

The University of Maine

DigitalCommons@UMaine

WLBZ Radio Station Records

Manuscripts

2-17-1978

President Jimmy Carter Town Meeting, Bangor, Maine

WLBZ Radio

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/wlbz_station_records



Part of the [History Commons](#), and the [Radio Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

WLBZ Radio, (February 17 1978) "President Jimmy Carter Town Meeting, Bangor, Maine". *WLBZ Radio Station Records*. MS 608. Tape A 78. Special Collections, Raymond H. Fogler Library, University of Maine. https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/wlbz_station_records/172

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in WLBZ Radio Station Records by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

University of Maine Raymond H. Fogler Library Special Collections Department

Transcript of a sound recording in MS 608, WLBZ Radio Station Records, Bangor, Maine, 1931-1973

Title: President Jimmy Carter Town Meeting, Bangor, Maine

Date: February 17, 1978

Recording number: Reel-to-reel Tape A 78

Length of recording: 1:32:03

[transcript begins]

PRESIDENT CARTER: Thank you. This reminds me of 1976, in the latter part of the campaign, not the first part, because when I came to Maine for the first time, no one knew who I was, or cared. I made a speech to the Democratic state convention and I remember that I was a twenty-third person on the program and I started speaking about 10:20 [audience laughter] and then when I began to run for President and came back, some of you were very hospitable to me and took me in and made me feel at home. Later my wife came, my three sons, their wives, my aunt Sissy, my sister Ruth, my mother, and, uh, maybe later Billy will come as well. [Laughter and applause]

We've had town meetings now since I've been President, in Massachusetts and in Mississippi. We'll have an hour and a half. I'd like to make a brief opening statement on a subject that is important to you, and then I'll answer questions. I'll take the last question about 20 minutes after 9:00.

Last year, New England suffered the worst winter ever recorded, and this winter may be just as harsh. Certainly the blizzard of 1978, just 10 days ago, will go down in history along with a terrible blizzard of 1888. You are expert in an average year of contending with freezing weather and winds of gale force and in handling large snowfall. And yet in some ways, you are more vulnerable to winter than any other section of the country. You don't have access to cheap supplies of natural gas or oil and you're heavily dependent on imported energy, primarily oil. It costs you more to heat your homes and your factories here than it does anywhere else in the 48 states in this in this country. Alaska, maybe a little more, but even now Alaska has cheaper supplies of oil. Your jobs are in danger of leaving Maine, some of them, because to provide a certain amount of heat, the energy costs you about 45% more than the average place in our country. No part of a nation has suffered more from a lack of a comprehensive national energy plan than has New England. I've tried my best to close that gap, to correct the unfairness in energy distribution and energy prices. The House and Senate have both passed now a version of our Energy Proposal and the Conference Committees are hard at work.

Let me tell you some of the ways, very briefly, that this energy package would make your own lives more prosperous and your own future more sure. At present, natural gas produced and sold within a state, like Louisiana, Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, Oklahoma, brings a higher price than gas exported to another state. The energy bill would create a single price so that producers would no longer be discouraged from marketing their natural gas in other regions, like your own state. The Energy Bill sets efficiency standards for motor vehicles, for appliances, and for buildings, to save energy. The bill gives

tax credits to homeowners and business leaders who insulate their buildings and save energy. For those with income so low that they don't pay taxes, the energy bill establishes a program to weatherize the houses of the poor at no cost to them. Local utilities will be required to work with their customers on energy audits to see where energy is being lost and where economies can be affected. Energy bills can be cut down even more by use of solar energy to meet part of your heating needs. The energy bill also encourages this by offering tax credits to those who install solar energy equipment. The bill provides research and development funds to study ways in which we can make better use of energy sources that are renewable, the ones that comes from the sun. One of these, obviously, is wood, which has traditionally been an important fuel throughout much of New England and also in my own home state of Georgia. But wood can be used in many new and innovative ways and we aim to explore those ways by research and development.

I don't mean to suggest that any of these things can come about easily or overnight. The problem of energy has been ignored too long for us to expect any quick solution, but we need to start down the road or we will never bring our demand for energy into balance with our continuing supply. Nor are there any attractive shortcuts. Our progress will be slow and sometimes hard to measure, but we must save oil. We must encourage energy production in our own country. And we must shift the more plentiful supplies of energy. One immediate step that we can take is to lessen our dependence on foreign oil by conserving energy now.

Some people have argued that conservation, the elimination of waste, will slow down our economic growth and cost jobs. But this is the opposite of the truth. Not only does energy conservation create jobs, in the building industry and elsewhere, but conservation also means saving money by the efficient use of energy. It means a return to self-reliance in energy matters. Simply stated, conservation means thrift and since when does thrift means stagnation? Any New Englander knows the answer. We must have a good, sound, comprehensive national energy policy. You know the answer to that. And now I'm ready to take your questions on other issues.

[Applause]

SHERLOCK: My name is Bob Sherlock and I live at 49 Bradbury Street in Old Town. Mr. President, Americans have long looked to government to constrain private decision-making for the good of society. Do you think the federal government should play a role in constraining U.S.-based multinational corporations from following investment, production, and marketing policies which weaken and destabilize the American economy?

CARTER: Yes, I do. There are several ways that this is being done now, as you know. One is the antitrust laws which try to enhance competition in our country and preserve the finest aspect of the free enterprise system. Another one is to cut down on unnecessary regulation. One of the great improvements that we've made in the last 12 months has been in the deregulation of the airline industry. And now, as you know, because of the changes that we have made there's much more competition in overseas flights. You can now fly to England and back for, I guess, half what you could a year ago. The Senate is now getting ready to start voting on a bill to deregulate the domestic air route

and we hope to eliminate unnecessary regulation also. I mentioned earlier today in a press conference in Rhode Island, some of the tax provisions that I think would accommodate what you've just described. The elimination of overseas deferrals, which means that major corporations who invest overseas, and therefore start employing foreigners to work in their factories, pay a lower tax bill on a given amount of profits overseas than they would pay if they made those same profits in our own country. And we've got what they call a disc operation which encourages overseas investments in sales, where a big corporation, and almost all these credits go to big corporations, can set up a dummy corporation and export American product and they only pay taxes on half their profits. Well, then they don't pay their profit in taxes at a fair rate, you know who has to pay the taxes for them. Just the average working people of our country. Another thing that I've try to do is to eliminate some of the special loopholes that have been enjoyed by very wealthy people, and influential people. One is what's been inaccurately called a three-martini lunch. Now, if a working man or woman takes your lunch to work, say a dollar and a half, a \$2 sandwich, and something to drink, or buys it in a local store or a restaurant, you can't mark it off as a business expense. But if a salesman, or someone else, has a very fancy lunch and has a customer with him, then they can mark all that off maybe \$25 or \$30 lunch, as a business expense. The same thing is applicable with tickets to a sporting events, tickets to the theater. If they carry a customer with them, then they can mark it all off as a business expense. I don't think that's right, and I think we ought to do away with it. [Applause] But it's very difficult for the members of Congress to support these kinds of tax reforms because the more influential people are, the more of these tax breaks or loopholes they've gotten for themselves, and the same ability to hire lobbyists to get the tax breaks in the first place, keeps those lobbyists who are very effective in Washington now, to preserve the tax breaks for them. And the average working family doesn't know anything about it. And I think it's time to have comprehensive tax reform, so I'd say antitrust deregulation, tax reform, intense competition, brings out the best in our free enterprise system and does not hurt business. It does not hurt employment in most instances. In my in my opinion, it would help employment.

