>/Late Afternoon

*Ham Jordan hands Rafshoon a memo from Schneiders telling him to make sure that Carter delivers the speech well.*

JORDAN

Hey Gerry, I have a memo for you here from... Schneiders, I guess. What does he want?

RAFSHOON

If I know Schneiders well enough, whatever Walter told him to want.

JORDAN

Well open it up.

RAFSHOON

(Reading the memo) Dear Gerry, I just wanted to get a hold of you before Jimmy came back to the White House. Now, I know that he doesn't like practicing his speeches before going live, but now is definitely not the time for such hubris, especially considering the speech's peculiar subject matter. I would advise that

you make Jimmy practice the speech a few times before he comes back here on Sunday for the address.

JORDAN

Well, what do you think?

RAFSHOON

Hold on there is a post-script.

JORDAN

What's it say?

RAFSHOON

Make sure that Jimmy emphasizes substance over speculation.

JORDAN

Huh. Was that written in Walter's handwriting?

RAFSHOON

Might as well have been.

JORDAN

Well, do you think Jimmy should practice his speech?

RAFSHOON

It couldn't hurt. It would help us see what lines need to be taken out, which need to be highlighted. The delivery of this message will be as important as its content. It's a speech about confidence for god sake.

JORDAN

I think that Schneiders has a point.

RAFSHOON

Well then let's get a final draft from Hendrik by this evening and set up a space for Jimmy to practice in.

JORDAN

How about the chapel? It's about the same size as the Oval Office.

RAFSHOON

You know what Ham? That could work. Its Saturday, nobody will be using it.

JORDAN

We could set up some TV cameras. Tape the whole thing. Go back over the tapes and see what he needs to work on.

RAFSHOON

That ain't a bad idea. That way we can get Jimmy comfortable with the speech while offering some feedback on presentation style. You know, I think Walter was up to something on this one. Either that or Schneiders is learning fast.

JORDAN

I'll have the chapel outfitted like the Oval Office. I guess, there is a first time for everything Gerry.

RAFSHOON

This week Ham, I'll believe anything.

EXT. Camp David – Lake/Evening

*Carter stands alongside the water with his daughter, skipping stones. "Amazing Grace" is heard in the background.*

CARTER

You see that Amy! I got four that time!

AMY

I'm sure that I can beat that!

CARTER

I don't know it's getting pretty dark and I'm getting eaten up. I'll give you three more tries.

*Amy takes her first attempt, but is unable to outdo her father.*

AMY

(Turning to her father) Why did we come out her dad?

CARTER

To the lake?

AMY

No, to Camp David.

CARTER

Amy, are you still missing the cat?

AMY

No Dad, it's not that. There have just been so many guests, it seems like the whole White House is out here.

CARTER

Well, Amy. Washington gets a bit stuffy after a while.

AMY

I can understand that Dad. I have secret service drive me to school everyday.

CARTER

I just thought that I could get more work done out here.

AMY

What work?

CARTER

Well, we are trying to find ways to solve some of America's problems.

AMY

You mean the Cold War?

CARTER

No, Amy it's bigger than that.

AMY

Oh, my teacher told me that our biggest problem was the Soviets.

CARTER

Well I'm sure that she is a very smart lady, but that's not our biggest problem.

AMY

So if it isn't the Soviets, then why are we here at Camp David?

CARTER

Because the American people are asking your father to find a way forward.

AMY

A way forward?

CARTER

Out of this whole mess.

AMY

What mess?

CARTER

They no longer believe in themselves, in me.

AMY  
I believe in you daddy. Isn't that enough?

CARTER  
(Taking Amy into his arms) That's all I'll ever need Amy.

AMY  
So why do you still have to give that speech dad?

CARTER  
Amy, let me ask you a question. Do you see those ripples out on the lake?

*Amy tosses her second stone.*

AMY  
When I throw a rock yes.

