

# Debate preview — Carter, Ford on the issues



Compiled by  
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Editor's note: The following articles have been compiled from a Common Cause report — "How They Stand."

## Inflation, Jobs, Unemployment

Carter states that "there are more humane and economically sound solutions (to inflation) than forced recessions and high unemployment." He will battle inflation through a steady flow of jobs, reform of government regulations

Carter plans to use zero-based budgeting to help curtail government spending. "I think that a strong emphasis toward comprehensive planning and carefully prepared budgets can reduce large deficits and therefore contribute to controlled inflation. Carter will insist that every government program that spends taxpayers' money justify itself annually.

Carter opposes across-the-board permanent wage and price controls but says he does favor standby controls, which the President can apply selectively. "I wouldn't hesitate to use them if I had to."

Carter wants to implement a national food policy that would do away with food shortages and excessive price increases that hit hard at the average consumer. "We should maintain a predictable, reasonably small and stable reserve of agricultural products." Carter wants to strive to give farmers incentives to produce abundantly.

Carter feels a major priority of the next administration has got to be employment. "My own belief is that we can get the adult unemployment rate down to 3 per cent or the overall rate down to 4.5 per cent without any adverse effect on inflation." Carter hopes to strengthen the private sector and not guarantee "everybody that they will get a job from the federal government." Carter places emphasis on establishing government incentives for private industry to hire the unemployed and retain them, increased government commitment to funding of on-the-job training, more efficient employment services to match people and jobs and better manpower training programs.

Carter says the federal government "has an obligation to provide funds for useful and productive public employment (to) those whom private business cannot or will not hire." He will do this through summer youth jobs and accelerated public works programs targeted to national needs. Carter favors channeling of jobs into the private sector whenever possible.

## Role of the Federal Government

Carter emphasizes the need for more efficiency in the federal government to make it more responsive. "We must give top priority to a drastic and thorough revision and reorganization of the federal bureaucracy, to its budgeting system and to the procedures for analyzing the effectiveness of its services."

He favors the extension of the federally funded revenue-sharing programs to the states and calls for an "increase in the annual funding level to compensate for inflation and enforcement of the civil rights provisions of the bill to guarantee against discriminatory use of the funds."

Carter has proposed a transportation policy for the nation that especially helps railroads and will increase efficiency and effectiveness of the total system. "We need a national comprehensive transportation policy, and it is obvious that the savings in fuel, operating and pollution costs from intensive use of railroads should provide them with a competitive advantage over other forms of transportation."

Carter emphasizes the need for coordinated government planning in the economic sector. "It is imperative that we study ways to anticipate problems rather than await their arrival and once again react with ill-conceived solutions in a crisis environment." Carter applies this theory to planning for unemployment, inflation, the environment and natural resources allocation.

## Energy and Environment

Carter is extremely critical of the nation's lack of a definite energy policy. "It is unlikely that we will be totally 'independent' of oil imports during this century. It is certainly not possible or necessary for us to be energy independent by 1985, but we should be free from possible blackmail or economic disaster which might be caused by another boycott." Carter feels the nation must be more conservative in its energy use and favors strong conservation measures including mandatory energy reduction guidelines. He is also opposed to a large, single company owning all phases of production and distribution of oil. "To insure maximum protection for our consumers during the coming years of increasing energy shortages, anti-trust laws must be rigidly enforced. Maximum disclosure of data on reserve supplies and production must be required."

Carter favors the use of alternative energy sources with less emphasis on nuclear power. "U.S. dependence on nuclear power should be kept to the minimum necessary to meet our needs. We should apply much stronger safety standards as we regulate its use. And we must be honest with our people concerning its problems and dangers." Carter sees an immediate need to make the most of our coal supply without harming environmental quality. "... We must invest in improving mining efficiency, cleaner combustion technology and a better transportation system for moving coal to its end-users."

Carter places environmental quality above development concerns. "Whenever there is a conflict between development and environmental quality, if it can be resolved, I will be for the project; when it can't, I would go with the environment. I want to make it clear, if there is ever a conflict, I will go for beauty, clean air, water and landscape."

## Health Care

Carter sees the present health care system in need of drastic reorganization. He proposes a national health insurance program "financed by general tax revenues and employer-employee shared payroll taxes — which is universal and mandatory." Carter calls for a streamlining of the "bureaucratic sprawl" of federal health agencies. His program would allow for some private administration of the program, but rates for both institutional and personal medical care would be set in advance. Carter's program would be phased in over a four-year period.