SHERLOCK: Thank you.

CARTER: Thank you. [Applause]

BUSSEY: Bill Bussey from Bath, Maine. Before my question, Mr. President, the citizens of Bath, Maine, and the employees of the Bath Iron Works wish to take this opportunity to express their gratitude and appreciation to you and the State Department for awarding contracts which enable the Iron Works to continue building the finest ships in the world. Thank you. [Applause]

CARTER: Thank you. I might interrupt you to say that in the 1979 budget which I've just sent to the Senate we have eight more patrol frigates and I feel sure that with the very fine quality work that you do and with your two US senators Ed Muskie and Bill Hathaway there, I'm sure that Bath's gonna get its fair share of that contract. [Applause]

BUSSEY: We'll keep them coming.

CARTER: Oh, now what was your question?

BUSSEY: Do you support Senator Hathaway's stand on the Dickey Lincoln Power Project?

[Audience reacts with comments that indicate surprise at the boldness of the question, then applauds]

CARTER: Both Senator Hathaway and Senator Muskie have been long supporters of Dickey Lincoln Dam on the St. John River. We will make a decision, I will make a decision, on the dam after August. We have an environmental impact statement that will be coming to me, I believe, on August of 1978. And until that time comes, I will not decide whether or not to put my request for that dam in the 1980 fiscal year budget. As you know, we did put enough money in the budget this year to do the basic research and the preliminary planning for it and to complete the environmental statement. But I will not decide that until after August when I get the statement about the environmental impact.

BUSSEY: Thank you very much.

CARTER: Thank you. [Applause]

BAIRD: Wayne Baird of Bangor, Maine. Mr. President, may I just say that I want to thank you for your support and recognition of the courage and contributions of Senator Hathaway in coming to the state of Maine. [Applause] You have been accused, unfairly I believe, of sending Congress too many legislative proposals. I'm concerned that if this argument gains increasing acceptance, that Senator Kennedy's plans and yours for some form of national health insurance will be kept on the back burner. As you know, it's been over 30 years since Harry Truman first proposed that the United States join the other progressive countries in the Western world in protecting its low and middle income citizens, in providing its low and middle income citizens some protection from unexpected medical costs that wipe out savings and financially ruin families. My question, Mr. President, is how long will it be before Congress and the Executive Branch finally join hands in providing protection to those citizens who cannot afford adequate medical care? Thank you.

CARTER: Thank you. [Applause] As you know, I've been in office now for 13 months and most of the problems that affect our nation, you know, I inherited. And I think that this past year has been a good opportunity for us to address those difficult questions. Energy, we've never had a comprehensive energy proposal put forward. Welfare reform, which the House is now working on with its special committees involved. Reorganization of the federal government, the establishment of a new Department of Energy, the economic stimulus package which was so successful last year in bringing down the unemployment rate. In fact, the unemployment rate dropped about 3% in New England, from an average of about 8 ½ % down to about 5 ½ %. We've also, on the foreign field, gotten deeply involved in the Middle East in a comprehensive settlement effort and the Panama Canal treaties, a very difficult political question, that are not popular, but a crucial to our nation. And I know that Congress has been hard at work trying to deal with these questions and so far their final decisions have been very good on all these matters. I will present to the Congress before the end of this session legislation on a national health insurance program. We've been working on this now for about a year. It is accurate to say that until we get the energy legislation, welfare, tax reform, tax reduction out of the Ways and Means Committee in the House and the Finance Committee in the Senate, on which, you know Senator Hathaway serves, I don't think they can handle the health care question. I've met with Senator Kennedy

on this subject and my guess is that his subcommittee will begin, his committee will begin working, early in the summer or late in the spring. But we will present to the Congress a comprehensive a health plan before they adjourn this year. And I would guess that next year would be the time for the Congress to take action on this legislation.

BAIRD: Thank you, Mr. President.

CLARK: Mr. President, my name is James Clark and I reside in a Herman, Maine. Mr. President, I realize that you have a national commission studying the nation's mental health needs and that that Commission will report you around April 1st. The anticipated report of the Commission notwithstanding, would you please tell us tonight some of the specific improvements that you would like to see in the nation's system of mental health care?

CARTER: As you know, before I was President I was Governor of Georgia for four years and my wife, Rosalyn, and I both undertook the mental health program in our state as a major new task. We were successful then in putting into effect a strong preventive care program and an attempt through that and through education in the prenatal months of a mother's life, and also an early stages of a child's life, to prevent future mental illnesses. We also emphasized the shift away from incarceration and large mental institutions to community or community treatment centers where the retarded child or other person with mental problems could live at home, and have eight or ten hours a day to utilize what talents God had given them. I think we established about 85 of those around the state during the four-year period. In addition, we had an heavy emphasis on the problems that are caused by alcoholism and drugs. And, as you know, the foremost Senate proponent of correcting or addressing the alcohol and drug problem just also happens to be Bill Hathaway. He's been an innovator there. Particularly the effect of excessive uses of alcohol and drugs on a mother before a child is born. My wife is heading up the commission that you referred to, that will make a report to me in April. One of the things they asked for was a heavy increase in research and development funds, even in the new upcoming budget and we've advocated, I think, \$39,000,000 to start a much more heavy research program in mental health. So I would say that that on a federal level, we would emphasize these major things, as similar to what we did when I was Governor of Georgia. And many other states are already doing these things. We have a need for increased funding. We had a Title 4A Program, as you know, a while back where local people could set up in an abandoned house or storefront a place for retarded or other mentally afflicted people and we had a good response there. I think once you give a local group an image of what can be done, almost every family knowing some person with a mental problem can help. So I would say, prevention, research and development, a combination of treatment in the physical and mental health field, an increased use of prior medical personnel and even non trained personnel for rehabilitation and care, the utilization of federal funds to match local and private funds and state funds in setting up community treatment centers, those are some of the things that will be part of a new program. But I'll have to wait until my wife gets through with the Commission in April before I can give you a better answer than that.

CLARK: Thank you, Mr. President.

HUGHES: My name is Joe Hughes and I live in Bangor. Mr. President, how do you feel about federal aid to parochial schools?