CARTER  
Well, each time that a rock touches the water's surface, it creates those very ripples, but the rock can't make waves forever. Eventually gravity pulls it down, and the water swallows it up.

AMY  
Uh huh.

CARTER  
Well Amy, we are all just like that rock you're holding in your hand. We all skip across the water's surface until the good lord calls us back home. But there are moments in this life, those moments when our destiny allows, that we can make change. That we can do good. Well Amy, this is my moment, and maybe I will only get one shot, but I just can't let it pass me by.

*There is silence for a while. Amy throws her final rock as Carter stares off into the sunset.*

AMY  
Five!

CARTER  
What?

AMY  
Dad, I just skipped it five times.

CARTER

(Smiling) Now I don't care what anybody says, I always had hope in the next generation.

AMY

Does this mean that I can bring the cat next time?

CARTER

Only if we can leave your mother home.

AMY

I'm telling!

*The two start running toward the lodge laughing, Carter chasing his daughter.*

INT. Camp David/Chapel - July 14<sup>th</sup>/Midday

*Carter grudgingly practices the speech while Rafshoon and Stewart provide feedback.*

RAFSHOON

Jimmy you have to speak with your hands. You don't want to look like a statue up there.

STEWART

And don't flash your grin all the time. We are talking about some grim stuff here. The president shouldn't be smiling through a speech like this.

RAFSHOON

And you need to talk a bit louder Jimmy. I'm not getting enough volume here in the playback.

CARTER

Now boys, we've been at this for over half an hour now. My throat is getting a bit sore...

RAFSHOON

Just a little longer Jimmy and we will have it down.

CARTER

Oh fine, just a few more goes.

STEWART

If you could take it from "It's clear?"

*Rafshoon fixes the tape.*

RAFSHOON

Ok we are rolling.

CARTER

(Clears his throat) It's clear that the true problems of our Nation are much deeper – deeper than the gasoline lines or energy shortages, deeper even than inflation or recession. And I realize more than ever that as president I need your help. So I decided to reach out...

STEWART

Mr. President, stop there a minute.

CARTER

What's wrong this time?

STEWART

It just doesn't sound right. What do you think Gerry?

RAFSHOON

You aren't really projecting Jimmy.

CARTER

Projecting? Won't we be using microphones?

RAFSHOON

Of course Jimmy, but you still need to demonstrate confidence with your tone of voice. The networks are projecting 40 million viewers. Your highest rating ever. You don't want to put them to sleep.

STEWART

Ok lets switch gears and take a look at "The threat."

CARTER

Where is that?

RAFSHOON

Next page, Jimmy.

CARTER

Alright. Yeah, I've got it.

RAFSHOON

Ready.

CARTER

The threat is nearly invisible in ordinary ways. It is a crisis of confidence. It is a crisis that strikes at the very heart and souls and spirit of our national will. We can see this crisis in the growing doubt about the meaning of our own lives and in the loss of a unity of purpose for our nation. The erosion of our confidence in the future is threatening to destroy the social and the political fabric of America. The confidence that we have always had as a people is not simply some romantic dream or a proverb in a dusty book that we read just on the Fourth of July.

STEWART

Alright, stop it right there.

CARTER

I was on a roll. What's the matter this time?

STEWART

I'm just still not feeling it. It doesn't sound the way that we wrote it.

CARTER

Well why don't you come over here and give the damn speech yourself?

STEWART

They only pay me to write 'em Jimmy.

RAFSHOON

Why don't we try it one more time? And this time Jimmy, try not to mumble.

CARTER

The threat is nearly invisible in ordinary ways...

STEWART

I'm sorry Mr. President I can't hear you.

CARTER

IT IS A CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE. IT IS A CRISIS THAT STRIKES AT THE VERY HEART AND SOUL AND SPIRIT OF OUR NATIONAL WILL.

STEWART

Mr. President, you don't need to shout. You just need to stop sounding so flat. Why don't you start over again?

CARTER

I'm getting tired of this, boys. I'll give you one more go.



RAFSHOON

Mr. President, we are going to work on this until we get it down. There is just too much riding on this speech. If you don't capture their attention in the first five minutes, you may lose it for the rest of your presidency.

STEWART

Take it from "It is a crisis."

RAFSHOON

Ready.

CARTER

It is a crisis of confidence. It is a crisis that strikes at the very heart and soul and spirit of our national will...

*Stewart begins to put his jacket on and move towards the door.*

CARTER

(Angrily) Now where in the hell do you think you are you going?

STEWART

I'm bored. I could be outside enjoying the day. Instead I'm in this chapel listening to a speech that couldn't move a soul. I guess they were right when they said we couldn't turn this administration around with one address...

CARTER

(Becoming animated) Now you just wait a second. I am the goddamn President of the United States, and when the President speaks you have to listen. Now all I've heard over the past 10 days is criticism and I'm just about sick and tired of it. But if that is what I needed to do to get a speech that I believe in, so be it. Now you are just going to sit right back down and finish this.

STEWART

(To Rafshoon) You see that Gerry.

RAFSHOON

(Winking) I've got it on tape.

STEWART

Mr. President, now we are getting somewhere. Take it from "The threat."

CARTER

The threat...

*Carter continues reciting the speech. Stewart and Rafshoon whisper to one another while watching Jimmy speak.*

STEWART  
(To Rafshoon) You think he's ready?

RAFSHOON  
As ready as he'll ever be.

STEWART  
Alright, I'll go let Ham know. Looks like we're headed back to Washington.

RAFSHOON  
I'll stay and go over the opening a few more times. Let's just hope it's enough.

*Stewart exits.*

CARTER  
...We've always had a faith that the days of our children would be better than our own...

*Rafshoon and Carter remain.*

INT. White House - July 14<sup>th</sup>/4pm

*Powell, Mondale, and Schneiders await the president's arrival.*

MONDALE  
So, Jimmy's coming back at 6?

SCHNEIDERS  
I believe so.

POWELL  
They've been practicing the speech all day. Eizenstat got some policy in towards the end.

MONDALE  
Good. At least someone still has their head on straight.

SCHNEIDERS  
I'm glad that Jimmy finally practiced a speech, I'm sure that Gerry saw him to it.

MONDALE  
Does everyone know that he is coming back?

POWELL

I've barred the press.

MONDALE

Good. Keep those vultures away as long as possible.

POWELL

Jimmy is coming back under that same veil of mystery as when he left.

SCHNEIDERS

You know what, oneday someone is going to write a book about all of this.

MONDALE

(Laughing) Greg, I'm not sure that I want to read that one. I don't think that I'd be the hero.

POWELL

You never know Walter. Scripts can always be rewritten.

SCHNEIDERS

I just hope that the final act goes as well as Caddell thinks it will.

MONDALE

Well that's all we can do now boys, hope.

*The three peer out the window towards the White House lawn. The sun is shining bright.*

EXT. Camp David - July 14<sup>th</sup>/5:30pm

*The group is shown boarding a helicopter heading back to the White House. The copter takes off and aerial shots of Camp David are shown as they leave. Amy Carter peers out the window to the right, while Caddell does the same to the left. Rosalynn Carter watches both of them while Jimmy smiles looking ahead.*

EXT. White House- July 14<sup>th</sup>/6pm

*The copter lands at the White House. There is no one to greet the party besides Mondale and Powell. Carter looks around a bit before following the rest of the group into the White House.*

INT. White House/Oval Office - July 15<sup>th</sup>/Evening

*President Carter prepares to go live. Rosalynn and his advisors give him some final pointers.*

JORDAN

Now remember Jimmy, wait until we give you the signal to start.

RAFSHOON

And speak with your hands. Don't rely on the note cards too much. We've practiced it enough.

STEWART

(Smiling) Remember, Mr. President if you don't capture my attention in the first 5 minutes I'm going golfing.

