



## Jimmy Carter Library & Museum News Release

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### **SOLAR PANEL ON DISPLAY AT JIMMY CARTER LIBRARY AND MUSEUM**

*EFFORT TOWARD ENERGY INDEPENDENCE BECOMES "MUSEUM PIECE"*

**Atlanta, GA.** - When solar panels were installed on the roof of the White House West Wing in 1979, President Jimmy Carter predicted "a generation from now, this solar heater can either be a curiosity, a museum piece, an example of a road not taken, or it can be a small part of one of the greatest and most exciting adventures ever undertaken by the American people; harnessing the power of the Sun to enrich our lives as we move away from our crippling dependence on foreign oil." Today, one of those solar panels has, in fact, become "a museum piece" at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum.

The solar panels were removed when the White House roof was being repaired in 1986. At the same time, funding for research into alternative energy sources was dramatically reduced. In 1992, Unity College in Maine acquired the panels under the government surplus donations program. For the next 12 years, the school used the solar panels to provide hot water to its cafeteria. Others were periodically used for student experiments.

Last year, Unity College donated one of the solar panels to the Carter Presidential Library and Museum to provide "education, memory and inspiration" to all who see it. The solar panel is now a permanent part of the museum's exhibit on President Carter's energy initiatives.

"I think people will be surprised to learn how modern Carter's statements on energy were when the panels were put on the White House roof," Carter Library Director Jay Hakes said. "It was clearly ahead of its time."

The White House solar panels were a symbol of the Carter Administration's commitment to Reduce America's dependence of foreign sources of energy, according to Hakes, who was the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration at the U.S. Department of Energy during the Clinton presidency.

"Behind that was a whole package of tax incentives, research and development and loans that made it much more than a symbol," Hakes added. "There was actually a very substantive attempt to move ahead the expanded use of solar energy."

For more information, call 404-865-7100 or visit [www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov](http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov)