

Exit Interview with Jane Fenderson, Scheduler for First Lady

Interviewer: Marie Allen, Presidential Papers Staff

Date of Interviewer Not Stated, Jane Fenderson's Office, East Wing

Transcriber: Lyn B. Kirkland

Allen: First, I want to ask you about your personal background. Where did you grow up and go to school?

Fenderson: I grew up in Saco, Maine and went to Mount Holyoke College. For two summers while I was in college I worked in Washington in the office of Senator Muskie of Maine. Following my graduation in 1965, I went to work full time for Senator Muskie. I worked in his personal office for about from 1965 to 1971, at which time I took a leave of absence and went on his campaign staff, presidential campaign staff, where I did Mrs. Muskie's scheduling and also did travel and also did some advance for her during the 1972 primaries. After the Democratic convention in Miami in 1972, I returned to the senate staff on the staff with the senate subcommittee on intergovernmental relations, as a professional staff member.

Allen: Did you work with Mary at that time because I talked to her about a week ago and she mentioned her time with the Muskies.

Fenderson: We met first in 1968 when she was Mrs. Muskie's press secretary and she and I worked together in 1971 and 72. She was my boss.

Allen: You've had quite a long association then.

Fenderson: That's right, yeah. I worked and in fact continued on in the summer of 1976 after the Democratic convention in New York when Mrs. Carter was beginning to put together her staff for the general election campaign. I was asked if I was interested in coming to Atlanta to do her scheduling for the campaign. Obviously that was because of Mary who had gone to work for her just prior to the Democratic Convention and I said indeed that I would and I went down to Atlanta in August of 1976 and did her scheduling advance for Mrs. Carter during the campaign in August, September and October and came back to Washington in November and after a brief vacation went to work on the transition.

Allen: What were the scheduling problems? What were the activities like for Mrs. Carter during the campaign? Were there certain types of events that she was primarily scheduled at?

Fenderson: Well, one of the first things was just trying to figure out exactly how it was all going to work. We were starting from basically one person who was Madeline MacBean, primarily, who had done all of her scheduling during the primary to expanding into a much

larger staff. One of the first things that I was faced with was hiring about 11 people to advance for her on a full time basis and I just sort of landed in Atlanta and immediately had to start assembling advance people. And that was just sort of an overwhelming job because most of the people I didn't know. I had some people. I asked Kathy Cade if she would be willing to come to Atlanta as my deputy to work on advance.

Allen: Was she another, was she a Muskie person?

Fenderson: Yes. She worked in Muskie campaign too. [Laughs] Quite a network. So Kathy came down in September and started working as my deputy and by that time I had begun pulling together an advance, a few advance people. I think eventually we had four men, four women and one traveling assistant who went with Mary who eventually turned out to be a full time advance person. I think we had nine people on the road at all times throughout the campaign, and then of course there was the question of beginning to sketch out a travel schedule for the fall and that was done in connection with the overall campaign schedule. It took into account a very complicated series of evaluations of the importance of how much time should be spent by which principal in each state, obviously based on population, votes, and everything like that. The governor at that time had a certain number of points. His appearance in a place would count for so much weight and they were weighted down according to Mr. Carter, Mondale, and Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Mondale, and then all of the Carter children and their spouses.

Allen: Who developed that system? Do you remember?

Fenderson: It was something I think that basically came out of the Hamilton Jordan basic strategy. The person who was more or less responsible for keeping track of it was Rick Hutchinson in the situation room with Bill Simon and they had this grand, huge map and overlay so you could see where everybody was and where they were going the next week and then once a week, on Sunday afternoons, there would be a very large scheduling meeting to go over upcoming schedules in detail for the forthcoming week and then sketching out, you know, further and further down the line so that everyone had an idea where everyone else was going to be to try to avoid overlap, or when it was necessary for two or more of the principals to be at the same place at the same time, we would know that. So, from there obviously the President's schedule was decided first, then the vice president's (candidates, in this case), and then Mrs. Carter's and it went down in descending order like that so we would have to wait until their schedules were pretty much locked up before we could make a decision, a final decision, about where Mrs. Carter was going to go.