CARTER

(Chuckling) Don't worry Gordon. I'll keep them on the edge of their seats.

CADDELL

Just remember the message Mr. President. It is strong. This is your moment.

*As Jimmy walks by her to take his seat at the President's Desk, Rosalynn kisses him on the cheek and whispers into his ear.*

ROSALYNN

Be the president they need, Jimmy. A teaching president. Show them the light.

*Carter moves over to the President's Desk and sits down.*

HERTZBERG

Good luck Mr. President.

CARTER

Thank you Hendrik.

POWELL

Jimmy, I've just got confirmation from the networks. You are about to speak to your largest audience ever. You have a real opportunity to reach them tonight Jimmy.

CARTER

Good Jody, thank you.

EIZENSTAT

Remember to stress the policy points towards the end. You'll really capture their attention with those. Be bold when you get to that part of the speech.

CARTER

I will Stuart.

MONDALE

Jimmy.

CARTER

Yes Walter.

MONDALE

Give them one hell of a speech.

CARTER

(Smiling) I will Walter. Thank you.

JORDAN

We are coming up on two minutes. We are going to have to clear the room...

*Everyone starts to exit.*

CARTER

Hey before you go. I just want to say something.

*They all turn around.*

CARTER

Tonight, I will do something rarely attempted by a sitting US president. I will speak directly and honestly to the American people. I will talk about my own doubts, and theirs. And together, I truly believe that we will make it out of this whole mess. Now I want to thank all of you for your help during these past 10 days. Although I'm the one who goes on tonight, it was because of you all that I am taking this chance. And if the lord wills it, in about half an hour, it will be the start of new age in America, and one that we wrote together.

JORDAN

We believe in you Jimmy, good luck.

*Everyone exits except Mondale, Jordan, and Rafshoon. Caddell and Rosalynn look nervous outside.*

RAFSHOON

How are you feeling Jimmy?

CARTER

Ready, Gerry. I feel ready.

JORDAN

Good. We go live in less than one minute.

CARTER

Walter.

MONDALE

Yes Jimmy?

CARTER

When this is all over, what do you say you and I go to Camp David for the week?

MONDALE

Over my dead body, Mr. President. Over my dead body.

JORDAN

30 seconds.

RAFSHOON

Remember to speak out. And although we love them, don't flash those pearly whites so often.

CARTER

Yeah Gerry, don't worry I got it.

JORDAN

20 seconds.

*Carter shifts in his chair.*

JORDAN

Jimmy.

CARTER

Yes Ham?

JORDAN

Lead them home.

*The camera lights go on.*

RAFSHOON

Live in five, four, three, two...

## CARTER

"Good evening. This is a special night for me. Exactly three years ago, on July 15, 1976, I accepted the nomination of my party to run for president of the United States.

I promised you a president who is not isolated from the people, who feels your pain, and who shares your dreams and who draws his strength and his wisdom from you.

During the past three years I've spoken to you on many occasions about national concerns, the energy crisis, reorganizing the government, our nation's economy, and issues of war and especially peace. But over those years the subjects of the speeches, the talks, and the press conferences have become increasingly narrow, focused more and more on what the isolated world of Washington thinks is important. Gradually, you've heard more and more about what the government thinks or what the government should be doing and less and less about our nation's hopes, our dreams, and our vision of the future.

Ten days ago I had planned to speak to you again about a very important subject -- energy. For the fifth time I would have described the urgency of the problem and laid out a series of legislative recommendations to the Congress. But as I was preparing to speak, I began to ask myself the same question that I now know has been troubling many of you. Why have we not been able to get together as a nation to resolve our serious energy problem?

It's clear that the true problems of our Nation are much deeper -- deeper than gasoline lines or energy shortages, deeper even than inflation or recession. And I realize more than ever that as president I need your help. So I decided to reach out and listen to the voices of America.

I invited to Camp David people from almost every segment of our society -- business and labor, teachers and preachers, governors, mayors, and private citizens. And then I left Camp David to listen to other Americans, men and women like you.

It has been an extraordinary ten days, and I want to share with you what I've heard. First of all, I got a lot of personal advice. Let me quote a few of the typical comments that I wrote down.

This from a southern governor: "Mr. President, you are not leading this nation -- you're just managing the government."

"You don't see the people enough any more."

"Some of your Cabinet members don't seem loyal. There is not enough discipline among your disciples."

"Don't talk to us about politics or the mechanics of government, but about an understanding of our common good."

"Mr. President, we're in trouble. Talk to us about blood and sweat and tears."

"If you lead, Mr. President, we will follow."

Many people talked about themselves and about the condition of our nation.

This from a young woman in Pennsylvania: "I feel so far from government. I feel like ordinary people are excluded from political power."

And this from a young Chicano: "Some of us have suffered from recession all our lives."

"Some people have wasted energy, but others haven't had anything to waste."

And this from a religious leader: "No material shortage can touch the important things like God's love for us or our love for one another."

And I like this one particularly from a black woman who happens to be the mayor of a small Mississippi town: "The big-shots are not the only ones who are important. Remember, you can't sell anything on Wall Street unless someone digs it up somewhere else first."

This kind of summarized a lot of other statements: "Mr. President, we are confronted with a moral and a spiritual crisis."

Several of our discussions were on energy, and I have a notebook full of comments and advice. I'll read just a few.

"We can't go on consuming 40 percent more energy than we produce. When we import oil we are also importing inflation plus unemployment."

"We've got to use what we have. The Middle East has only five percent of the world's energy, but the United States has 24 percent."

And this is one of the most vivid statements: "Our neck is stretched over the fence and OPEC has a knife."

"There will be other cartels and other shortages. American wisdom and courage right now can set a path to follow in the future."

This was a good one: "Be bold, Mr. President. We may make mistakes, but we are ready to experiment."

And this one from a labor leader got to the heart of it: "The real issue is freedom. We must deal with the energy problem on a war footing."

And the last that I'll read: "When we enter the moral equivalent of war, Mr. President, don't issue us BB guns."

These ten days confirmed my belief in the decency and the strength and the wisdom of the American people, but it also bore out some of my long-standing concerns about our nation's underlying problems.



I know, of course, being president, that government actions and legislation can be very important. That's why I've worked hard to put my campaign promises into law -- and I have to admit, with just mixed success. But after listening to the American people I have been reminded again that all the legislation in the world can't fix what's wrong with America. So, I want to speak to you first tonight about a subject even more serious than energy or inflation. I want to talk to you right now about a fundamental threat to American democracy.

I do not mean our political and civil liberties. They will endure. And I do not refer to the outward strength of America, a nation that is at peace tonight everywhere in the world, with unmatched economic power and military might.

The threat is nearly invisible in ordinary ways. It is a crisis of confidence. It is a crisis that strikes at the very heart and soul and spirit of our national will. We can see this crisis in the growing doubt about the meaning of our own lives and in the loss of a unity of purpose for our nation.

The erosion of our confidence in the future is threatening to destroy the social and the political fabric of America.

The confidence that we have always had as a people is not simply some romantic dream or a proverb in a dusty book that we read just on the Fourth of July.

It is the idea which founded our nation and has guided our development as a people. Confidence in the future has supported everything else -- public institutions and private enterprise, our own families, and the very Constitution of the United States. Confidence has defined our course and has served as a link between generations. We've always believed in something called progress. We've always had a faith that the days of our children would be better than our own.

Our people are losing that faith, not only in government itself but in the ability as citizens to serve as the ultimate rulers and shapers of our democracy. As a people we know our past and we are proud of it. Our progress has been part of the living history of America, even the world. We always believed that we were part of a great movement of humanity itself called democracy, involved in the search for freedom, and that belief has always strengthened us in our purpose. But just as we are losing our confidence in the future, we are also beginning to close the door on our past.

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. Human identity is no longer defined by what one does, but by what one owns. But we've discovered that owning things and consuming things does not satisfy our longing for meaning. We've learned that piling up material goods cannot fill the emptiness of lives which have no confidence or purpose.

The symptoms of this crisis of the American spirit are all around us. For the first time in the history of our country a majority of our people believe that the next five years will be worse than the past five years. Two-thirds of our people do not even vote. The

productivity of American workers is actually dropping, and the willingness of Americans to save for the future has fallen below that of all other people in the Western world.

As you know, there is a growing disrespect for government and for churches and for schools, the news media, and other institutions. This is not a message of happiness or reassurance, but it is the truth and it is a warning.

These changes did not happen overnight. They've come upon us gradually over the last generation, years that were filled with shocks and tragedy.

We were sure that ours was a nation of the ballot, not the bullet, until the murders of John Kennedy and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. We were taught that our armies were always invincible and our causes were always just, only to suffer the agony of Vietnam. We respected the presidency as a place of honor until the shock of Watergate.

We remember when the phrase "sound as a dollar" was an expression of absolute dependability, until ten years of inflation began to shrink our dollar and our savings. We believed that our nation's resources were limitless until 1973, when we had to face a growing dependence on foreign oil.

These wounds are still very deep. They have never been healed. Looking for a way out of this crisis, our people have turned to the Federal government and found it isolated from the mainstream of our nation's life. Washington, D.C., has become an island. The gap between our citizens and our government has never been so wide. The people are looking for honest answers, not easy answers; clear leadership, not false claims and evasiveness and politics as usual.

What you see too often in Washington and elsewhere around the country is a system of government that seems incapable of action. You see a Congress twisted and pulled in every direction by hundreds of well-financed and powerful special interests. You see every extreme position defended to the last vote, almost to the last breath by one unyielding group or another. You often see a balanced and a fair approach that demands sacrifice, a little sacrifice from everyone, abandoned like an orphan without support and without friends.

Often you see paralysis and stagnation and drift. You don't like it, and neither do I. What can we do?

First of all, we must face the truth, and then we can change our course. We simply must have faith in each other, faith in our ability to govern ourselves, and faith in the future of this nation. Restoring that faith and that confidence to America is now the most important task we face. It is a true challenge of this generation of Americans.

One of the visitors to Camp David last week put it this way: "We've got to stop crying and start sweating, stop talking and start walking, stop cursing and start praying. The strength we need will not come from the White House, but from every house in America."

We know the strength of America. We are strong. We can regain our unity. We can regain our confidence. We are the heirs of generations who survived threats much more powerful and awesome than those that challenge us now. Our fathers and mothers were strong men and women who shaped a new society during the Great Depression, who fought world wars, and who carved out a new charter of peace for the world.

We ourselves are the same Americans who just ten years ago put a man on the Moon. We are the generation that dedicated our society to the pursuit of human rights and equality. And we are the generation that will win the war on the energy problem and in that process rebuild the unity and confidence of America.

We are at a turning point in our history. There are two paths to choose. One is a path I've warned about tonight, the path that leads to fragmentation and self-interest. Down that road lies a mistaken idea of freedom, the right to grasp for ourselves some advantage over others. That path would be one of constant conflict between narrow interests ending in chaos and immobility. It is a certain route to failure.

All the traditions of our past, all the lessons of our heritage, all the promises of our future point to another path, the path of common purpose and the restoration of American values. That path leads to true freedom for our nation and ourselves. We can take the first steps down that path as we begin to solve our energy problem.

Energy will be the immediate test of our ability to unite this nation, and it can also be the standard around which we rally. On the battlefield of energy we can win for our nation a new confidence, and we can seize control again of our common destiny.

