

perspective

Stop Jimmy Carter

All but one of the "Stop Carter" campaigns has stopped trying to stop Carter, virtually assuring the former Georgia governor of a first-ballot victory at the Democratic convention next month. Carter now needs fewer than 200 delegates to push him over the magical 1,505 mark.

Once nominated, Carter's chances of winning the November election look excellent. Experts say the fierce Republican primary battles between President Ford and Ronald Reagan have left that party drained and divided, both spiritually and financially. A recent NBC poll shows that nearly half of Ford's supporters say they will switch parties and vote for Carter if Ford does not win the nomination. An equal percentage of Reagan backers say they will back Carter if Ford wins the nomination.

Unless either Ford or Reagan can miraculously unify the Republicans between August and November, the next President of the United States is likely to be Jimmy Carter, a peanut farmer from Plains, Ga., a former governor of that state and a man about whom we can be sure of frighteningly little else.

Carter's stands on controversial political issues are deceptively non-committal. He is quick to note deficiencies in the status quo ("The tax system in this country is a disgrace to the human race"), but he is unwilling to bind himself to specific reforms ("We have to be cautious," he advises his aides. "We don't want to offend anybody"). As one political observer put it, Carter is a man of "hard generalities."

That Carter gets away with being ambiguous can be credited to his campaign style. Publicly, he is compassionate and self-effacing, "a regular human being, just like you." He speaks to his audiences about his "intimate relationship with the people of this country," and he pledges that "when I'm President, the country will be ours again."

But some of Carter's close associates are pointing increasingly to what they call a dichotomy between the candidate's public image and his private self. The Jimmy Carter they see away from the rostrums and the crowds is a self-righteous, unsmiling man of dogged determination who reacts violently and stubbornly to those who oppose him. Carter prides himself on not being a part of the Washington establishment, but many fear that such devil's

advocacy makes for poor bargaining power in politics, where strong allegiances are often necessary to push through legislation. But some of Carter's close associates are pointing increasingly to what they call a dichotomy between the candidate's public image and his private self. The Jimmy Carter they see away from the rostrums and the crowds is a self-righteous, unsmiling man of dogged determination who reacts violently and stubbornly to those who oppose him. Carter prides himself on not being a part of the Washington establishment, but many fear that such devil's

advocacy makes for poor bargaining power in politics, where strong allegiances are often necessary to push through legislation. Tough opposition from Congress could be disastrous for Carter, who is characterized by one of his aides as being "a lot like Nixon" in that "he doesn't like to hear things he disagrees with." And that, in turn, could be disastrous for the country.

Jimmy Carter says that the American government is "as good and honest and decent and truthful and fair and competent and idealistic and compassionate and as filled with love as are the American people."

Unfortunately, Carter fails to explain how such a good people elected such a bad administration the last time around, or what will prevent them from repeating the same mistake in November by electing him.



Flying the friendly skies

by Jim Thomas

GREENVILLE, S.C.—June 6 is a date I'll never forget. It was the first time I ever flew on Precarious Airlines. If you've flown Precarious before then you undoubtedly have a few tales of your own to tell; if you haven't it's something akin to a bird trying to fly with a wounded wing... it can stay in the air but it's wobbly.

Now lest you think I haven't the stomach for flying I've flown all over the Eastern half of the United States, across the Atlantic Ocean and survived a hairy ride in a World War II fighter plane. But Precarious is something else.

Even before I left Greenville I had an uneasy feeling about the trip home. I had heard all of the old jokes in Unk's Education 41 class—"Precarious is a very democratic airline, it elects its pilots before each flight"—and could not help wondering about their veracity.

Still, I approached the flight with an open mind. Surely, Precarious wasn't as bad as they said—you know how people exaggerate. I had almost convinced myself that there was nothing to worry about when the plane pulled up—a two-engine prop job. I felt my heart in the bottom of my shoes. It looked like a relic from the Lindbergh days.

There was a sense of impending doom among the 12 would-be passengers. The people I had been chatting with stopped talking, no doubt trying to remember whether they had included everyone in their will or if there was time to buy flight insurance. I could see the headlines in *The Tar Heel*, "UNC student dies in plane crash."

"I took this flight because I didn't want to get my family up at 6 o'clock for me to catch a morning flight," one woman said in a grandmotherly voice, "now I wish I had."

"I'm going to Buffalo," said her seat companion with obvious

discomfort. "I won't get home until 11 o'clock (nine hours). I didn't know we made four stops (Charlotte, Raleigh, Rocky Mount and Wilson) before we got to Washington. I would have gotten on another flight."

My reason for flying Precarious was because the only Eastern flight available wasn't until 7 p.m. and, with an 1½ hour layover in Charlotte, I wouldn't get back to Chapel Hill until 10:30.

Finally, I decided this was silly; if it was so dangerous the FAA (Federal Aviation Authority) wouldn't let Precarious off the ground. So having reassured myself I climbed up the steps to the plane.

As soon as I came through the portal into the cabinet, my self-confidence deserted me. The cabinet was so small there wasn't a first class section, and the aisles were so narrow you had to turn sideways to pass. To add to the discomfort, the engine was almost sitting in my lap, I had to shout to talk to the person next to me.

Much to my surprise, the takeoff was smooth. I thought, maybe all those people were only kidding after all. But then it started to happen. The plane dropped suddenly, I felt my stomach do flip-flops.

I was just settling back in my seat when the plane dipped again. My knuckles turned white as I gripped the armrest tighter. A few seconds later, another lurch forward. I noticed a few of the other passengers were getting restless. I was starting to sweat so I took off my coat, and loosened my tie. Everything was fine until we ran into a crosswind, either that or Thor hit us with his hammer. By this time, I felt like I was on the *Poseidon Adventure*. I felt my forehead, it was hot. I raised my hand to push the button overhead to call the stewardess, but I couldn't make it. I was exhausted. I felt like I was going to die. Just bury me in newspaper, that'll all I ask.

I knew I couldn't hold out any

longer. I reached for the disposal bag in front of me. My eyes started to water. I couldn't focus on anything. I thought, Jesus! How unglamorous, how disgusting... how embarrassing.

Then it came.

In all its effervescent beauty, into the bag clearly marked, "For Your Convenience"—steak, eggs, lettuce, tomato, bacon, potatoes, peas, watermelon, etc....

Through the mist I saw the girl across the aisle reach for her bag. Everyone was looking at me. The stewardess came by and asked if there was anything she could do. "Yeah, let me off the plane," I mumbled. She smiled and said we would be landing in Charlotte in a few minutes.

Now it was only coming up in spurts. By the time we got to Charlotte I was feeling a lot better. I was glad to get my feet on the ground. The stewardess came back and said apologetically, "When you fly that low (under 5,000 feet) you run into a lot of turbulence. The rest of the flight should be a lot smoother."

My throat was dry as I asked for something to drink. The stewardess brought me a ginger ale. "This should help settle your stomach," I thanked her gratefully.

As she promised, the rest of the flight was uneventful. My stomach did a flip-flop once when the plane dipped briefly, but other than that it was smooth. I'm glad. I don't think I could have taken it again.

By the time the plane landed at the Raleigh-Durham Airport I had recovered completely. My face was full again, my hands steady and I had stopped sweating. Except for my disheveled hair, you'd have never known what I'd just been through.

Just as I was about to get up from my seat, the stewardess' voice came over the speaker. "Flight 545 has now come to an end. We have enjoyed serving you. We hope the next time you fly, you fly Precarious."

No thanks, gimme the Wright brothers.

the tar heel

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