

GOODBYE TO JIMMY?
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Now, beyond mid October and with the presidential election less than three weeks away, we are being swamped with poll results and other opinion-sampling studies that seem to change the outlook of the race almost daily. The news one day will have Reagan ahead, and then five days later will have Carter regaining a lead that he will promptly lose again in the next week. The wise men of press and television have been unable to line up wholeheartedly behind any of the candidates. There is no Jack Kennedy for them to admire, there is no Richard Nixon for them to hate; they are displeased with Carter, they are contemptuous of and afraid of Reagan, and their early hero, John Anderson, has let them down and faded away. A result of the opinion molder's indecision is that they have failed to create a groundswell for any of the candidates. They would like to have someone other than Carter as the next president, but they don't want it to be Reagan.

From the beginning it was our opinion that James Earl Carter was not presidential material and that his subsequent election was a one-time fluke due to a combination of political circumstances not likely to be duplicated a second time around. He was not well liked, nor was he an effective governor of Georgia during his one term in office here. Had he run for reelection in 1976 against the present Georgia governor, George Busbee, he would certainly have been soundly defeated. Carter has survived his four years in the White House in much the same manner nationally as he did earlier locally. When he leaves the office, he will leave reluctantly, but in his own mind, absolutely convinced (as he was here in Georgia on leaving Atlanta) that he has been a good president and it will be the people who will not have appreciated all of his great accomplishments. In general, he has failed to generate enthusiasm and support within his own party, and his effectiveness in dealing with a Democratic Congress has been as limited as was his effectiveness here with his own local lawmakers. His foreign policy has inspired no confidence among the leaders of foreign countries, and he is viewed almost universally abroad as a very weak president. Under the Carter administration, federal taxes have increased, bureaucracy has expanded, government spending has increased, unemployment has increased, and inflation has almost doubled. In the opinion of one observer, this unusual achievement is one that "no other president has been able to accomplish in this century."

The media pundits tell us that our choices in this election are poor ones—that Reagan would be a disaster, that Anderson has no chance, and that Carter may be the least of the evils. No matter what the polls say, or what the day-to-day fluctuations in popularity of Carter or Reagan seem to indicate, we think the widespread and general dissatisfaction with Carter and his performance is being underestimated and that this will

be reflected when the final voting begins. Right now it seems to us that Reagan will be our next president. He will inherit the same mess that Jimmy Carter did, only now it is a mess compounded and increased by the ineptitude of Carter's administration. If the nation can survive four years of Jimmy, it should be able to survive four years of Ronnie and perhaps, even survive in better fashion. At any rate, we won't be unhappy at all to say goodbye to Jimmy, to Rosalyn, to Amy, to Billy, to Miss Lillian and to the rest of the Carter clan.

As one bumper sticker puts it:

WHY NOT AN ACTOR—WE'VE ALREADY HAD A CLOWN

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