CARTER: Thank you very much, Joe. Well, within the bounds of the Constitution of the United States, and the ruling of the federal courts, I'm in favor of it. We have, in our own state while I was Governor, authorized the payment of a certain amount of state money to students who went to any of our colleges in the state, whether they were of state-owned or related to religious institutions. And this was declared constitutional in our state and we did it. We also are providing textbooks and other assistance to students in parochial schools. I think that's completely legitimate. As you know the Congress is restrained in its passage of legislation on that subject because the Supreme Court and the federal courts have ruled that direct aid to religious institutions, even including schools, is prohibited. I think it would take a constitutional amendment to completely open up that subject, so I would say to summarize it within the bounds of federal court and constitutional prohibitions, I would be in favor of giving aid to the parochial school students whenever possible. [Applause]

HUGHES: Thank you.

CARTER: Joe, thank you for that easy question. I appreciate it. [Audience laughs]

BURR: Mr. President, my name is Bobbie Burr and I'm from the canoe city of Old Town, and on behalf of the 5th Street residents, I would like to welcome you to Maine. The Democratic Party has long proclaimed that they are defendants and champions of the poor, the oppressed, and the elderly. I would like to know how you as a leading Democrat of the country can equate the fact, on the one hand, that the House and the Senate has either done away with or decreased drastically any aid for these people and on the other hand has granted themselves a continuous cost of living raise.

CARTER: I think that under a Democratic or Republican presidents there have been substantial increases in the salary and the other benefits of members of the Congress. And the same thing is applied to the top of federal employees. I'm sure that it's been the case with state employees and others who serve in local government. I think that we have done a great deal to help the elderly and those who were unemployed, and those who have been suffering from chronic poverty. The Democrats were the ones who initiated Social Security. The Republicans, unanimously, with one exception, voted against Social Security. The Democrats were the ones that advocated a minimum wage when it was only 25 cents an hour. The Republicans voted overwhelmingly against it. The Democrats were the ones who initiated rural free delivery of mail to farmers and isolated families. The Republicans voted overwhelmingly against it. The Democrats initiated Medicaid and Medicare, the old age of programs that we presently have in existence. The Older Americans Act was co-authored by Bill Hathaway and in many cases the Republicans voted overwhelmingly against. This past year, we initiated a strong economic stimulus package and I think our economy was helped greatly. I just pointed out a few minutes ago that the unemployment rate in New England which had been eight and a half percent when I took office, dropped to five and a half percent in one year. I can't predict that downward rate is going to continue, I don't know about the future. But we will have going to the Congress next week from me a recommendation for thirteen billion dollar continuation of the Comprehensive Education and Training

Act because the Democrats have always felt that people who don't have great wealth ought to have an opportunity for vocational training and education tied directly to a job. We've advocated more than doubling public service employment and greatly expanding jobs for young people and I think you know that the Civil Rights Act, who initiated and passed by a Democratic President working with a Democratic Congress. We've got our faults in the Democratic Party but neglecting old people, unemployed people, poor people, young people, is not one of our faults. [Applause]

BURR: Thank you, sir.

[Applause]

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Mr. President, my fifth-grade class would be upset if I didn't say hello for the fifth-grade class of Hichborn Middle School in Howland, Maine. I would, my question is, since the ice hasn't been broken yet, since our Land Claims case, well, set a precedent across the country, I would like to know that will other states have to be as lucrative in the giving of land and money as we are in the state of Maine? [Applause]

CARTER: As you know, the Indian Claims Case in the state of Maine was initiated, I think about 1971, when copies of old treaties were discovered and the Indians felt that they had a legitimate claim in court. Under the laws of our nation, the Interior Department is responsible for Native Americans and is obligated to defend and to protect and even intercede in court on behalf of the Indians. And the Attorney General is required to represent the Secretary of Interior in that relationship. When I came into office a year ago, this case had been continuing for a long time. And if you think back a year, you can remember that almost every property owner in Maine were, was in danger of not being able to transfer their own property or to buy additional property because no one could get a clear title even to their own land because of a threat of the Indian lawsuit. Well obviously I've got as much as I can handle as President, and I could recognize very clearly that there are more non-Indians and there are Indians in Maine, and so politically, there's no advantage in trying to resolve a question of this kind. I could have washed my hands of it and said let the people of Maine sweat it out. But I felt then that there was a need for us to resolve it fairly quickly, and we've been working on it for a year. I sent the best lawyer I know up here to work with it, Judge William Gunther, and he worked out an agreement that he thought was fair that the Indians rejected. Later, I got Eliot Cutler from Bangor Maine, knowing your people, to come in and take over as a negotiating head of a negotiating committee. What we've worked out, I think it's a very good resolution. The Indians have accepted it. And what it says is that anybody in Maine that owns less than 50 thousand acres of land will no longer have to worry about lawsuit attacks on their rights or deeds to their own property. That's an agreement that I reached on behalf of the American people and the Congress will have to ratify. The only ones left still not resolved are 14 landowners in Maine who have more than \$50,000 and the state of Maine itself. What we have negotiated doesn't put any obligation on those large landowners, nor the government of Maine. The Indians have said if you want to accept it, fine. We are ready to accept it on those terms. But if the Governor of Maine or the 14 landowners don't want to accept it, they have three choices. They can either continue to negotiate, they can accept the agreement that we've worked out and have an end to it, or they can stay in court and litigate. I have no preference about it. I don't have any personal interest

in it, as you well know. But I thought it was good to get this question out of the way as quickly as possible to let the people of Maine in two-thirds of the area of your state stop worrying about possible future lawsuits about which they know very little and over which they had very little control. So I think I've done my job as well as I could and we have not imposed the will of the Executive Branch on the state of Maine at all. The government of Maine is still completely free to do anything it chooses. [Applause] One other part of your question, how many other states will be in a similar condition, I don't know. My own preference is it the Executive stay out of it and let, you know, either the Interior Department representing me and the federal courts settle it. But I felt that in this particular case so many citizens were adversely affected in Maine that it was a special case. But I hope that this will be the only instance of this kind in which I as President will be involved.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you.

MEADOWS: Mr. President, I am Ed Meadows. I live in Hampden, Maine, just down the river from Bangor. You're certainly correct that we in New England are much concerned with the dilemma of energy sources and supplies in this region, and for that reason, references to wood energy in your opening statement were very heartening. However, we know that up until this point that the ERDA administration has not been particularly concerned or convinced about the potential for great regional impacts and a balance of payment and other benefits that wood energy could have. My question is, therefore, what specific steps will your administration now take to ensure that wood energy plays a more prominent role in federal energy policy?

