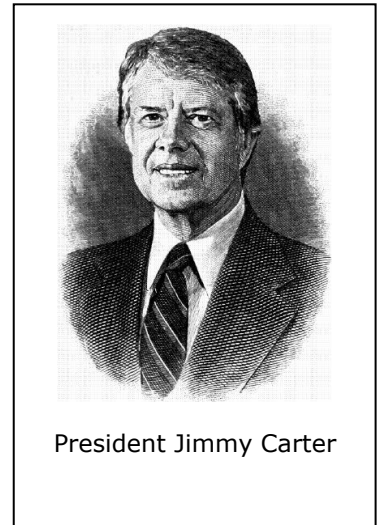


Ninety-Fifth Congress

Jan. 4, 1977-Oct. 15, 1978

Administration of Jimmy Carter

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Historical Background

During the 95th Congress, the newly elected President Jimmy Carter, in hopes of stimulating a faltering economy, initially proposed an increase in Federal spending combined with a small tax cut. After considerable reshaping, Congress completed action on the administration's proposals in May 1977 and sent a \$34.2 billion tax cut bill to the President, who signed it into law. Energy shortages proved to be an equally compelling issue facing the nation during the 95th Congress. In August 1977, Carter's request for a new Cabinet-level Department of Energy was approved. Subsequently, five laws comprising the Nation's new energy policy were signed by the President on November 9, 1978. These enactments provided for economic incentives which encouraged energy conservation, established new regulatory procedures for converting industries from oil to coal, encouraged reforms in electrical utility rates, and instituted a variety of conservation assistance programs.

With the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977, Congress enacted the nation's most complex and far-reaching environmental law. The final compromises which brought about enactment of the Clean Water Act as well as the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, however, left both environmentalists and industry with lingering concerns. In passing the Housing and Community Development Act of 1977, Congress incorporated most of President Carter's housing and urban aid proposals for low and moderate-income families. Refugees from southeast Asia who fled to the United States following the Communist takeover of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia after 1975 were given an opportunity to become American citizens under an October 1977 law. On November 1, 1977, legislation was signed

House	Senate
Majority Party: Democratic (292 seats)	Majority Party: Democratic (61 seats)
Minority Party: Republican (143 seats)	Minority Party: Republican (38 seats)
Other Parties: None	Other Parties: Independent (1 seat)
Speaker of the House: Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill, Jr.	Senate Majority Leader: Robert C. Byrd

raising the minimum wage in stages from \$2.30 to \$3.35 an hour over the next three years.

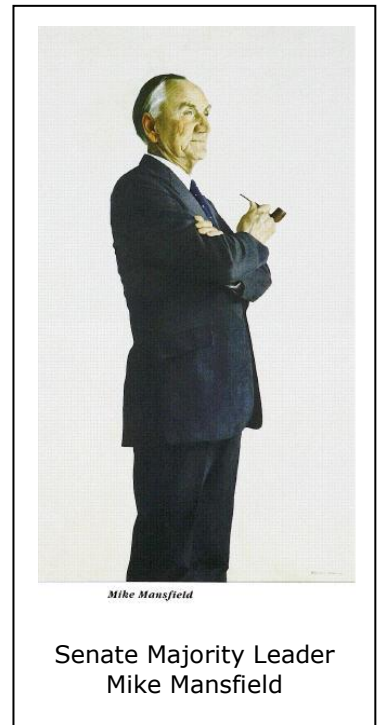
In his 1978 State of the Union Address, President Carter stressed the importance of creating a national energy program and taking action to continue economic recovery and achieve further cuts in unemployment and inflation.

In April 1978, a law which in effect banned mandatory retirement before 70 and removed the existing mandatory retirement age (70) for most Federal workers became a reality. Supporters of the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act of 1978 were finally able to gain approval for their bill during the waning hours of the 95th Congress only after agreeing to major changes which they previously had considered totally unacceptable. Also, in October 1978 Congress produced legislation prohibiting discrimination against pregnant workers and required that pregnant workers be covered by disability and health insurance plans and provided for a non-voting delegate to the House of Representatives from American Samoa.

The new Food and Agriculture Act of 1977 greatly strengthened Federal farm price support programs. A new Federal farm lending program that became law in August 1978 boosted both the size of loans and interest rates for farmers. Two months later, legislation designed to stimulate American agricultural exports while at the same time reducing the U.S. deficit was signed by President Carter. Strict controls on the export of nuclear materials aimed at stopping the global spread of nuclear weapons were established by a bill signed March 10, 1978. During the next few days, after several months of debate, the Senate approved two treaties which relinquished American control over the Panama Canal. The first turned over the Canal to Panama by the year 2000. The second guaranteed the United States the right to defend the Canal after that date.

Focusing on the Nation's transportation concerns, Congress during October 1978 completed work on legislation that would eventually end most Federal regulation of the commercial airline industry and imposed a user tax on the Nation's inland waterway barge industry. Congress in addition approved President Carter's plan for reorganizing the Government's Civil Service Commission and extended the Older Americans Act, the basic Federal Government effort on behalf of America's 35 million elderly citizens, through fiscal 1981. A proposed constitutional amendment giving residents of the District of Columbia full representation in Congress was passed on August 22, 1978, and was sent to the States for ratification. Late in October 1978, legislation requiring detailed public financial disclosure by top officials in all three branches of the Federal Government became law. Within days, Congress also approved legislation making the papers of outgoing Presidents public property.