## Welfare Reform

Carter recognizes three distinct categories of poor people — the unemployable poor, the jobless poor and the working poor. "No person on welfare should receive more than the

working poor can earn at their jobs; strong work incentives, job creation and job training should be provided for those on welfare able to work; family stability should be encouraged by assuring that no family's financial situation will be harmed by the breadwinner remaining with his dependents; efforts should be made to have fathers who abandon their family be forced to continue support; the welfare system should be streamlined and simplified ... (and) persons who are legitimately on welfare should be treated with respect and dignity." Carter calls for a uniform, nationwide payment with adjustments made for differences in living costs between different areas. The program would be partly subsidized by the government, but strong work incentives would be placed within the structure.

## Abortion

Carter is opposed to a constitutional amendment prohibiting abortion, although he opposes it personally. "I don't think government should do anything to encourage abortion. I think abortion is the result of a failure of measures designed to prevent unwanted pregnancies and to induce the mother to carry the unwanted child through to delivery. I think we should do everything to have better education, family planning, contraceptives, if desired."

## Busing

Carter opposes mandatory busing. "This well-intentioned idea has contributed little to the equalization of education opportunity, has often resulted in a decreased level of integration over the long term and has divided and sidetracked our efforts toward improving education for all children." Carter emphasizes that he would support any decision the Supreme Court handed down even if it conflicted with his personal beliefs. He does not favor a constitutional amendment to prohibit busing and adds, "Ultimately, I think the best solution is voluntary transfers for students who want it and adequate representation of minority leadership in the administration of a school system."

## International Relations and National Security

Carter feels the Nixon-Ford administration evolved a secretive "Lone Ranger" foreign policy, in which it was

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necessary to "forego openness, consultation and a constant adherence to fundamental principles and high moral standards." Carter calls for a reordering of foreign policy priorities where high-level negotiations with communist powers take second place to reestablishing a working relationship with our close allies.

Carter thinks the Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty talks (SALT) have succeeded "largely in changing the build-up in strategic arms from a 'quantitative' to a 'qualitative' arms race." Carter wants to get down to the real issue of the SALT negotiations, "the actual negotiation of reductions in strategic forces and measures effectively halting the race in strategic weapons technology."

Carter wants to improve relations with developing nations through two means: first, by widening opportunities for consultation between democratic nations and the developing nations, and second, by assisting those nations that are in the direst need by lowering trade barriers and increasing support to international agencies that supply capital to Third World nations.

Carter plans to cut defense spending by implementing efficiency in the military structure. "Without endangering the defense of our nation or our commitments to our allies, we can reduce present expenditures by \$5 to \$7 billion annually." Carter thinks the United States has too many military bases overseas and wants to reduce gradually the troop commitments of the United States to NATO territory in Europe. Carter is concerned about the United States' role as arms salesman to the world and said, "We and our allies must work together to limit the flow of arms into the developing world."

Carter comes down hard on military intervention and covert intelligence actions. "We must respect the results of democratic elections and the right of countries to make their own free choice if we are to remain faithful to our own ideals. We must learn to live with diversity, and we can continue to cooperate, so long as such political parties respect the democratic process, uphold existing international commitments and are not subservient to external political direction." Carter sees intelligence agencies as responsible for supplying information for foreign policy decisions, not overthrowing governments or making secret foreign policy.

On the subject of detente, Carter feels the relationship must be one of both cooperation and competition. Carter feels that "mutual advantage must be apparent, or the American people will not support the policy."

In other foreign policy areas, Carter would "be willing to renegotiate the payment terms on the (Panama) Canal" and to delete the term "perpetuity" from the treaty. Carter favors continued economic aid to Israel and the development of an overall, long-term settlement. He feels that Kissinger's step-by-step approach in the Middle East as ended its usefulness.



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## Inflation, Jobs, Unemployment

Ford feels that federal fiscal policy is as important as monetary policy. But Ford's basic solution is that "the government must stop spending so much and borrowing so much of our money; to hold down the cost of living, we must hold down the cost of government."

Ford frankly feels that "based on past history of wage and price controls during peacetime they (price and wage controls) don't work."

As for high food prices, Ford says that "our big problem is the middle-man profit. The farmer doesn't get it, and the consumer doesn't get it," and one of the jobs of government "is to find out why there is such an abnormally high differential between what the farmer gets and what the consumer pays." Ford also says he believes Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz "is one of the finest Secretaries our country has ever had."

As for unemployment, Ford says "the best and most effective way to create new jobs is to pursue balanced economic policies that encourage the growth of the private sector without risking a new round of inflation." Ford says that "everyone who wants a job has to have a job under my administration."

He says his program is "expected to produce lasting, productive jobs—not temporary jobs paid for by the American taxpayers."

Ford opposes the Humphrey-Hawkins bill, and he vetoed the Public Works Employment Act of 1976 saying it "would

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dependence on foreign oil will go up and up."

Ford has asked for a 63 per cent increase in funding for energy conservation research and development in his 1977 budget.