CARTER: Last November, I think, maybe December, I had the state Forester from my own state come up to Washington to meet with me and to meet with the head of the American foresters who works in the Agriculture Department to expedite research and development in and the use of wood for energy. About two-thirds of the state of Georgia's covered with forests. A lot of that forest land is suitable for paper pulp or timber, mostly they're softwood or pines, poplars. But we have thousands and thousands of acres of land that's not good for pulpwood, nor for timber, construction, that would be perfectly suitable for fuel. And there are some fast-growing species of trees, as you know, that will give us a replenishable supply. The problem is the cost of harvesting lumber. We're now experimenting with chippers that that can take a whole tree and run it through the chipping machine in the forest, load it on dump trucks that can take it directly to the railroad siding and with vibrators on the side of the box cars, can haul substantial quantities of that material to major plants nearby. And I think that this is a subject that needs more attention. Jim Schlesinger has been to the White House specifically to discuss this with me and we will increase our research and development effort in this use of wood far beyond what we've done it in the past. I can't give you an exact figure yet or what will be advocated, but it will be a top priority for me because I know firsthand how valuable wood is. But if you, I've got your, well if you if give me, before we leave, I'll give one of my staff members your mailing address. I'll get Dr. Schlesinger to give you in writing a more specific answer while spelling out in detail what projects we have underway now and what we advocate for the future.

MEADOWS: Thank you very much. We appreciate your understanding of this issue as a scientist. [Applause]

PORTER: Mr. President, my name is Dave Porter from Hampden. I am also a teacher, I'm a science teacher at Weatherbee Junior High School. As I understand it, you are planning to recommend implementing a separate Department of Education. What benefits do you feel that this will have on our educational system?

CARTER: There is already a bill in the Government Organization Committee under Senator Ribicoff to set up a separate Department of Education. When I first went into government I was on a local school board. I ran for the Georgia Senate and I was chairman of the university committee and in the Education Committee when I was Governor, I would say I spent 25 percent of my time, at least, working on improvements in education. Since I've been President, we have a cabinet meeting every Monday morning for several hours and then I meet with my cabinet officers, two or three of them individually each day. I doubt that I've spent 1/2 of 1% of my time dealing with educational matters as President. Education is buried deep within the same Department as a Health and Welfare which are the more dominant matters of interest, at least in Washington. And I believe that in that process our education is neglected. There's a tremendous opportunity in our country to get back to basic education. We've got too many people I think going into the 4th 5th 6th 7th and 8th rates it can't even read and write. And we've got too many vocational, technical schools, career training programs, high schools even colleges turning out students that are not accurately matched in their learning capabilities with the jobs that are available when they graduate. There's very little correlation between jobs that need to be filled and the product of our educational institutions. I think that this is also a matter that ties very closely to employment and the comprehensive education training programs. You know, working with both private employers and also with the state and local governments, as well as the federal government, where you can have a combination of training in education. I've just advocated recently a tremendous increase in scholarships, in loans, grants, and work-study programs for college students. The federal government is just now getting involved in that process. We also have a real need to tie together the training and education programs for the mentally afflicted Americans or those who are slow learners. And in many ways I think the federal government ought to give more attention to education. I think the control of the education system ought to be at the state and local government. I don't want to get the federal government in the controlling of any colleges or high schools or grammar schools or kindergartens. But I just would like to have as President a much more sure sense that I'm devoting an adequate amount of my own time to bringing about a raising of educational standards in our country. We spend too much money and get too little education benefits back from it. And I think a separate Education Department or agency with that one single responsibility would give education the high visibility on a national level and the voice of the President promoting better education that I don't think will ever be possible with education buried in Health, Education and Welfare.

PORTER: Thank you very much.

SMITH: Mr. President, my name is Mary Smith and I'm from Bangor. During your campaign for president, you made a firm commitment to put more women in decision-making positions should you become president of the United States. I was on the state steering committee for the 51.3 Carter-Mondale campaign. Do you feel that your administration has in fact put more women in decision-making positions than your unenlightened Republican predecessors? [Applause]

CARTER: Yes, at the Executive level of government, we've got I would say at least three times as many women now as we had before. We still don't have enough. The General Counsel for the Defense Department is a woman. Juanita Kreps, the head of the Commerce Department, as you know, is a woman. The person who's in charge of all the Housing and Urban Development programs, of Public Works programs, is also a woman. And we've had the first of women appointed as US attorneys and also women, you know, being considered and appointed for federal judgeships. I think that we have a difficulty in that it's hard to locate women with proven records in business administration or local or state government administration or in the federal government that we can promote into a major job because they've been discriminated against for so long. But we have in the regulatory agencies as well, one of the top regulatory agencies, appointed women in major positions of responsibility. Compared to what my predecessors have done, we've done an excellent job. Compared to what we can do, we have not yet done so well, but we're doing better every day.

SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President. [Applause]

SHAY: Mr. President, Morris Shay, 36 Grove Street, Bangor. Mr. President, there's been a lot of talk in recent years about the role of the Federal Reserve Board and its impact on our economic welfare. How do you envision the Fed's role under your new chairman, Bill Miller, and do you feel that they will be of help to you as you try to meet your goals?

CARTER: The Fed should always be independent and not subservient to a President. I think, I'm sure that you are well aware, that that the President, the Congress, and the Federal Reserve Board, have a joint responsibility under our legal structure. I, as President, for instance, can with my cabinet make many administrative decisions that concern the rate of spending of money, what month the money is spent, what part of the country the money is spent in. I can propose the overall budget figures and the Congress quite often complies within reasonable limits with the President's proposal. The Congress has an equivalent responsibility. For instance, in the tax laws, they can modify very quickly the tax laws giving an instant rebate, which has a profound effect on the economy. And at the same time, the Federal Reserve in controlling the flow of money into and out of the banks, can determine how much money is extant at one time, so indirectly control the interest rate. So I think those three can balance one another. I had a good working relationship with Arthur Burns, and I have a great respect for him. I think he did a good job. As you know, his major concern was inflation, but I think that under his administration, which was combined with a Democratic Congress and Democratic and Republican Presidents, including myself, the inflation rate continued to grow up and I think the interest rates last year went up too much. I don't say that in criticism of him. But I think Bill Miller will be an outstanding person. I felt it was time to bring in a tough, competent business leader into the Federal Reserve Board System and not just a professional economist, or even a banker. Bill Miller is someone who is intimately familiar not only with business management but he also understands international trade problems. And he's been one of the most dedicated and unselfish public servants I've ever known in trying to enhance job opportunities for minority groups, young people, Vietnamese veterans, and so forth, working with private business. I think Bill Miller will bring a very well balanced approach between controlling inflation on one hand, enhancing the value of the dollar overseas with a sound international trade practices, and at the same time he has a heartfelt commitment to cutting down the unemployment rate. Also I think

that Miller will be much more inclined to at least consult with me and the Congress perhaps than Chairman Burns was because he's a younger man he's coming in and he knows that he has a lot to learn, as do I. So without any criticism of Arthur Burns, I think that we will have a very good administration of the Federal Reserve Board under Bill Miller.

SHAY: Thank you very much.

CARTER: Thank you.