The first major overhaul of offshore oil and gas leasing laws in 25 years was signed by President Carter on September 18th. New procedures which allowed the Environmental Protection Agency to simplify registration of pesticides were also approved during September 1978. In an effort to curb oil spills, Congress subsequently approved tougher safety and anti-pollution



standards for tankers. Revision and extension of the massive Elementary and Secondary Education Act was completed on November 1st. Three days later, provisions were made for indigent war veterans who had not been disabled as a result of their military service to receive a 50 percent increase in their maximum pension. During the final hours of the 95th Congress, the largest national parks and recreation bill in history which authorized \$1.2 billion for more than 100 projects in 44 States, and a \$18.7 billion tax cut gained final approval.

Sources:

Carter, Jimmy. [*State of the Union. Message from the President*](#). House. Jan. 19, 1978. 95th Congress, 2nd Session. H. Doc. 95-273. ProQuest Congressional. 13211-1 H.doc.273

Carter, Jimmy. [*State of the Union. Message from the President*](#). House. Jan. 23, 1979. 96th Congress, 1st Session. H. Doc. 96-1. ProQuest Congressional. 13251 H.doc.1

Dell, Christopher and Stephen W. Stathis. [*Major Acts of Congress and Treaties Approved by the Senate, 1789-1980*](#). Government Division (CRS), Sept. 1, 1982. 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 82-156 GOV. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1982-GOV-0005

War or Peace?

Conflict in the Middle East

While the United States continued to deal with a number of difficult domestic issues during the 95th Congress, things were a bit brighter on the international stage. The policy of détente with the Soviet Union continued to pay dividends, not only by creating the conditions required for bilateral action on shared interests, but also by allowing for foreign policymakers to work on other problems. There were few diplomatic problems that seemed less likely to be resolved during this period than the middle east conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

As the 95th Congress convened, the most recent concerted attempt to achieve a breakthrough in the conflict had been the Geneva Conference of 1973, which was a UN-sponsored negotiation aimed at achieving lasting peace in the middle east, as articulated in UN Security Council Resolution 338, and called for a cease fire to end the Yom Kippur War. Though the Geneva Conference did manage to produce military disengagement agreements between Israel and Egypt and another between Israel and Syria, it did little to address the main issues in the conflict, including the territories occupied by Israel since the Six Day War in 1967 or the status of Palestinian refugees. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat had come to view the Geneva process with circumspection. As he saw it, members of the international community were more than happy to exploit an opportunity to make themselves look good and yet there was little will to do the extremely difficult work of hammering out a workable agreement. Moreover, Sadat had come to view many Arab leaders as obstructionists who had little interest in expending their own political capital to achieve a just solution for the Palestinians. So, he decided to take matters into his own hands.

In the years following the Geneva Conference, Sadat reached out to religious leaders, including the American Evangelical preacher Billy Graham and Pope Paul VI, seeking to enlist their help in crafting an international and interfaith coalition to achieve a just peace. Then, on November 9, 1977, Sadat stunned the world when he announced, during an address to the Egyptian Parliament, that he would travel to Jerusalem and speak before the Israeli Knesset. Shortly after his speech, the Israelis cosigned Sadat's unilateral announcement by issuing a formal invitation for Sadat to travel to Israel via the U.S. Ambassador to Egypt. Finally, on November 19, a mere ten days after announcing his intentions, Sadat arrived in Israel for an historic three-day visit that inaugurated the first formal peace process between Israel and an Arab state.

Coup D'états in Afghanistan

Meanwhile, heading into the 95th Congress, relations between the United States and the Soviet Union continued to warm as a result of the policy of détente between the two countries, allowing the superpowers to collaborate on shared priorities. The most significant example was the ongoing second round of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II). Begun in 1972, SALT II sought to further curtail the production and stockpiling of strategic nuclear weapons. Though the talks were fruitful and would ultimately produce an agreement signed by the two rivals, events unfolding in Afghanistan and central Asia were about to completely upend U.S.-Soviet relations and the SALT II treaty, now effectively stillborn, would be abandoned by both countries.

In Afghanistan, in April 1978, the government of President Mohammed Daoud Khan was dissolved when the President was killed along with most of his family during a coup d'état engineered by members of the communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). Daoud himself had brought about an abrupt upheaval in Afghan governance only five years earlier when he seized power from his cousin, King Mohammed Zahir Shah, in a bloodless coup July 17, 1973, engineered with PDPA support. Rather than appoint himself Shah as was traditional, Daoud instead proclaimed the Republic of Afghanistan with himself as President. As President, Daoud oversaw a growing proxy war between Afghanistan and its newly-independent neighbor Pakistan, largely over the issue of establishing a Pashtun homeland in Afghanistan and the long-running border dispute that Pakistan inherited from the United Kingdom. The border conflict with Pakistan, which long preceded Daoud's Presidency, had a devastating impact on the Afghan economy, forcing Afghan leaders to seek economic and military support from the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, in Afghanistan, the PDPA, which had amassed enormous power thanks to its role in the coup and within Daoud's government and its ties to the Soviet Union, was beginning to fall victim to a factionalist split between the more moderate Parcham faction and the radical Khalq faction. As the violence and discord between the two factions increased, Daoud saw it as an opportunity to bring the PDPA to heel and ordered the arrest of several factional leaders.

However, on the afternoon of April 27, 1978, military units allied with the Khalq faction of the PDPA, including tank columns and fighter jets, converged on the center of the government in Kabul. Afghans awoke the next morning

to quiet and the news that President Mohammed Daoud Khan and his brother Naim had been killed and that Khalq had orchestrated a coup and was set to remake the country in its own image. The Khalqist regime proved to be a ruthless one, introducing radical socialist reforms that would wreak havoc on the economy, and adding to that an unprecedented level of political repression in the country. The level of dissatisfaction with the new government continued to grow among the populace throughout 1979, with a series of uprisings occurring in Afghan cities including Herat and Kabul. In December, Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan to shore up the friendly, communist regime along its border in central Asia, sparking global protests and fomenting a religiously inflected insurgency that would be supported with a seemingly limitless supply of funds and armaments provided by the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan.

