

Ambassador Howard Schaffer

Remarks at Academy Awards Luncheon, November 30, 2016

It's been almost four decades since Jimmy Carter entered the White House to begin what turned out to be a one-term presidency.

A great deal has been written since then about his foreign policy successes and failures. There's no end of books about Camp David, the Panama Canal Treaties, and the Iran hostages crisis. But Nancy Mitchell's outstanding book "Jimmy Carter in Africa" is the first in depth account of President Carter's diplomatic efforts to resolve the crises that his administration faced in the horn of Africa and in what was then Rhodesia.

As we found in the book committee, "Jimmy Carter in Africa" has a lot going for it. Dr. Mitchell's research is nothing short of awesome. She has left no source unturned. She has interviewed not only Carter and his inner policy-making circle, but legions of diplomatic working stiffs -- the likes of department desk officers, INR researchers, National Security Council staffers, Embassy officials, and congressional aides, not to speak of many knowledgeable foreign sources. The result of this research --and her own keen understanding of the issues at stake -- is a comprehensive, incisive, and highly readable account of Carter's policies in Africa and how they were put together.

Dr. Mitchell has also offered some useful insights about the President's style of operation and the factors that drove him to adopt the foreign policies he did.

Perhaps most importantly, she links his approach to Rhodesia with his experience in dealing with the challenges he faced in domestic politics, not least the influence the changing racial contours of American life in the 1980's had on the way he looked at foreign policy issues. This probing of the intersection of Carter's foreign and domestic policies is one of her great contributions to our understanding of the President and his era.

Text of inscription:

"To Nancy Mitchell for *Jimmy Carter in Africa*, a splendid, zealously researched study of the impact that President Carter's views of the role of race in domestic American politics had on his administration's efforts to resolve dangerous crises in Rhodesia and East Africa."