Allen: Would you do that a month at a time, a week at a time?

Fenderson: It was basically, I'm trying to remember. It got pretty hairy towards the end. It was almost day to day at the end. But in the beginning we were generally about ten days out so that we would have a week and the beginnings of the next week. She, in the beginning, indicated that

she was willing to travel, I think it was three and a half days a week and then it gradually became five days a week and then finally seven days a week at the end. But it started off slowly and then kept building up momentum as we approached the election and also as her effectiveness as a campaigner, which had already been established in the primaries, but became much more widely known in the general election so she became much more in demand.

Allen: How did it change with the transition? What were you doing during the transition? Were you mostly working with Mary trying to put this office and the people together?

Fenderson: That's right and also sorting out the invitations which started arriving in barrels full. Right after the election all of the mail that went to Plains and it got terribly waylaid down there and then it was finally shifted back up to the Washington headquarters and we were dealing with box loads and box loads and box loads of letters. We would have irate telephone calls from people saying you haven't answered my invitations and of course we didn't know where it was and it was just very difficult. The whole situation was very difficult. At the same time we were trying to assemble a staff, define what responsibilities and the structure of the staff for responsibilities managing the staff, hiring people to fill unfilled slots.

And then midway during the transition, early December, as I recall, it became obvious that we had some serious problems that had developed with the inaugural committee having to do with the invitations to the inauguration and the post-inaugural receptions that were going to be held at the White House the day after the inauguration the following day. And it was just an overwhelming list, a lot of people were involved--- computer problems and glitch problems and just too many people involved and finally Mrs. Carter asked me if I would take the responsibility for coordinating the post-inaugural receptions.

So, I did that from somewhere after the first of December full time until the 22nd of January and that was about all I did. It was about 14 to 16 hours a day. And it was just---looking back on it I don't know how any of us survived [Laughs], because first of all we didn't know the full, we didn't totally understand all the resources at our command at the White House and we were sort of finding out what was available, dealing with the military that had a lot to do with the logistical arrangements of the inauguration. Then we started dealing with the food and the entertainment. The President and Mrs. Carter had asked Robert Shaw, the conductor of the Atlanta Symphony, to arrange to have various musical groups entertain at each of the different receptions. There were seven in all, so he and I was in constant contact. I guess we had, I am trying to think of who all, we had some wonderful---the Juilliard String Quartet, the Atlanta Quartet, a group from Minneapolis. There was a tenor and pianist from Atlanta who was a great friend, a personal friend of Mrs. Carter's; different kind of music. I'm trying to remember. There was a--who was it? He was a black singer and piano player who had once played for Franklin Roosevelt and the President decided he wanted him to play at one of his receptions and we had the worst time tracking him down. I can't remember what his name was. Isn't that awful?

Allen: That's OK.

Fenderson: It would be in the records. We had a terrible time finding this man and he was quite honored and I made arrangements for him to come to the White House to perform, which he did and it was very exciting because he was very warm.

Allen: So you were responsible not just for the invitations but for all of the arrangements in advance, for the food, for the invitations?

Fenderson: Basically what I did for that particular segment was perform the duties of the White House social secretary although I did not understand that that was what it was at the time. It was some time afterwards when I realized that Gretchen Poston had not been appointed until after the New Year, so it was too late for her to take over and she just sort of said you do the inauguration and I will take over from there, so that was the arrangement that we had worked out. So that's in effect what I did, acting as social secretary during that era. Very interesting. Trial by fire. [Both laugh.]

Allen: What kinds of instructions did you have from the Carters about these inaugural festivities? Was there something perhaps special in what they wanted?