Source:

Mark, Clyde R. [Arab-Israeli Peace: Sadat-Begin Negotiations](#). Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division (CRS), Feb. 9, 1979. 96th Congress, 1st Session, IB78083. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1979-FND-0016

Economic Trends and Conditions

During 1977 the economy was showing some signs of recovery. Four million new jobs were created, an all-time record, and the number of unemployed dropped by more than a million. Unemployment was the lowest it had been since 1974 and the percentage of Americans employed was the highest it had been since World War II. In 1977 the rate of economic growth increased by nearly a full percentage point over the prior year and in 1978 the output of goods and services advanced by more than 4%.

In 1978 unemployment declined to less than 6 percent. Gains in employment and output produced strongly rising incomes for most Americans during 1978. Disposable personal income adjusted for inflation, rose by more than 3 percent during the year. The income of farmers, which was severely depressed in 1976 and 1977, showed a marked recovery.

President Carter also continued to express concerns about inflation and the skyrocketing health care costs. The rate of inflation, which had been at about 5% at the end of 1976, rose to just below 7% in 1977. Over the course of 1978 the inflation problem worsened. Consumer prices rose by about 9%. Increases in wages rose, productivity gains declined sharply, and the costs of production moved up.

Sources:

Carter, Jimmy. [State of the Union. Message from the President](#). House. Jan. 19, 1978. 95th Congress, 2nd Session. H. Doc. 95-273. ProQuest Congressional. 13211-1 H.doc.273

Carter, Jimmy. [State of the Union. Message from the President](#). House. Jan. 23, 1979. 96th Congress, 1st Session. H. Doc. 96-1. ProQuest Congressional. 13251 H.doc.1

Constitutional Amendments

Proposed Constitutional Amendment Providing for Representation of the District of Columbia in Congress. If ratified this amendment would have provided for the District of Columbia to be treated as a State for the purposes of congressional and Electoral College representation and ratification of proposed amendments to the Constitution. Would have repealed the 23rd amendment to the Constitution which allows District residents to vote for President and Vice President, while limiting District representation in the Electoral College to that of the least populous State. Proposed August 22, 1978. (92 Stat. 3795-3796). This proposed amendment was not ratified by the States.

Source:

Dell, Christopher and Stephen W. Stathis. [Major Acts of Congress and Treaties Approved by the Senate, 1789-1980](#), Government Division (CRS), Sept. 1, 1982. 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 82-156 GOV. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1982-GOV-0005

Major Treaties

Panama Canal Treaty. Granted to the United States rights to regulate the shipping and to manage, operate, maintain, improve, protect, and defend the Panama Canal until December 31, 1999, when Panama assumed total control and responsibility of Canal operation and property. Provided that Panama's participation in the management, protection, and defense of the Canal would continue to increase during this period. Established a Panama Canal Commission to operate and manage the waterway and employ a U.S. citizen as its administrator until January 1, 1990, when a Panamanian would assume that position. Prohibited the construction in Panama of any new Canal except as the two countries might agree and prohibited the United States from negotiating with other nations for construction of a new route in Latin America except as the two countries might agree. Provided that Panama would receive an annual payment of \$10 million from Canal revenues and an additional amount of up to an additional \$10 million if revenues exceed expenditures. Concluded September 7, 1977. Ratified by the Senate March 16, 1978. ([SED-77-S385-14](#))

Treaty Concerning the Permanent Neutrality and Operation of the Panama Canal. Declared that the Panama Canal would remain permanently neutral and secure and open to peaceful transit by vessels from all nations on terms of equality in times of peace and war. Provides that after the termination of the Panama Canal Treaty in 1999, only Panama would operate the Canal and maintain military forces, defense sites, and military installations within its national territory. Also provided that U.S. and Panamanian war vessels and auxiliary ships be "entitled to transit the canal expeditiously." Concluded September 7, 1977. Ratified by the Senate April 18, 1978. ([SED-77-S385-14](#))

Source:

Carter, Jimmy. [*Panama Canal Treaties. Message from the President.*](#) Department of State, Sept. 16, 1977. 95th Congress, 1st Session. Exec. Doc. N, 95-1 (Y1.95/1:N). ProQuest Congressional. SED-77-S385-14

Dell, Christopher and Stephen W. Stathis. [*Major Acts of Congress and Treaties Approved by the Senate, 1789-1980.*](#) Government Division (CRS), Sept. 1, 1982. 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 82-156 GOV. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1982-GOV-0005

Landmark U.S. Supreme Court Decisions

Village of Arlington Heights v. Metropolitan Housing Development, held that the denial of a zoning permit for low income housing in Arlington was not blatantly racially discriminatory, and therefore did not violate the Equal Protection Clause, 429 U.S. 252 (1977)

Whalen v. Roe, held that the New York State Controlled Substances Act did not violate one's privacy with its requirement to disseminate personal information to pharmacies and the state department of health in relation to the prescribing of drugs, 429 U.S. 589 (1977)

United Jewish Organization of Williamsburgh, Inc. v. Carey, held that a reapportionment plan in New York districts, which split the Hasidic Jewish population into two districts, was not in violation of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, 430 U.S. 144 (1977)

Ingraham v. Wright, held that corporal punishment in public schools is not prohibited under the Eighth Amendment, 430 U.S. 651 (1977)

U.S. Trust Co. of New York v. New Jersey, held that the repeal of a bond agreement, which withdrew railroad subsidies to encourage water-related business, was in violation of the Contract Clause and restricted public transportation, 431 U.S. 1 (1977)