As for the regulation of energy prices in this country, Ford says he "recommends the de-regulation of all new natural gas ... We have to de-regulate the exploration and development of crude oil ... We have to spend research and development money on solar energy, on geothermal energy and some of the other exotic fuels."

The energy industry, Ford feels, should be "supervised" but not torn apart. "I don't think you produce more oil or more gas by tearing apart the oil companies in the United States."

Ford strongly urges Congress to give high priority to his Nuclear Fuel Assurance Act that would provide enriched uranium needed for commercial nuclear power plants here and abroad.

Ford also proposes to create an Energy Independence Authority, a government corporation to assist private sectors in financing new energy facilities. Ford believes "greater utilization must be made of nuclear energy in order to achieve energy independence and maintain a strong economy." He also feels it is vital that "we continue our world leadership as a reliable supplier of nuclear technology in order to assure that worldwide growth in nuclear power is achieved with responsible and effective controls."

Land use, Ford says, should be left up to the state and local governments who "can make better decisions as to land use ... than the federal government."

Ford is opposed to strip mining and feels that the Clean Air Act "unnecessarily discourages greater coal production." "I pursue the goal of clean air and water, but I must also pursue the objective of maximum jobs and continued economic growth."

## Health Care

Ford is against a national health insurance plan saying "we cannot realistically afford federally dictated national health insurance providing full coverage for all ... I do envision the day when we may use the private health-insurance system to offer more middle-income families high quality health services at prices they can afford."

Ford is asking Congress to enact the Financial Assistance for Health Care Act which will consolidate Medicaid and 15 categorical federal health programs into a \$10 billion block grant to the states. He says the public will receive more money for health needs under this act.

## Welfare Reform

Ford considers the welfare system a "mess" and has proposed "a sweeping overhaul." He blames all levels of government for the poor shape of the system today. He said it invites abuse and "worse, we are wasting badly needed resources without reaching many of the truly needy."

Some proposed changes include: Presidential authority to modify federally assisted programs for which there is a means test, e.g. Food Stamps, Aid for Dependent Children and Social Security. Ford also wants authority to modify administrative procedures and eligibility requirements.

## Abortion

Ford says he is against abortion "on demand" but believes that it is justified in cases of rape and where the woman's life is in danger.

Again Ford pledges to uphold the laws of the land but has proposed a Constitutional amendment leaving to the states the task of re-defining limits on abortion.

## Busing

While pledging to uphold the laws of the land, Ford also feels forced busing to achieve racial balance is not the right way to get quality education.

Ford says he believes "that quality education can be enhanced by better school facilities, lower pupil-teacher ratios, improvement of neighborhoods and possibly by other alterations."

## International Relations and National Security

Ford feels that the United States must remain a dominant world power: "In the final analysis, as the framers of our Constitution knew from hard experience, the foreign relations of the United States can be conducted effectively only if there is strong central direction that allows flexibility of action. That responsibility clearly rests with the president ... "Our military forces are capable and ready; our military power is without equal. And I intend to keep it that way."

As for arms control and the SALT agreement, Ford says, "I can assure you we will not give more than we get," but he wants to continue working toward a SALT II agreement.

Ford feels that "we should help people less well-off than ourselves" for two reasons. One, humanitarianism, and two, "in order to help ourselves in the implementation and execution of our foreign policy." Ford also believes the United States "should have a meaningful presence in substantial parts of Africa" and believes that we should not sit "idly by while the Soviet Union and Cuba seek control and dominate significant parts of Africa."

In military spending, Ford believes we should "reverse" the past trend of cutting the defense budget. He does, however, advocate "trimming off all the fat that we can."

Ford insists that work continue on the Trident submarine, the B-1 bomber, cruise missiles and ballistic missiles. He also feels the U.S. Navy should retain its superiority over the Russian navy.

Ford feels electronic surveillance in the United States for foreign intelligence purposes should be permitted upon consent of the federal courts. The opening of mail sent to or from suspected foreign agents engaged in spying and sabotage or terrorism should also be permitted upon consent of the federal courts.

Ford has asked Congress to make it a crime to plan or carry out an assassination of a foreign official in peacetime.

As for detente, Ford says that "we have achieved a two-way street" and expects that the policy will continue.

Although "detente" has been officially dropped from Ford's vocabulary he says detente means "a fervent desire for peace—but not peace at any price. It means the preservation of fundamental American principles, not their sacrifices."

Ford is very strong on the Panama issue. "I can simply say—and say it emphatically—that the United States will never give up its defense rights to the Panama Canal and will never give up its operational rights as far as Panama is concerned."

The President's budget calls for a \$500 million reduction in military aid for Israel in fiscal 1977. He allotted \$1.5 billion for 1976. According to Ford, the 1977 budget request "is fully adequate to meet Israel's future security requirements."