McDONALD: Mr. President, my name is Bill McDonald. I'm a Master Sergeant in the United States Air Force and I live here in Bangor, Maine. My question, Mr. President, is what are your feelings on the proposal to close Loring Air Force Base?

CARTER: When the decision is made, probably later on this year, almost surely later on this year, I'll make a judgement as to what I think is best for our country. It's a defense with attention to the efficient use of money and obviously with a strategic advantage, in case we are attacked over the Arctic Circle in a war. Under the previous administration, when President Nixon I believe was President, maybe President Ford, a decision was made to close Loring Air Force Base or to cut it down substantially. Ed Muskie and Bill Hathaway recognized that in addition to environmental questions and defense questions and federal budget questions there's a major additional factor of economic damage to the northern part of Maine if Loring Air Force Base is closed. I have asked Secretary of Defense Harold Brown to reassess the decision made by the previous administration about Loring. And I've told him to take into consideration not just environmental questions and defense questions but also the economic impacts on Maine of closing Loring Air Force Base. I don't know what their decision will be when it's recommended to me, but I do know that there's a much better chance now to keep Loring Air Force Base open because of the interest of your Senators your Governor and others, and because of my interests, that there was before. But I can't promise you at this point that I'll keep Loring Air Force Base open at its present full strength. But if there's any doubt whatsoever, about the overall balanced impact, then my inclination would be to maintain Loring at as high a strength as possible, but I'll have to wait until I get the recommendation before I know the final answer.

McDONALD: Thank you, Mr. President. [Applause]

VICKERY: My name is Elizabeth Vickery. I live in Orrington, Maine. Mr. President, during your election campaign you stated you were against using federal funds for abortion. Congress has recently passed a restrictive Hyde Amendment. Could you give me your view of HEW's liberal interpretation of this amendment?

CARTER: I do not favor, and I have not favored, the use of federal funds to finance abortions. I am willing to use federal funds if the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest. I think though that this should be administered in such a way that women are not encouraged to lie about it and to use that legal Congressional mandate as an excuse for abortions when no rape or incest has taken place. And if it appears to me and to Joe Califano, who feels the same way I do about the question, that the ruling is being abused and that women who have not actually been raped or had a pregnancy caused by incest,

then I would favor a tightening up of those HEW regulations. I think we ought to be very strict about the administration of the law and the ruling. [Applause]

PENOBSCOT TRIBE MEMBER: Mr. President, my name is Francis [?]. I am a Penobscot Indian, full-blooded. I live at Indian Island, Maine. Question, would you veto any attempt by the Congress to abolish the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indian Land Claims suit?

CARTER: I doubt that I'll face that prospect. I can't imagine the Congress abolishing a lawsuit by statute. I would, I would say yes, I would veto such legislation. Now, let me add one other thing, because I'm not sure I understand all of the meaning of your question. If I felt that the suit had been resolved in a fair way, say based on the settlement that Indians have already agreed to, then the lawsuit would no longer be necessary. But I would not take away the rights of the Indians that have already been negotiated by short-circuiting the process with federal legislation. Is that what you meant? In other words, if the lawsuit is successful and negotiated and Indians accept the negotiation, then the lawsuit would no longer be needed, is that correct? Did I understand your question right?

PENOBSCOT TRIBE MEMBER: Would you veto any attempt by the Congress to abolish the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indian Land Claims suit?

CARTER: The answer is yes. I would veto any legislation that would try to resolve the whole Indian Claims question just by abolishing your suit. Yes, I would veto that.

PENOBSCOT TRIBE MEMBER: Thank you. [Applause]

MATHESON: Good evening, Mr. President. My name is Marie Matheson and I live in Bangor and I attend John Bapst High School. My question for you tonight, sir, is whom do you consider contributes more to the welfare of our country, a coal miner or United States Senator? [Applause]

CARTER: Well as you know there are coal miners who are now United States Senators, and there are peanut farmers who are now United States presidents, so I don't think you could say who contributes more. Quite often, when someone does become a United States Senator it's because in their own profession, whether it be a college professor or schoolteacher or a farmer like myself, or miner, or perhaps an engineer or business executive or lawyer, they have shown leadership qualities. And they've either been in the Congress or been a governor and proven to be a good representative of many people and, and because of a trust that they've built up among people who know them, they've been sent to the United States Senate in a much more responsible job. Obviously, a U.S. Senator has more impact as one person on our nation's attitudes and perhaps its welfare than one individual or coal miner would. But that doesn't mean that coal miners, as a collective group, are not very important. I think each person in the eyes of God is of equal importance and I would guess that many coal miners, if they never go away from their homes more than ten miles, could do as many or more great things in the eyes of God, and their families, and those who know them, than even a president could, so it's hard to say who would be the greatest. [Applause]

MATHESON: Thank you.

LEWIS: Mr. President, my name is Cathy Lewis and I'm a resident of Veazie, Maine. My question for you is with the recent news concerning defaulted governmental educational loans, will there be new and stricter requirements when applying for a government guaranteed loan?

CARTER: For college education?

LEWIS: Yes.

CARTER: The answer is yes. In the comparison of federal employees' names with students who have deliberately defaulted on loans, we found many people who are now drawing a good government salary who just did not pay their student loan. And Joe Califano is now requiring those federal employees to pay off their loan without working a hardship on them and their families because of too high of payment per month. One of the things that has endangered the entire college aid program has been the deliberate cheating by college students off the taxpayers when they signed a contract, if you will lend me money to get my college education I will repay it, and let that money go to help another student. And because of a loophole in the law, many students would finish college and immediately declare bankruptcy, so they would not have to prepay the loan. I don't have any sympathy for a student who does that on purpose and I think we ought to do everything we can to collect those loans when they've been made in good faith and received in good faith because the ones who suffer are the taxpayers in general and also other students who could benefit if that first student did his or her duty.