Linmark Associates, Inc. v. Township of Willingboro, held that a local ordinance that banned the posting of "for sale" and "sold" signs on real estate was in violation of the First Amendment, 431 U.S. 85 (1977)

Smith v. U.S., held that in a case centered on the mailing of materials that included nudity and other sexual content, state law cannot define contemporary community standards, 431 U.S. 291 (1977)

U.S. v. Ramsey, upheld Customs Service right to open without a warrant mail entering U.S. which is reasonably suspected to contain contraband or dutiable goods, 431 U.S. 606 (1977)

Illinois Brick Co. v. Illinois, held that indirect purchasers cannot recover damages from antitrust violations, 431 U.S. 720 (1977)

Ward v. Illinois, held that the Illinois obscenity statute was not overly broad or vague, and therefore not unconstitutional, and that material that focused on sadomasochism fell within the scope of the statute, 431 U.S. 767 (1977)

Maher v. Roe, held that first-trimester abortions were only covered under Medicaid if the abortion was “medically necessary”, 432 U.S. 464 (1977)

Poelker v. Doe, held that the prohibition of non-therapeutic abortions in St. Louis was constitutional in that the state did not deny the right, only the city, 432 U.S. 519 (1977)

Trans World Airlines v. Hardison, upheld EEOC guidelines requiring employers to make reasonable accommodation for employee and applicant religious needs where this would not create an undue hardship, 432 U.S. 63 (1977)

Nixon v. Administrator of General Services, held that the Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act did not violate any of Richard M. Nixon’s constitutional rights, and that he would have to surrender his presidential materials to be used in court proceedings, 433 U.S. 425 (1977)

Wolman v. Walters, held that an Ohio code that authorized the provision of secular books, standardized testing, scoring, diagnostic services, and the therapeutic and remedial services to nonpublic schools is constitutional, though the provision of individual instructional materials and field trip transportation and services is not, 433 U.S. 229 (1977)

Bates v. State Bar of Arizona, held that an Arizona law that limited the advertising allowed by attorneys was in violation of the First and Fourteenth amendments, 433 U.S. 350 (1977)

Coker v. Georgia, held that that death penalty was considered cruel and unusual punishment under the Eighth Amendment when used as a punishment for rape charges, 433 U.S. 584 (1977)

Dayton Board of Education v. Brinkman, upheld the decision of the Court of Appeals that the Dayton, Ohio Board of Education was operating a segregated dual school system, which must not be perpetuated or re-established, and was therefore racially discriminatory under the Equal Protections Clause, 443 U.S. 526 (1977)

Pnizer v. India, held that foreign governments have standing to bring suit in U.S. courts for treble damages from U.S. firms for antitrust violations, 434 U.S. 308 (1978)

U.S. Steel Corporation v. Multistate Tax Commission, held that the formation of the Multistate Tax Compact, made up of twenty-one states with the purpose to establish and implement tax law, was not in violation of the Compact Clause, despite not having received approval in Congress, 434 U.S. 452 (1978)

Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe, limited tribal jurisdiction over non-Indians, 435 U.S. 191 (1978)

Foley v. Connelie, held that the refusal of a legal resident alien to a position as a New York State trooper was constitutional, 435 U.S. 291 (1978)

Stump v. Sparkman, held that a district court judge was within his authority to act upon a petition for sterilization, in this case from a mother for her mildly disabled daughter, and is immune from liability in the case of a suit, 435 U.S. 349 (1978)

First National Bank of Boston v. Bellotti, held that speech used to try and influence elections, in this case by corporations that were not monetarily invested, was protected under the First Amendment, 435 U.S. 765 (1978)

Marshall v. Barlow's Inc., held that searches without a warrant by the Department of Labor under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 were in violation of the Fourth Amendment, 436 U.S. 307 (1978)

Baldwin v. Fish & Game Commission, held that a Montana requirement that charged nonresidents higher rates for hunting licenses was constitutional, 436 U.S. 371 (1978)

Zurcher v. Stanford Daily, held that Fourth and Fourteenth amendments do not prevent States from issuing search warrants for evidence possessed by innocent third parties including news media, 436 U.S. 547 (1978)

Monell v. Dept. of Social Services of the City of New York, held that local government officials and organizations are liable when being sued for back wages, 436 U.S. 658 (1978)

Hicklin v. Orbeck, held that an Alaska statute that required the preferential hiring of residents over nonresidents for oil and gas industry employment was unconstitutional under the Privileges and Immunities Clause, 437 U.S. 518 (1978)

Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, found that the admissions policies of the University of California at Davis Medical School were unconstitutional because they set aside a certain number of places for non-white students, 438 U.S. 265 (1978)

Butz v. Economou, held that federal administrative officials have qualified immunity when facing challenges against their conduct, rather than absolute immunity, in the case that they are performing duties outside of adjudication or prosecution, 438 U.S. 478 (1978)

FCC v. Pacifica Foundation, held that excessive obscenity is not protected by the First Amendment and therefore could be restricted and punished when publicly broadcast, 438 U.S. 726 (1978)

Source:

Costello, George A. and Johnny H. Killian. [*Constitution of the United States of America. Analysis and Interpretation*](#). CRS, Library of Congress, Jan. 1, 1996. 103rd Congress, 1st Session, S. Doc. 103-6 (Y1.1/3:103-6). ProQuest Congressional, 14152 S.doc.6

1977 Events

- **Jan. 21:** [U.S. President Jimmy Carter grants unconditional pardons to Vietnam-era draft evaders](#)
- **Feb. 18:** The Space Shuttle *Enterprise*, NASA's testing prototype for its reusable spacecraft program, has its maiden flight—bolted atop a Boeing 747
- **Mar. 9-11:** Twelve Hanafi Muslim gunmen, led by Hamaas Abdul Khaalis, entered the District Building in Washington D.C., taking 149 people hostage there and in two other locations to draw attention to the murder of members of Khaalis's family in 1973
- **May 16:** A helicopter taking off from the Pan American World Airways headquarters in Manhattan careens sideways and crashes, killing four passengers and a pedestrian
- **May 26:** George Lucas's *Star Wars* opens in theatres
- **June 4-5:** Frustrated by poor living conditions and racial discrimination, Puerto Rican immigrants clash with Chicago police in Humboldt Park
- **June 7:** Residents of Miami-Dade County Florida vote to overturn a county ordinance banning discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodation based on sexual orientation, marking a victory for Anita Bryant's 'Save Our Children' political campaign, formed explicitly to oppose the anti-discrimination
- **June 21:** Robert Hillsborough, a gardener for the city of San Francisco, was brutally beaten and stabbed to death – he was targeted because he was homosexual
- **June 26:** A march in San Francisco protesting the murder of Robert Hillsborough and the anti-gay crusade of singer Anita Bryant draws a crowd of 200,000
- **July 13-14:** [The failure of an electrical system at Consolidated Edison of New York causes an extended blackout in New York City](#)
- **Aug. 4:** [The U.S. Department of Energy is established](#)
- **Aug. 10:** David Berkowitz, a serial killer known as the "Son of Sam," is captured outside his apartment in Yonkers, New York
- **Aug. 16:** [Elvis Presley dies](#)
- **Aug. 20:** NASA's Voyager 2 probe is launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida
- **Sept. 7:** [The United States and Panama sign the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, establishing that the U.S. will transfer control and defense of the Panama Canal to Panama after 1999](#)
- **Sept. 29:** [Soviet Union launches the Salyut 6 space station](#)
- **Nov. 8:** [Harvey Milk is elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors making him the first openly gay elected official in the United States](#)
- **Dec. 19-21:** [A dust storm in the San Joaquin Valley of California causes \\$40 million in damages](#)

1978 Events

- **Feb. 15:** Serial killer Ted Bundy is captured in Florida

- **Feb. 21:** The Great Pyramid of Tenochtitlan is accidentally rediscovered in Mexico City
- **Apr. 22:** Bob Marley and other reggae artists perform at the One Love Peace Concert in Kingston, encouraging Jamaicans to abjure the worsening political violence that gripped the country
- **Apr. 27:** Afghanistan President Daoud Khan and his family are killed by members of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) during a coup d'état
- **May 25:** A package sent to Northwestern University professor of materials engineering Buckley Crist explodes when opened by a campus police officer—the first bombing by Ted Kaczynski, whom law enforcement agents would dub the Unabomber
- **May 26:** [The first legal casino on the east coast of the United States opens in Atlantic City, New Jersey](#)
- **June 20:** [A 6.2 magnitude earthquake occurs near Thessaloniki, Greece](#)
- **June 22:** James Christy discovers Charon, a moon of Pluto, though this would be confirmed and formally announced to the public on July 7
- **July 3:** Eight countries, including Brazil, Colombia, and Bolivia, sign the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, promoting sustainable development of the Amazon Basin
- **July 25:** [Louise Brown, the first human conceived by in vitro fertilization, is born in Great Britain](#)
- **Sept. 16:** A 7.4 magnitude earthquake strikes the city of Tabas in Iran, killing 15,000
- **Sept. 17:** [The Camp David Accords framework for peace is signed by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin](#)
- **Oct. 16:** [Karol Józef Wojtyła becomes the 264th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, adopting the Papal sobriquet John Paul II](#)
- **Nov. 18:** [Representative Leo J. Ryan of California is assassinated while investigating the People's Temple religious colony in Jonestown, Guyana, spurring a mass suicide/murder in which 909 temple members are killed](#)
- **Nov. 27:** [George Moscone and Harvey Milk are assassinated in San Francisco, California](#)
- **Dec. 11:** [2 million protestors demonstrate against the Shah of Iran in Tehran](#)
- **Dec. 13:** [The Philadelphia Mint produces the first Susan B. Anthony dollars](#)
- **Dec. 25:** [Vietnam invades Cambodia](#)

Sources:

Carter, Jimmy. [Relating to Violations of the Selective Service Act, Aug. 4, 1964 to Mar. 28, 1973: \[facilitates Presidential pardon of draft evaders\]](#). Numbered Executive Orders, 1862-Present, Jan. 21, 1977. Executive Order No. 11967. ProQuest Congressional, 1977-EO-11967

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Committee on Foreign Affairs. House. [*Assassination of Representative Leo J. Ryan and the Jonestown, Guyana Tragedy*](#). GPO, May 15, 1979. 96th Congress, 1st Session, 79-H382-18. ProQuest Congressional, CMP-1979-FOA-0077

Committee on Foreign Relations. Senate. [*International Human Rights Treaties*](#). GPO, Nov. 14-16, 19, 1979. 96th Congress, 1st Session, 80-S381-14. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1979-FOR-0028

Committee on the Judiciary. Senate. [*Panama Canal Treaties: U.S. Senate Debate, 1977-78, Part 3*](#). GPO, Mar. 17, 1978. 95th Congress, 2nd Session, 79-S522-8. ProQuest Congressional, CMP-1978-SJS-0023

[*"Earthquake in Greece."*](#) Congressional Record, 95th Congress, 2nd Session (June 22, 1978) Vol. 124, p. 18484. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1978-0622

[*"A Genuine Hope for Peace in the Middle East."*](#) Congressional Record, 95th Congress, 2nd Session (Sept. 18, 1978) Vol. 124, pp. 29732-29734. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1978-0918