In little more than two decades we've gone from a position of energy independence to one in which almost half the oil we use comes from foreign countries, at prices that are going through the roof. Our excessive dependence on OPEC has already taken a tremendous toll on our economy and our people. This is the direct cause of the long lines which have made millions of you spend aggravating hours waiting for gasoline. It's a cause of the increased inflation and unemployment that we now face. This intolerable dependence on foreign oil threatens our economic independence and the very security of our nation. The energy crisis is real. It is worldwide. It is a clear and present danger to our nation. These are facts and we simply must face them.

What I have to say to you now about energy is simple and vitally important.

Point one: I am tonight setting a clear goal for the energy policy of the United States. Beginning this moment, this nation will never use more foreign oil than we did in 1977 -- never. From now on, every new addition to our demand for energy will be met from our own production and our own conservation. The generation-long growth in our dependence on foreign oil will be stopped dead in its tracks right now and then reversed as we move through the 1980s, for I am tonight setting the further goal of cutting our dependence on foreign oil by one-half by the end of the next decade -- a saving of over 4-1/2 million barrels of imported oil per day.

Point two: To ensure that we meet these targets, I will use my presidential authority to set

import quotas. I'm announcing tonight that for 1979 and 1980, I will forbid the entry into this country of one drop of foreign oil more than these goals allow. These quotas will ensure a reduction in imports even below the ambitious levels we set at the recent Tokyo summit.

Point three: To give us energy security, I am asking for the most massive peacetime commitment of funds and resources in our nation's history to develop America's own alternative sources of fuel -- from coal, from oil shale, from plant products for gasohol, from unconventional gas, from the sun.

I propose the creation of an energy security corporation to lead this effort to replace 2-1/2 million barrels of imported oil per day by 1990. The corporation I will issue up to \$5 billion in energy bonds, and I especially want them to be in small denominations so that average Americans can invest directly in America's energy security.

Just as a similar synthetic rubber corporation helped us win World War II, so will we mobilize American determination and ability to win the energy war. Moreover, I will soon submit legislation to Congress calling for the creation of this nation's first solar bank, which will help us achieve the crucial goal of 20 percent of our energy coming from solar power by the year 2000.

These efforts will cost money, a lot of money, and that is why Congress must enact the windfall profits tax without delay. It will be money well spent. Unlike the billions of dollars that we ship to foreign countries to pay for foreign oil, these funds will be paid by Americans to Americans. These funds will go to fight, not to increase, inflation and unemployment.

Point four: I'm asking Congress to mandate, to require as a matter of law, that our nation's utility companies cut their massive use of oil by 50 percent within the next decade and switch to other fuels, especially coal, our most abundant energy source.

Point five: To make absolutely certain that nothing stands in the way of achieving these goals, I will urge Congress to create an energy mobilization board which, like the War Production Board in World War II, will have the responsibility and authority to cut through the red tape, the delays, and the endless roadblocks to completing key energy projects.

We will protect our environment. But when this nation critically needs a refinery or a pipeline, we will build it.

Point six: I'm proposing a bold conservation program to involve every state, county, and city and every average American in our energy battle. This effort will permit you to build conservation into your homes and your lives at a cost you can afford.

I ask Congress to give me authority for mandatory conservation and for standby gasoline rationing. To further conserve energy, I'm proposing tonight an extra \$10 billion over the next decade to strengthen our public transportation systems. And I'm asking you for your good and for your nation's security to take no unnecessary trips, to use carpools or public

transportation whenever you can, to park your car one extra day per week, to obey the speed limit, and to set your thermostats to save fuel. Every act of energy conservation like this is more than just common sense -- I tell you it is an act of patriotism.

Our nation must be fair to the poorest among us, so we will increase aid to needy Americans to cope with rising energy prices. We often think of conservation only in terms of sacrifice. In fact, it is the most painless and immediate way of rebuilding our nation's strength. Every gallon of oil each one of us saves is a new form of production. It gives us more freedom, more confidence, that much more control over our own lives.

So, the solution of our energy crisis can also help us to conquer the crisis of the spirit in our country. It can rekindle our sense of unity, our confidence in the future, and give our nation and all of us individually a new sense of purpose.

