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This in-depth profile of President Jimmy Carter explores his rise to political power and his career as a humanitarian.

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**APA**

**CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE**

**Transcript**

A Look at Jimmy Carter's Presidency and His Life After Leaving Office

KATIE COURIC, co-host:
This morning on our special series leading up to Presidents' Day, Jimmy Carter. He is perhaps the most active former president in American history and is celebrated more today than he was when he was in the White House.

President JIMMY CARTER: I, Jimmy Carter, do solemnly swear...  
COURIC: In 1977, Jimmy Carter, a peanut farmer and former governor of Georgia, was sworn in as the country's 39th president.

Mr. JODY POWELL (Former Carter Press Secretary): He was a president who acted constantly out of conviction and principle, rather than out of political expediency.

COURIC: Principles learned in Plains, Georgia, where he was born in 1924. He attended the Naval Academy and married hometown girl Rosalynn Smith in 1946. After seven years in the Navy, his father died, and Carter returned home to Plains to run the family peanut business. Soon, he was a community leader, starting his political career in the State Senate. On his second run for governor, he won. But still, he longed for more, as his mother, known as Miss Lillian, recalled.

Ms. LILLIAN CARTER: He said, 'I'm going to run for president.' I said, 'President of what?'
COURIC: Carter ran his campaign in the wake of Watergate as an honest Washington outsider, and defeated incumbent Republican Gerald Ford.

Mr. CARTER: I see an America where we control government; it doesn't control us.
Mr. POWELL: This was a man who didn't belong to anybody or any group or any interest, who, to the best of his ability, was going to do what was right for the country.
COURIC: But once he reached the White House, Carter hit some major roadblocks in his dealings with Congress.

Mr. POWELL: One of the things that Jimmy Carter realized was that the world had changed and the
country had changed, and that the Democratic Party needed to change, too. He was not a 1960s Democrat.

COURIC: Even with such a tenuous relationship with Congress, Carter was still able to get many of his programs passed. He expanded public lands in Alaska, negotiated the Panama Canal Treaty, and brought human rights into the nation's foreign policy dialogue. And he brokered the historic Camp David Accords, which led to a lasting peace between Egypt and Israel.

Mr. DOUGLAS BRINKLEY: He took these intractable foes in Egypt and Israel, brought them to the woods in Maryland, had them there day after day, at one point blocking a doorway and refusing to let Menachem Begin leave, all for the sense of peace.

COURIC: But soon, his successes were overshadowed by long gas lines, high inflation, and the 52 Americans taken hostage in Iran. A rescue attempt ended in failure. Voters began to question Carter's leadership, and in 1980, Ronald Reagan won the race for the White House.

Mr. CARTER: I promised you four years ago that I would never lie to you, so I can't stand here tonight and say it doesn't hurt.

COURIC: Even after the devastating defeat, Carter was determined to see the hostages home safely.

Mr. CARTER: The next step then...

COURIC: Negotiations went down to the wire and continued late into the night on the eve of Reagan's inaugural.

Mr. POWELL: In the end, he was successful in reaching a series of agreements that brought the hostages home alive and well.

COURIC: But the hostages did not clear Iranian airspace until moments after Reagan took the oath of office.

President RONALD REAGAN: The planes bearing our prisoners left Iranian airspace, and are now free of Iran.

COURIC: Leaving the high pressure of Washington for the quiet life in Plains was an adjustment.

Mr. BRINKLEY: Once Jimmy Carter moved back to Plains and no longer president, a great depression engulfed him.

Mr. POWELL: There was a point of trying to figure out what to do with the rest of their lives.

Mr. CARTER: I intend to establish a center where without any political constraints, and strictly on a nonpartisan basis, I can devote the rest of my life working on the issues that are important to me and to the world and to our country.

COURIC: With the Carter Center as his base of operations, the former president has circled the globe for over 20 years, monitoring elections from Africa to Latin America. In 1994, he was credited with preventing a US military invasion of Haiti.

Mr. BRINKLEY: He's a one-man 911 emergency peacekeeping unit.

COURIC: That same year, he traveled to North and South Korea to broker a peaceful resolution to the rising nuclear tensions, an agreement that some criticize today as too lenient. In 2002, he was the first American president to travel to Cuba and meet with Fidel Castro. All of his efforts have not gone unnoticed.

ANN CURRY reporting: This morning, former President Jimmy Carter won the Nobel Peace Prize.
Mr. Carter was honored for what the Nobel committee called, quote, "his decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts."

COURIC: In Plains, Georgia, they celebrated.

Mr. CARTER: The last 20 years of my life have been, I would say, the most gratifying of all, after I left the White House.

COURIC: At the awards ceremony in December, he stayed true to form, pushing for peace without mincing his words.

Mr. CARTER: War may sometimes be a necessary evil, but no matter how necessary, it is always evil, never a good. We will not learn how to live together in peace by killing each other's children. God gives us a capacity for choice. We can choose to alleviate suffering. We can choose to work together for peace. We can make these changes, and we must.