LEWIS: Thank you. [Applause]

CORVEY: My name is Karen Corvey and I live in Bangor. Mr. President, I am a second grade teacher at the Abraham Lincoln School in Bangor. My class and Donna Chappitt's class have been studying about the many facets of a president's job. Our second grade children would like to ask you these questions. What part of your job is the hardest? What part of your job do you enjoy the most? And do you get dizzy flying in Air Force One? [Audience laughter and applause]

CARTER: Can I take my choice? [More laughter] No, I don't get dizzy flying an Air Force One. Sometimes on a long trip with a lot of stops and not much rest and time zones changing, you know I can't say that I'm particularly in charge of all my faculties, but I don't really get dizzy. I think the most enjoyable thing that I have to do as President is just to realize the tremendous history that has preceded me in the White House and what our nation stands for, and the difficulties in challenges that have faced the American people, and the courage and strength and the cohesiveness of Americans in overcoming those difficulties. Every single president has lived in the White House except George Washington. The White House was built while he was president. And I walk through the White House sometimes, you know, alone, and see the portraits there of Thomas Jefferson and his little writing case and go in the Lincoln Bedroom where the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, and think about the difficult times they had. And the time of Harry Truman and Franklin Roosevelt when we fought the Second World War and Woodrow Wilson at the conclusion of the first world war, and I about the strength of our country. So I think the most gratifying thing is feeling that the American people have trusted me, that I'm part of this tremendous nation, and that I share a heritage and a history and a future in the greatest country on earth. It's a very reassuring thing. I think obviously the most difficult thing is to recognize the

limitations of a president's power. There are so many things that I would like to do instantly that take a long time. But I think in general that frustration that I feel is a good thing. The balance of power between presidents and governors, between the president and the Congress, between the Congress and the courts, although it's frustrating, it also is good. There are some difficult decisions that I have to make. The SALT treaties with the Soviet Union. I would like to be able to eliminate nuclear weapons from the face of the earth and prevent other countries and [Applause] and I would like to prevent other countries from developing explosives that don't have them now. And I would like to see the Middle East peace negotiated and you know I would like to see a good health insurance program and welfare reform in the state and the federal government, or rather reorganized. The tax system reformed. I have to negotiate and work with the Congress and sometimes I'm impatient. But then the more I've gotten to know the individual members of Congress, the more I see that they have a special experience and an expert knowledge that I don't have and they bring up questions that I haven't thought about so I have to be very cautious about how I move forward. In general though, I would say that that I have enjoyed being President. Our family is close together now. We enjoy the house where we live in [laughter]. It is convenient to my working place and the salary is very good and the perquisites are nice, and I think the reception of the American people has been, has been good so far. We've addressed some very controversial questions and I feel that I've got adequate support from the American people. So I think the most of enjoyable thing is knowing that I'm part of a great nation. The most difficult thing is the limitations that are built in to a president that makes his actions checked and balanced with others, both internationally and domestically, but I think it's one of the greatest jobs I've ever had. [Applause]

CORVEY: My second graders thank you very much, Mr. President.

CARTER: Tell you second graders to come and see me and Amy.

CORVEY: They would love to. We've talked a lot about Amy and they really would like to meet her.

CARTER: You bring them to Washington I'll be glad to see them. [Applause]

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good evening, Mr. President. I would like to ask the question on employment as far as handicaps are concerned. Are we going backward or forward?

CARTER: I think in the last 12 months in carrying out the mandates of the Congress with the implementation of employment standards in the federal and state, local governments and also in private industry, that we've made the greatest step forward in ensuring handicapped Americans' rights that we've ever taken. I think most of the groups that represent handicapped people agree that this is true. It applies not only to jobs and to educational opportunities, to special education grants and loans that are available, but it also applies to physical facilities, the design of buildings, the design of buses and other transportations available. So I think that we've made a major step in the last 12 months, not because I initiated it, but because we carried it out, a decision that Congress had made before. So I think we're moving forward with the handicapped.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Mr. President, please send our fondest wishes to your wife and we love you.

CARTER: Thank you very much. [Applause] I love you, too. [Applause continues]

ARRUDA: Hello, Mr. President. My name is Jeff Arruda and I'm from Bangor and I attend Bangor High School. Mr. President, don't you think that it's contradictory to sell arms to Middle East countries when you're pushing for peace?

CARTER: No. [Audience laughter.] And I'll tell you why. I have promised, and I will carry out my promise, to cut down year by year the quantity of arms sold in the, to overseas markets. We'll obviously have to meet our treaty obligations with NATO and with Japan and with New Zealand and Australia. Other than that, though, each year the amount of arms we sell will be reduced. We have already begun discussions with other arms suppliers, France, Belgium, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, to try to get them to join with us in this commitment. So far, we are moving on our own. We have made some progress. Later on this year, the United Nations will have a general disarmament conference and many of those leaders that I just described to you will be speaking at the United Nations, and may, I may go and make a keynote speech there myself. In the meantime, the Soviet Union is selling tremendous quantities of arms, very advanced in nature, in Ethiopia, in Libya, Iraq and Syria and formerly they sold large quantities of arms to Egypt. Our historic commitment in the Middle East has been to keep Israel strong and secure. And obviously we are honoring that commitment. The Saudi Arabians have very close relations with us, as do the people of Iran, and as you know, they are between Israel and the Soviet Union, a very highly tense part of the world. We've never before sold Egypt any weapons that could be used in an attack. The F5-Es, which I have asked the Congress, I will ask the Congress next week to sell to Egypt, are not nearly so advanced as the F-15s and F-16s that Israel is getting. And no one could think that the F5-Es could challenge an F-15 or F-16. But you have to remember that we cannot abandon our own friends in the Middle East. If we did, Egypt would soon be overrun, from Libya or perhaps even from Ethiopia, and we cannot afford to let that happen. I might say in closing, that it's not a matter of confrontation between Saudi Arabia and Egypt on one hand, and Israel on the other. We're trying to negotiate a peace settlement there and I think we have an excellent chance to succeed this year. But Egypt has to be able to meet the threat from other sources as well. So we're doing three things, to recapitulate, we're trying to get other nations to join in with us in cutting down the sale of advanced weapons around the world, unilaterally we are cutting down the quantity of arms we sell overseas, at the same time though we have to meet the legitimate defense needs of our allies and friends so that they will be secure.

ARRUDA: Thank you very much, Mr. President. [Applause]

HOLMBERG: Mr. President, Joan Holmberg, Maple Street, Bangor. Each state is currently undergoing much debate and legislation over malpractice insurance due to the problem of increasing premiums from the increasing financial awards. How do you feel the federal government could help in this dilemma which might in a long run be able to keep down the cost of medical care?

CARTER: One of the things that has been done in some states is to have a three-person board that acts as a mediator for a given hospital community. Where the doctors agree and the hospital agrees and the patients agree that when they go into the hospital if there is any malpractice involved and the patients

suffer therefrom, that the patients would choose one member of the negotiating board, the doctors would choose one member, and perhaps either the courts or those two would choose another. And instead of going into a lawsuit where the doctors might suffer from unscrupulous lawyers, that they would be negotiated between the patient and the doctors, and a fair payment made. That's one legal procedure that has been used in some areas. When I was in Rhode Island earlier today, I visited a health maintenance organization which goes an even greater step and I strongly favor this kind of health care. They have in Providence, Rhode Island, about 28,000 people who come in individually, or who work in small or large factories. And they pay a certain amount of money per a year for a family and they have their health needs taken care of on a continuing basis. The emphasis on the prevention of disease. Every adult goes into the clinic where I think 25 doctors work and they have a physical examination complete once a year. A small baby would go in every three weeks, or perhaps every four months when they get to be two years old, I don't know the exact statement, but they form kind of a partnership between the patients on the one hand and the doctors on the other, where the doctor's best interests are served if the patient doesn't have to go to the hospital. The average cost for excellent health care there, including hospital costs, is about half the cost for Americans on an average, and they use the hospital about half as many days per year as the average American does. At this time, as you know, it is sometimes to the advantage of the doctors, it's sometimes to the advantage of the hospital, and the patients pay in the long run, through insurance premiums, to put the patient in the hospital where they don't need to go at all. My wife recently, for instance, had a tumor in her breast and it turned out later to be benign, not malignant, and she went to Bethesda Hospital and she was only there about an hour and she came back home but if she had been in Plains and had gone to the local hospitals chances are that she would have been admitted to the hospital and stayed a day or two because the doctor and the hospital would want her to stay there. So I think that that this kind of approach to health care, prevention, outpatient care, a constant relationship between the patient and the doctors, is the best broad-range prevention against abuses from malpractice suits and I think it would help to prevent malpractice itself. The old family physician is not the common thing now. In the situation I described in Rhode Island, though, each family can choose their own doctor, so there is a close relationship there. So I think that's a free enterprise system, it's not even a federal program. If we have a national health program in the future, I think this would be kind of a pattern that might be used, either using insurance companies or some other means to manage the financing. So I'd say those are two approaches that could serve to control malpractice suits. The last point I'd like to make is that this is kind of a regional thing. The most severe of threats to positions on malpractice is I think it's in California and it's kind of a it's kind of a community attitude that if a malpractice case does arise that enormous payments of fees can be collected from the doctor or the hospital above and beyond the actual damages that incur on the patient. So I can't give you, I can't give you the answers, I don't know the answers, but that's two ideas that just come to mind on the spur of the moment.

HOLMBERG: Thank you.

CARTER: I'm not a lawyer or doctor. Thank goodness I'm not a patient right now, and so I'm not very well qualified... [Applause]

PERDIKAS: Paul Perdikas, 94 Third Street, Bangor, Maine.

CARTER: What was your last name?

PERDIKAS: Perdikas.

CARTER: Okay.

PERDIKAS: Want me to spell it?

CARTER: No, that's all right.

PERDIKAS: Okay, I was wondering what are you going to do about the Cyprus situation over there in Cyprus? They're having a lot of hard times, you know, and most other Presidents haven't done anything. We're all depending on you to do something. We hope you will.

CARTER: Thank you. The first thing I did when I got to be President was to talk to Cyrus Vance, our Secretary of State, to see what we could do about the Cyprus question. It's very complicated, as you know, because in the past, the leaders of Turkey and Greece have not been willing to communicate with each other. And they have nations that are sharply divided on the argument over the Aegean Sea rights, both the rights of passage of ships and also possible future exploration for oil in the area between Greece and Turkey, in the ocean. I sent our Clark Clifford to represent me and he met with Demirel and Caramanlis. At that time recently Turkey has had a new election and Ecevit has been elected now the Premier of Turkey. Recently Secretary Vance visited both Ecevit and Caramanlis and urged them to make progress toward a resolution of a Cyprus question. They have now agreed to meet personally with each other in March, this coming month. This is a very good step in the right direction. We have pending now mutual defense treaties between ourselves and Turkey, ourselves in Greece. They've now been concluded finally by Greece, Turkey and the Congress. And I would hope that if we could make major progress toward a Turkey-Greece settlement of the Cyprus issue using the local administrators there working with Turkey and Greece, that we could proceed to bring Greece and Turkey back into NATO. So we're doing all we can. I think that there's a limit, though, to what the United States can do because the Turks and Greeks a highly independent people. And the right progress has already been made now, the scheduling of direct talks between the heads of states in Turkey and Greece.

PERDIKAS: OK, so as long as you do your best, you'll win in 1980.

CARTER: Well, if we could get that done, it would be a great step forward. Thank you.

THIBODEAU: Mr. President, my name is Jerry Thibodeau from Bangor. Do you believe that abortion is the taking of human life? If so, will you be taking any steps to protect this vulnerable life?

CARTER: Yes, I do. I have come from a state and from a family which is highly religious. Georgia and Texas had the two very stringent anti-abortion state laws that were stricken down by the Supreme Court while I was Governor. As soon as that was done, under my leadership as Governor, Georgia passed the strictest abortion law that was permissible under the Supreme Court ruling. As you know, the ruling in effect said that no state could prohibit abortions during the first 13 weeks and later in the second and third trimesters, that they could prevent abortions. Georgia took that stand in a very strong way. As

President, you know I favor, as I said earlier, the prohibition against the use of federal funds for abortions, recognizing that under the constitution of United States as interpreted by the Supreme Court, states are authorized to permit abortions under certain circumstances. So I do think that abortions are the taking of a human life and I have done and will do all I can to minimize the need for abortions. I might say that there are things that can be done to prevent an unwanted birth. An education program, the availability of contraceptives for those who believe or in their use, family planning programs, more easy adoptions, and so forth, and we are moving on those areas, too. I might add one other sentence and that is that Joe Califano, who is the head of HEW, is a very devout Catholic, as a matter of fact. I happen to be a Baptist, and his views on abortion, I believe, are the same as those I've described as mine.

THIBODEAU: Can I add one thing?

CARTER: Please.

THIBODEAU: I think the effect of the Supreme Court decision has been to legalize abortion on demand for the full nine months of pregnancy, rather than is just the first trimester.

CARTER: But the point I was trying to make is that a state, if it wishes, can prevent abortions in the second and third trimesters. A state cannot prohibit abortions, I think, in the first trimester.

THIBODEAU: Thank you.

CARTER: That's what I understand about it. Yes, ma'am.

URBANSKI: Mr. President, I'm Marie Urbanski from Orono. We agree on one fact, at any rate, I agree with you that life is unfair, and my question is this, Mr. President. Would you be willing to use the power of your office, the great moral power that you have, perhaps make a fireside chat to awaken the nation to the importance of extending the time for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment?
[Applause]

CARTER: I can't promise you the fireside chat, but I do favor the extension of a time for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. My wife Rosalyn is in Tampa, Florida, today trying to get the Equal Rights Amendment ratified in Florida. This ruling has been issued by the Attorney General Griffin Bell that it would be constitutional to extend the time for ratification. And legislation will be considered by the Congress. The Congress would have to pass such legislation. I support it, and if it is passed, I will sign it with pleasure.

URBANSKI: Thank you, Mr. President.

COOKSON: Mr. President, I'm Chris Cookson and I'm from Brewer. My question is I would like to know where you plan to get oil if the Mideast refuses to sell to the United States?