You know we can do it. We have the natural resources. We have more oil in our shale alone than several Saudi Arabias. We have more coal than any nation on Earth. We have the world's highest level of technology. We have the most skilled work force, with innovative genius, and I firmly believe that we have the national will to win this war.

I do not promise you that this struggle for freedom will be easy. I do not promise a quick way out of our nation's problems, when the truth is that the only way out is an all-out effort. What I do promise you is that I will lead our fight, and I will enforce fairness in our struggle, and I will ensure honesty. And above all, I will act. We can manage the short-term shortages more effectively and we will, but there are no short-term solutions to our long-range problems. There is simply no way to avoid sacrifice.

Twelve hours from now I will speak again in Kansas City, to expand and to explain further our energy program. Just as the search for solutions to our energy shortages has now led us to a new awareness of our Nation's deeper problems, so our willingness to work for those solutions in energy can strengthen us to attack those deeper problems.

I will continue to travel this country, to hear the people of America. You can help me to develop a national agenda for the 1980s. I will listen and I will act. We will act together. These were the promises I made three years ago, and I intend to keep them.

Little by little we can and we must rebuild our confidence. We can spend until we empty our treasuries, and we may summon all the wonders of science. But we can succeed only if we tap our greatest resources -- America's people, America's values, and America's confidence.

I have seen the strength of America in the inexhaustible resources of our people. In the days to come, let us renew that strength in the struggle for an energy secure nation.

In closing, let me say this: I will do my best, but I will not do it alone. Let your voice be heard. Whenever you have a chance, say something good about our country. With God's help and for the sake of our nation, it is time for us to join hands in America. Let us commit ourselves together to a rebirth of the American spirit. Working together with our common faith we cannot fail.

Thank you and good night.

*The camera focuses on President Carter and his face fills the entire screen before going black. Text is displayed on screen thereafter.*

- 1) White House phones lit up immediately after Carter's address. Support came pouring in from Americans far and wide. Many related to Carter's speech and hoped, that together, Americans could now forge a new pathway forward. Ultimately, many were relieved to hear Carter's message. For some, Carter's confidence and honesty restored their faith in the embattled president. There was a 12-point surge in Carter's approval rating overnight, almost unheard of for presidential addresses. In addition, the mainstream media provided mainly positive reviews of the speech, echoing the strong sentiments of the American people.
- 2) Emboldened by the success of his address, President Carter moved swiftly to enact changes prompted by realizations made at the "domestic summit." In an ill-fated move, Carter asked for the resignation of his entire cabinet, eventually accepting five. Americans were shocked. The political capital Carter had gained from his speech was lost on what some inside the administration began to call "Black Tuesday." Carter was never able to fully recover from that second loss of confidence.
- 3) In the lead-up to the 1980 presidential election, the Right began to re-brand Carter's "Address on Energy and National Goals" as the "malaise speech," a term never directly used by Carter himself, but one which was circulating in the media at the time.
- 4) Iranian students stormed the American Embassy in Tehran on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1979. Past that point, much of Carter's efforts were spent dealing with the hostage crisis where 52 US citizens were held against their will for a period of 444 days. Carter was ultimately unsuccessful in freeing the hostages, although a failed rescue operation was attempted. The hostages were eventually released upon President Reagan's inauguration.
- 5) Unsuccessful in securing a second term, President Carter left office on January 20, 1981, in favor of newly sworn-in President Ronald Reagan. Though voted out of office, Carter, alongside wife Rosalynn founded the Carter Center to promote and harmonize humanitarian efforts around the world. Considered by many to be the best "former president," the words Carter spoke on that Sunday night in July of 1979 still echo to this day. Dealing with many similar issues, some Americans have returned to the "Speech on Energy and National Goals" in recent days to recall perhaps its most timeless message.
- 6) "It is a crisis of confidence."
- 7) "CARTER"

-FIN-

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