Fenderson: Yeah, I think it kept, it was very much in keeping with the whole spirit of the inauguration itself which was to be a people's inauguration open not just to the big wigs and big shots but for the ordinary people, so many of whom had worked very hard for his election. One of the very first post inauguration receptions was for all of the people who had hosted a member of the Carter family overnight in their homes. That in itself presented a problem because there were many people who had booked receptions, parties, dinner, etc. for members of the Carter family but in whose house they did not actually stay overnight and they didn't fall in that category, so I was the one who had to patiently explain that we appreciate everything you did, but this is a specific category. It was hard. And then another problem was that some of the records had been destroyed or lost, so that I think, I think it was Caron Carter whose, all of people where she had stayed somehow the records got lost. I don't know how they were lost, but she was trying very hard to remember everybody and reconstruct where she had stayed during the campaign. So even up to practically the last two or three days before the inauguration, we were still adding people as they, you know, either they would call and we would verify that indeed they were notified, and we would check with a member of the family. People would keep remembering, oh my goodness, we forgot the Jones in Altoona, Pennsylvania. You know, we stayed overnight there in March, or something like that.

But anyway, it was first of all to thank so many of those people who had participated in the very early stages of the President's campaign or the later stages, to open the White House to many, many people who would not ordinarily have had an opportunity to come to a reception at the White House, and I think this is a philosophy and a theme that has certainly carried through to

the four years of the entire administration and I don't remember the exact figures but I think we had about six or seven thousand people through in those first receptions. It was just total open house and it was done in a very gracious and warm manner. They were inviting people to their home. It was their home but it was also the nation's home.

And the decorations, Mrs. Carter also asked the Georgia Garden Club to decorate the White House. All the floral arrangements were brought up from Georgia. They had forced forsythia, and then brought in forced azaleas. The flowers were really more beautiful than I have ever seen before...or since, even though the White House floral arrangements are always lovely, these were special. Women came up and they worked for days getting it ready. The whole house was just this mass of spring flowers.

Allen: Sounds like you still remember the aura of excitement.

Fenderson: Yeah, it was wonderful. It was very special. It was new for all of us and it was just a very special time. We were almost so busy that you had to every once in a while pull back and stop and think "Now this is history. Please let me remember something of this." I had two specific memories from those first two days, three actually. The first was, my first day in the White House I was so busy I didn't get to the parade. I did go to the actual inauguration on the hill and then came racing in here. I was at my desk until 10:00 at night. I had not eaten lunch or dinner. I had a raging migraine headache and I was taking names and date of birth and social security numbers on the phone of the last seventy people who absolutely had to come to some reception the next day and I was hand writing these things laboriously over the phone. Finally, when we got to Muhammed Ali, I said do we have to have his date of birth and social security number? [Laughs]

And the second thing is the day of the first reception I was racing around and again hadn't had anything to eat. Finally Rex Scouten came up to me and said have you eaten, let me get you some lunch and the next thing I knew I was seated in the Red Room at one of those chairs in the Red Room with a silver tray of lunch that someone had miraculously produced for me. That was my first lunch in the White House. It was so elegant.

Allen: Ahhh. Ahhh!

Fenderson: And then the third major thing that I remember is Mrs. Carter. One of the largest receptions was for people from Georgia. Just thousands of people came through. Most of them were friends. It was just old home week. I remember them standing hour after hour after hour, shaking hands. And finally she just took her shoes off. She couldn't stand it so there she was standing in the receiving line with her shoes beside her shaking hands and hugging and kissing people. It was a very natural, unaffected moment.

Allen: What was Mrs. Carter doing as far as staff meetings during this time? Did you have a number of staff meetings with her during the transition?

Fenderson: During the transition we did not. She came to Washington, as I recall, probably three times during the transition period and each time that she came obviously she would meet with the staff. The first time that she came it was not at all—no one had officially been hired for the White House staff so she came around and talked to each of us, first of all to ask if we were interested in a job on the White House staff and then saying that she had not yet made up her mind who she wanted or what the final make-up and structure of her staff and we would all have first consideration. So in some respects it was a little uncertain, and on the other hand it was fairly certain that those of us who had been working for her all along would probably get to continue.

Then at some point we were all asked to have interviews with her and then we went--- at that point they were staying at Jackson Place, and we would troop in and out of Jackson Place and I went down for my interview thinking it was somewhat funny because we had been talking all along and I went in to have my interview and found myself seated at a table with Chip and Caron and someone else. It wasn't an interview at all. She said "Now let's discuss inauguration arrangements." It was not.....I never had an interview. We were in the middle of the job at that point. And, let's see, I think she came in one other time that I recall her staying at Blair House; and again, at that point, we were really in to the inauguration arrangements. It seems that most of the contact I had with her at that point was just discussing all the arrangements.

Allen: After the administration began how did the staff organize and how did Mrs. Carter work her staff meetings? Was there a regular staff meeting?

Fenderson: Yes, in the very beginning I think we had--she had staff meetings practically every morning, for, I don't know, a period of time and, I can't remember. I would say it lasted for maybe six weeks or so that she would have almost daily staff meetings and then as we became more comfortable with each other and what we were doing, obviously the need for them and as she became busier, the need for the daily staff meetings decreased and we became much more on an as-needed basis or one-on-one basis, but we tried to have regular staff meetings about once a week. But again, as she became busier and busier over the four years, they became less regular.

Allen: Did you feel you had enough access to Mrs. Carter for your job?

Fenderson: I think this probably holds true for any member of her staff, senior staff or otherwise. I had total access to her at all times and in fact have always tried to discipline myself because she is so accessible to make sure that I don't bother her unnecessarily. She never refuses a phone call. She has always been more than gracious at inconvenient times. If it is particularly inconvenient she will say, I can't talk to her right now but I will call her back just as soon as I

can. That only happened to me maybe four or five times in four years. She is so accessible, as I said, that it takes an extra discipline on our part not to bother her or abuse the privilege.

Allen: Have you been responsible for scheduling trips as well as in-town events as well as events in the mansion itself in the residence?

Fenderson: Well, yes. In terms of the schedule, I have been responsible over all for her entire schedule but it breaks down in different ways. If it is a social event in the mansion, all I will have done is give them a time and then Gretchen Poston's office takes over if it is a social event of some kind. Again, if it has to do with a substantive kind of thing that involves a project that she's been working on, Kathy Cade would actually implement the whole thing. I would actually only be concerned with the time and block of time that was needed, making sure that the presentation papers were all assembled and attached and scheduled in the proper way. As far as trips are concerned, I've had more direct involvement in the development of trips. Again, if they've been mental health trips, I have sort of let Kathy do them as she has handled all those kinds of things, but if they've been political trips or foreign trips or something, in some respects, they are collegial. I mean the whole senior staff would get involved in a major trip so that we would sit down and go over what the options were and what we wanted to establish as a theme or if they were political trips which is obviously what we have been doing primarily the past year, what she has been doing the past year, then the political trips are interactive with the campaign staff.

Allen: On the foreign trips how would your responsibilities mesh with the way they received her?

Fenderson: Basically as soon as a foreign----there are two different kinds of trips obviously. The trips she has taken on her own and the trips in which she has accompanied the President. They are quite different as we found out. The first trip, well, the first time that she went abroad, first of all, she attended the inauguration of President Jose Portillo in Mexico City before President Carter was inaugurated and that was somewhat in a delicate stage because she was not yet the First Lady and Secretary Kissinger was the head of the American delegation and we didn't know, however that happened, I don't know. The first trip that she took after the President took office was obviously the trip to Latin America in 1977 and I had---I am trying to remember how it all came about. I don't remember how it all happened but it suddenly became---that was obviously an area she was interested in. She had said she wanted to travel to Latin America. She was taking Spanish three days a week and all of a sudden I knew there was a trip coming on. One day she asked me if I would go meet with her and Dr. Brzezinski to discuss the trip and I was just cleaning up some records yesterday and found my notes of that first meeting.