[*"Honoring Harvey Milk."*](#) Congressional Record Daily Edition, 112th Congress, 2nd Session (May 18, 2012) Vol. 158, p. E860. ProQuest Congressional, 158 Cong Rec E 860

Mark, Clyde R. [*Iran in Crisis: The Fall of the Shah*](#). Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division (CRS), Sept. 15, 1979. 96th Congress, 1st Session, IB79009. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1979-FND-0034

McCalip, Bernevia M. [*Legalized Gambling in the U.S.*](#) Economics Division (CRS), Aug. 26, 1980. 96th Congress, 2nd Session, 80-150 E. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1980-ECN-0034

[*"A National Tragedy."*](#) Congressional Record, 95th Congress, 2nd Session (Sept. 7, 1978) Vol.124, p. 28459. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1978-0907

[*"Public Law 95-91: Department of Energy Organization Act."*](#) (91 Stat. 565; Aug. 4, 1977). ProQuest Congressional

[*"Soviet Space Program."*](#) Congressional Record, 96th Congress, 2nd Session (Dec. 5, 1980) Vol. 126, pp. 32859-32860. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1980-1205

Subcommittee on Agriculture and Related Agencies Appropriations, Committee on Appropriations. House. [*Agriculture and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1978, Part 6*](#). GPO, Mar. 24-25, 28, 1977. 95th Congress, 1st Session, 77-H181-34. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1977-HAP-0029

Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, Committee on Foreign Affairs. House. [*1979-Tragedy in Indochina: War, Refugees, and Famine*](#). GPO, Feb. 28, Oct. 10, 17, Dec. 18-19, 1979. 96th Congress, 1st Session, 80-H381-46. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1979-FOA-0036

Subcommittee on Energy and Power, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. House. [*New York City Blackout of July 13, 1977*](#). GPO, Oct. 13, 1977. 95th Congress, 1st Session, 78-H501-57. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1977-FCH-0026

Subcommittee on Health and the Environment, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. House. [*In-Vitro Fertilization: Oversight*](#). GPO, Aug. 4, 1978. 95th Congress, 2nd Session, 79-H501-10. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1978-FCH-0030

Major Acts

Tax Reduction and Simplification Act of 1977. Set the standard deduction at \$2,200 for single persons and at \$3,200 for joint returns effective with the 1977 tax year. Adjusted the tax tables and rates to reflect the change. Extended the 1975 corporate tax cuts through 1978. Provided a tax cut to employers in 1977 and 1978 of \$2,100 (50 percent of the first \$4,200 of wages) for each new worker. Approved May 23, 1977. ([91 Stat. 126; PL95-30](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. Established an Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement within the Interior Department to develop and maintain an Information and Data Center on Surface Mining, Reclamation and Surface Impact of Underground Mining to provide information to the public and other Government agencies. Set performance standards for environmental protection to be met at all major surface mining operations for coal. Protected certain lands regarded as unsuitable for surface mining. Established a self-supporting Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund to restore lands ravaged by uncontrolled mining operations in the past. Authorized funds for each State to establish, or continue to support, a State mining and mineral resources institute at a public or private college that would conduct research and train mineral scientists and engineers. Approved Aug. 3, 1977. ([91 Stat. 445; PL95-87](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Department of Energy Organization Act. Established a Cabinet-level Department of Energy and transferred all the functions of the Federal Energy Administration, the Energy Research and Development Administration, and the Federal Power Commission to the new Department. Approved Aug. 4, 1977. ([91 Stat. 565; PL95-91](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977. Extended existing allowable levels for the three major automobile exhaust pollutants through the 1979 models, but began tightening them in 1980. Also extended the deadline for cities to meet national clean air standards from 1977 until 1982, and in some cases until 1987. Gave most industrial polluters up to three additional years to comply before facing heavy fines. Set new standards to protect clean-air areas, including national parks. Directed the Environmental Protection Agency to review the criteria for ambient air quality standards before 1981 and subsequent reviews every five years thereafter. Also established a National Commission on Air Quality, and required more than a dozen studies concerning air pollution. Approved Aug. 7, 1977. ([91 Stat. 685; PL95-95](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Food and Agriculture Act of 1977. Provided for a four-year extension of the 1973 farm bill which expired September 30, 1977. Raised target prices and loan levels for wheat, corn, and other commodities. Extended the food