CARTER: Okay, this will have to be the last question, but Chris, that's a good question to ask and it's one that's very important to your area of the country, in particular. As you know, the OPEC nations, the oil

producing and exporting nations, are not all Arab countries. And I think it's accurate to say that that now we have a much better relationship with the Arab countries than we had in 1973 when an embargo was placed on our country. We've now gotten to be very close, for instance, to Saudi Arabia, the major oil-producing nation of the world. And Iran is a very good friend of ours and so are others. Outside of the Middle East, there are major suppliers of oil. England is now able to export oil from the North Sea. We will be building up Alaska oil production to about two million barrels per day. Mexico has great reserves of oil that they are just beginning to explore for. Venezuela provides a major portion, a large portion of our oil, that's a country in South America, as you know. Nigeria is an OPEC nation in Africa. We now have a very good relationship with Nigeria. Formerly, when Secretary Kissinger was in office as Secretary of State, we had such bad relationships with Nigeria that they wouldn't permit him to come into the country to visit, but now we have good relationships there. So I would think that there's much less of a chance for the OPEC nations in the Middle East to declare an embargo against us because we're better friends than we used to be, secondly, many nations outside of the Middle East who are OPEC nations can provide us with oil. We have a major supply of oil in our own country, we've produced now about 50%, a little more than 50%, of what we use, and we have strict conservation measures that could be built up. One other point is that we are putting in the ground, in underground storage, in salt domes about 500 million barrels of oil which will be built up by 1985 to a billion barrels of oil. And this is enough to carry us over for about eight or ten months even with a total embargo against our country. I will do all I can to prevent an embargo, and as I said many times during the campaign, if another nation declares an embargo against us, I would declare our total embargo against them, and not ship them any food, [Applause] not ship them any weapons, not ship them any spare parts for the weapons they've got, and I've made that very clear. So I believe that we won't have to face that prospect. If we do, with our reserve supplies and other supplies of all from non middle-east countries, we can get by. We also, obviously, have large supplies of coal and natural gas that can be substituted with hardship, but we could get along.

Let me say one other thing before I have to leave. This session has been very helpful to me. It's a very enjoyable thing for a president to get out of Washington and I forgot to tell that to the second grade but to come back and visit with friends who took me in when I was a lonely, unknown candidate is a very fine experience for me as President, and I thank you for it. You've had some very challenging, very difficult questions. I don't claim to know all the answers and part of my answers have not been adequate for the question that you've asked but I really appreciate your hospitality here and I would just like to remind you of one thing in closing. We do have problems, economically, politically. Sometimes we've been embarrassed with our government officials' actions, but we are still the strongest nation on earth. We're still the best nation on earth. We're still the greatest nation on earth and I think all of us would serve ourselves and our country well to think about the good things and the positive things and the tremendous future that we have as Americans. Thank you very much. [Applause]

LOCAL COMMENTATOR 1: And the crowd comes to its feet as President Carter steps down from the podium surrounded by Secret Service men. He comes up and starts shaking hands of the persons in the front rows, again, smiling, people rushing forward to try to shake the President's hand. Bangor High School Band striking up in the background. President pausing, and shaking hands, speaking with people

who are lining up now all across the front of the Bangor Auditorium an effort to get closer to the President. Continues to smile turns and begins to work his way now toward the exit door. This is the same door that he entered from, which would be on the far side of the auditorium, over toward where the new addition is being built. People now are standing up on chairs reaching forward trying to shake the President's hand. Generally a rather enthusiastic reception of the people here in Bangor. I don't think I noticed the crowd starting to get restless until somewhere along by the 22nd 23rd questioner this evening, now, and some interesting questions at that, too.

LOCAL COMMENTATOR 2: I think one of the most interesting questions I heard was the one from the gentleman from Old Town who said he was a full-blooded Penobscot. When he asked the President if he would veto the type of legislation that was actually introduced by the Maine congressional delegation last year. And that's legislation that would quiet the claims against landowners without providing any compensation to the Indians. It would have allowed the tribes only to sue for money in court and would have settled all the claims against them. And the President said if that kind of legislation was introduced and passed, he'd veto it. So, it certainly is going to send some thoughts to the Maine Congressional delegation, considering that's the kind of bill they sponsored last year.

LOCAL COMMENTATOR 1: Of all of the questions of interest, particular interest to the state of Maine, the Dickey-Lincoln Hydroelectric Power Project, the phase-down of Loring Air Force Base which we had sort of been led to believe the President wouldn't really respond to, and indeed he sort of skirted the issue. He didn't really discuss at any great length the things that are going on, leaving it generally up to the Secretary of Defense. Crowd beginning to split up, move out of the auditorium. The President has not yet departed. He is working his way slowly through the crowd, shaking hands, beaming effusively as he is known to do, and as our people are want to say. And working his way now towards the exits. I thought I heard a beep there for a moment, which would indicate this Brian Nailor is outside and ready to go to work. However, I'm not sure that through the din of the Bangor High School Band I can hear.

Let's go back and review for a moment some of the things that the President was asked back, I guess, back to the first question, which came from the gentleman from Old Town. The last day, a question about to the weakening of the, weakening of the United States economy through the actions of interlocking giant international corporations. And the President seemed to feel that one was rather eased and he received the first and the largest interruptive round of applause when he worked his way down talking about not approving of the three-martini lunch, which is the second time today we've heard that.

LOCAL COMMENTATOR 2: Well it's not only the second time today, but it's been a theme the President's been striking for the past several weeks. It's been one of his campaign themes, if you will, even though he's not up for reelection, this coming election, of course. But he certainly has been campaigning on the attempts to change the tax laws so that he says there will not be so many special advantages to the large, multinational corporations.

LOCAL COMMENTATOR 1: And that was followed by a question from a resident of Bath, how a resident from the city of Bath got drawn into Penobscot Country waters to get into the Bangor Auditorium is

unknown at this point. However, the person congratulated the president on behalf of the citizens of Bath, claiming to represent citizens of Bath, for the President's handling of the FF-G7 destroyer contract which Bath Iron Works is participating in now, adding to the ever-increasing backlog of work which Bath Iron Works is trying to accomplish. Brian Naylor has a portable radio at the outside of the Bangor Auditorium. He is going to try to catch some of the people who are leaving and ascertain their impressions of what went on here at the town meeting. Brian.

NAYLOR: Thank you, [Eric?] Outside the Auditorium with me is Secretary of State Mark Gartley, also a candidate for the Second Congressional District. [Audio fades out for a second] ... think of Mr. Carter's appearance?

GARTLEY: Well, I'm very impressed with Jimmy Carter. I campaigned for him when he was just a candidate for president. And he hasn't, the presidency hasn't changed him. He's still Jimmy Carter. He's come to Maine. He's talked to us. I think the people in this state are very fortunate to have him up here.

NAYLOR: Were you satisfied with his response on the Indian Land Claims case?

GARTLEY: I think he's demonstrated with [audio fades out and ends]

[transcript ends]

For more information about this transcript, audio recording, or other materials in Special Collections at the University of Maine, contact:

Fogler Library Special Collections
5729 Raymond H. Fogler Library
Orono, ME 04469-5729
207.581.1686
um.library.spc @ maine.edu