stamp and Food for Peace programs and increased the Government's commitment to agriculture and research. Approved Sept. 29, 1977. ([91 Stat. 913; PL95-113](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Housing and Community Development Act of 1977. Extended the Community Development Block Grant Program for three years and authorized \$12.45 billion to fund it. Approved Oct. 12, 1977. ([91 Stat. 1111; PL95-128](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Permanent Residence Status for Indochinese Refugees. Provided an opportunity for Indochinese refugees who had fled to the United States after the Communist takeover of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and resided here for two years to apply for permanent resident alien status, the prelude to naturalized citizenship. Also extended the Federal resettlement aid program begun in 1975. Approved Oct. 28, 1977. ([91 Stat. 1223; PL95-145](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Fair Labor Standards Amendments of 1977. Raised the Federal minimum wage rate from \$2.30 an hour to \$2.65 on January 1, 1978, to \$2.90 on January 1, 1979, to \$3.10 on January 1, 1980, and finally to \$3.35 on January 1, 1981. Approved Nov. 1, 1977. ([91 Stat. 1245; PL95-151](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977. Prohibited any U.S. citizen and certain foreign issuers of securities, from making payments to a foreign official for the purposes of influencing the policy of a foreign country. Required any company whose securities are listed on a U.S. exchange to meet certain accounting practices. Approved Dec. 19, 1977. ([91 Stat. 1494; PL95-213](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Clean Water Act of 1977. Authorized an appropriation of \$4.5 billion in fiscal 1978 and \$5 billion annually for fiscal 1979 through 1982 for the Nation's sewage treatment construction program. Approved Dec. 27, 1977. ([91 Stat. 1566; PL95-217](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Presidential Powers During Wartime and National Emergencies. Authorized the President to regulate commerce after declaring a national emergency in response to any unusual and extraordinary threat to the United States that has a foreign source. Approved Dec. 28, 1977. ([91 Stat. 1625; PL95-223](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978. Provided for a more efficient and effective control over the proliferation of nuclear capability. Directed the President to begin negotiations with other countries to establish an international nuclear fuel source, thus reducing the incentive for countries to build certain kinds of fuel processing plants that would increase the risk of nuclear proliferation. Empowered the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to make independent judgments of the proliferation risks involved in licensing nuclear exports. Approved Mar. 10, 1978. ([92 Stat. 120; PL95-242](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Age Discrimination in Employment Act Amendments of 1978. Raised the permissible mandatory retirement age for most non-Federal workers from 65 to 70. Eliminated age ceilings for most Federal employees. Approved Apr. 6, 1978. ([92 Stat. 189; PL95-256](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Agricultural Credit Act of 1978. Amended the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to provide new emergency loans of up to \$400,000 to farmers and ranchers in economic stress conditions for as long as 30 years. Raised the limit for individual farm ownership loans from \$100,000 to \$200,000, for direct and insured loans, and to \$300,000 for guaranteed loans. Raised the limit for individual farm operating loans from \$50,000 to \$100,000 and to \$200,000 for guaranteed loans. Approved Aug. 4, 1978. ([92 Stat. 420; PL95-334](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act Amendments of 1978. Amended the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to establish a policy of increased development of oil and gas resources on the Outer Continental Shelf while ameliorating the impact of such development. Revised procedures for bidding, leasing and exploration of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands. Required consultation by the Secretary of Interior with affected coastal States and regional advisory boards established pursuant to this Act and authorized \$130 million per year for a Coastal Energy Impact Program to aid the States. Approved Sept. 18, 1978. ([92 Stat. 629; PL95-372](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Federal Pesticide Act of 1978. Authorized new procedures which allowed the Environmental Protection Agency to simplify registration of pesticides. Gave the public access to information about the effect of a pesticide on human health and environment. Authorized the States to enforce controls on pesticides once State governments met standards designed to maintain minimum, nationwide controls on the substances. Approved Sept. 30, 1978. ([92 Stat. 819; PL95-396](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Civil Service Reform Act of 1978. Reorganized the Civil Service Commission creating a Senior Executive Service for top Federal employees, a merit pay system for middle-level management, increased management flexibility in firing incompetent employees, and statutory labor rights for Federal workers. Approved Oct. 13, 1978. ([92 Stat. 1111; PL95-454](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Port and Tanker Safety Act of 1978. Authorized the Secretary of Transportation to require each vessel operating in U.S. waters to have a federally licensed pilot. Barred vessels carrying oil or other hazardous material from operating in U.S. waters or transferring cargo in any U.S port if the vessel had a history of accidents, failed to comply with U.S. law and regulations, did not meet U.S. manning requirements, or did not have at least one licensed deck officer who could clearly understand English. Expanded Federal authority to investigate accidents at sea. Required new crude oil tankers of 20,000 deadweight tons (dwt) or more to install a cargo tank

protection system, segregated ballast tanks, and a crude oil washing system. Approved Oct. 17, 1978. ([92 Stat. 1471; PL95-474](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Comprehensive Older Americans Act Amendments of 1978. Revised and extended through fiscal 1981. Consolidated the administrative structure of the programs for the aging, substantially increased authorizations for various social services, health and nutrition programs, and continued the effort to provide improved legal protections for older Americans. Approved Oct. 18, 1978. ([92 Stat. 1513; PL95-478](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Agricultural Trade Act of 1978. Authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to establish from 6 to 25 U.S. Agricultural Trade Offices abroad with the sole responsibility of expanding the export of U.S. commodities, and to establish a new restricted immediate-term credit program to facilitate increased exports of U.S. agricultural commodities. Approved Oct. 21, 1978. ([92 Stat. 1685; PL95-501](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Inland Waterways Revenue Act of 1978. Levied for the first time a user charge on freight traffic (other than noncommercial pleasure craft) along the 25,000 miles of the navigable inland waterway system of the United States. This fee, levied in the form of a tax on diesel fuel, was to begin on October 21, 1980. Approved Oct. 21, 1978. ([92 Stat. 1696; PL95-502](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Airline Deregulation Act of 1978. Amended the Federal Aviation Act of 1958 to encourage, develop, and attain an air transportation system that relied on competitive market forces. Instructed the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) to stress compliance in its regulations, and ordered it to expedite and simplify its procedures. Facilitated the offering of new services and routes by the airlines, and granted them flexibility in raising and lowering their fares. Provided that any certified intrastate carrier could automatically enter one new route a year until 1981 without seeking approval of the Civil Aeronautics Board, and each carrier could designate one of its routes per year as ineligible for automatic entry. Made airline employees eligible for compensation if they lost their jobs, had their wages cut, or were forced to relocate because of the increased competition brought on by enactment of this legislation. Approved Oct. 24, 1978. ([92 Stat. 1705; PL95-504](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978. Established the procedures for the physical and electronic surveillance and collection of foreign intelligence information between foreign powers and agents of foreign powers suspected of espionage or terrorism. Established the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC) to oversee requests for surveillance warrants by Federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies. Approved Oct. 25, 1978. ([92 Stat. 1783; PL95-511](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Ethics in Government Act of 1978. Codified the public financial disclosure provisions of the now ethic codes adopted by the House and the Senate in 1977. Applied the same disclosure requirements to the President, Vice

President, Supreme Court justices and the top-level employees of both the executive and judicial branch. Approved Oct. 26, 1978. ([92 Stat. 1824; PL95-521](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act of 1978. Declared a national policy of promoting full employment, increased real income, balanced growth, a balanced budget, growth in productivity, an improved balance of trade, and price stability. Provided for coordination of economic policymaking to promote the goals of reducing inflation and unemployment. Also provided for better coordination and faster integration of the policymaking framework involving the Administration, Congress, and the Federal Reserve in the Congressional budget process. Approved Oct. 27, 1978. ([92 Stat. 1887; PL95-523](#))

Pregnancy Discrimination Act. Prohibited employment discrimination on the basis of pregnancy and required disability and health insurance plans to cover pregnant workers. Approved Oct. 31, 1978. ([92 Stat. 2076; PL95-555](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Nonvoting Delegate from American Samoa. Provided for the election of a nonvoting delegate to the House of Representatives from American Samoa. Approved Oct. 31, 1978. ([92 Stat. 2078; PL95-556](#))

Education Amendments of 1978. Extended and revised the Elementary and Secondary Education Act programs of Federal assistance to public schools for five years, through fiscal 1983. Revised the formula allocating funds to States by fully counting all welfare children as poor, even if their families had incomes above the poverty level. Approved Nov. 1, 1978. ([92 Stat. 2143; PL95-561](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Veterans' and Survivors' Pension Improvement Act of 1978. Provided a fifty percent increase in the maximum pension paid indigent war veterans who were not disabled as a result of military service. Guaranteed veterans a minimum annual income. Established a new program of improved pension benefits payable monthly to needy surviving spouses of wartime veterans. Approved Nov. 4, 1978. ([92 Stat. 2497; PL95-588](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Presidential Records Act of 1978. Provided that beginning with the 1981 Presidential term most Presidential records would become public property at the end of the President's term in office. Presidents could retain personal records, including diaries and journals, materials relating to private political matters, and materials connected with their election or the election of any other official. In addition, Presidents also retained the right to restrict access to certain materials for up to 12 years if the document related to national defense or foreign policy, trade secrets, confidential advice between the President and his advisers, personnel files, or files relating to Presidential appointments. Approved Nov. 4, 1978. ([92 Stat. 2523; PL95-591](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Revenue Act of 1978. Provided for \$18.7 billion in tax cuts, including generous capital gains reductions for some 4.3 million taxpayers. Also gave people over fifty-five a once-only complete capital gains tax exclusion for up to \$100,000 in profits from the sales of personal residences. Approved Nov.6, 1978. ([92 Stat. 2763; PL95-600](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978. Required that State utility commissions and other regulatory agencies consider the use of energy saving methods, such as pricing electricity lower in off---peak hours to avoid heavy loads in the middle of the day and discontinuing discounts for large volume users. Approved Nov. 9, 1978. ([92 Stat. 3117; PL95-617](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Energy Tax Act of 1978. Provided tax credits of 15 percent of the first \$2,000 (maximum \$300) spent by homeowners to install insulation and other specific energy---conserving improvements at their principal residence. Homeowners investing in solar, wind or geothermal energy equipment were eligible for a tax credit of up to 30 percent on the first \$2,000 and 20 percent on the next \$8,000, for a total maximum credit of \$2,200. Made a 10 percent investment credit available to businesses installing specific types of energy conservation equipment, and tax incentives for companies producing synthetic fuels from coal or other resources. Also, provided that cars using fuel inefficiently to be taxed to discourage their manufacture and purchase. Approved Nov. 9, 1978. ([92 Stat. 3174; PL95-618](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

National Energy Conservation Policy Act. Required that utilities give customers information about energy conservation devices such as insulation and storm windows. Although the utilities could not sell the devices or install them, they could arrange for the installation and allow customers to pay for the improvements through utility bills. Provided \$900 million over the ensuing three years for schools and hospitals to install energy---saving equipment, grants and government---backed loans for low---income families for home conservation investments. Authorized mandatory efficiency standards for 13 major home appliances, including refrigerators, furnaces and water heaters. Approved Nov. 9, 1978. ([92 Stat. 3206; PL95-619](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act of 1978. Required that new industrial and utility plants be built to use coal or a fuel other than oil or gas, and existing utility plants using oil or gas switch to other fuels by 1990. Authorized the Secretary of Energy to order some industries, on a case---by--- case basis, to switch fuels, and also to exempt utilities and companies from the requirements if certain conditions, such as inadequate supply of coal, existed. Approved Nov. 9, 1978. ([92 Stat. 3289; PL95-620](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

National Gas Policy Act of 1978. Allowed the price of newly discovered natural gas to rise about 10 percent a year until 1985, when the price controls would be lifted. Established special pricing categories for industrial

users to pay the brunt of the higher prices until the cost reached a certain level, when residential users were to assume more of the burden. Prohibited the installation of new decorative outdoor gas lights and required that existing lights were to be shut off in three years. Approved Nov. 9, 1978. ([92 Stat. 3350; PL95-621](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978. Authorized \$1.2 billion for more than 100 parks and preservation projects in 44 States. A major provision of Act was a \$150 million annual urban parks program during 1979---82 for grants to rehabilitate recreational facilities, including basketball and tennis courts. Approved Nov. 10, 1978. ([92 Stat. 3467; PL95-625](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Source:

Dell, Christopher and Stephen W. Stathis. [Major Acts of Congress and Treaties Approved by the Senate, 1789-1980](#). Government Division (CRS), Sept. 1, 1982. 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 82-156 GOV. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1982-GOV-0005

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