Allen: "What did you do with them?"

Fenderson: I threw them away. They are meaningless now.

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Allen: Oh.

Fenderson: They were just a lot of head scratching, but anyway. So we just sat down and he discussed what a good idea it was and why we were going to which countries and why we weren't going to other countries and basically that we were trying to highlight the Carter administration initiative in encouraging democratic, the development of democratic institutions where they didn't exist and paying attention to those places like Venezuela and Columbia, and Costa Rica where there was a genuine democracy. Also, congratulating those countries that had good human rights policies. And in the case of Brazil, it was sort of an amalgamation of a lot of different initiatives, a lot of different things, because obviously our relation to Brazil, as the largest country in South America, was very important even though they haven't always been very close.

Anyway, that's how it all started. We started having Bob Pastor of the NSC staff, the Latin American expert who was our principle liaison, and he and I started talking on an hourly basis at that point about the structure of the trip. We went through various permutations, as I recall, in terms of dates and trying to set up, just blocking out some time. For some reason, one set of dates that we had chosen were unacceptable to several of the countries. They conflicted with our state visits and we had to keep shifting our dates and we finally agreed on the dates and the next thing was the whole question of how the trip was going to be scheduled and carried out. And, since we were all so new, we didn't understand the concept of the pre-advance, or at least I didn't, but we finally decided that a small group of us would go to the countries and do the negotiations with the embassies and the host governments on the schedules and just look it over and see what the possibilities were.

I spent about two weeks fighting with Hugh Carter about getting a plane to go to South America. It was just so debilitating to be working such extraordinarily long hours anyway and to have to worry about the silly plane and we kept talking that there was no precedent for this. The President is trying to cut down on unnecessary flights and so forth and so on. Finally I said alright, we want to encourage commercial travel as much as possible. I said alright, have the travel office come up with a schedule that takes me to each of these places in order, in the order of Mrs. Carter's trip, because it doesn't make sense, you know, there is a certain sense of taking a trip in a logical progression. He said all right and he came back the next day and sort of laughed and said "Well, they came up with a schedule. There is no way you can do it in the order in which you are taking the trip." And so I said, "well fine, but you have left out a country." They had me basically hopscotching between Miami and various South American capitals, because that is the way you have to fly and it took a minimum of two and a half weeks. [Allen laughs.] So, anyway, after that he was convinced that we should have a plane. [Both laugh.] We finally got our plane two days before we were supposed to leave and we took off and we went to Jamaica, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Columbia, Venezuela, and home. It was grueling, an

incredible learning experience. I think it stands out as probably the most interesting experience I had in four years.

Allen: Why? Why do you say that?

Fenderson: Because it was a total...everything was new and it was just complete....I had never been to any of those countries before, first of all. I didn't quite understand the concept of what we were doing until I got---it was total learning by experience. Fortunately Jamaica was the first country and it was the least stiff in terms of protocol. I remember we landed and we got there at night and started our first control meeting with embassy officials and we thrashed things around and around for about three hours and then finally agreed on some basic structure of the schedule. And I don't think we ever met with anybody from the Jamaican government. Maybe we did. There was some man that was sort of wandering around who I think it was the chief of protocol; we never were quite sure. And then by that time we understood what we were doing, or I understood what I was doing, because I was the head of the commission.

Then we went on, picked ourselves up and went on to Costa Rica and by the time we got to Costa Rica I understood. I was into the swing of things and by the time we got to Columbia and Venezuela we were pros. We could zip through the meetings in forty minutes. This is what we want to do. What do you want to do? And where can we disagree and what do they want and we would negotiate things very quickly. We had a series of somewhat mishaps with our plane. It could not take off from Quito and we had a lot of ...we would just go up and down the runway trying to take off. Afterwards the air force realized they had not been flying Jet Stars to South America for twenty years for a reason and that was the altitudes were so high the oxygen mix isn't sufficient to get the planes off the ground in some of the capitals, so we had to leave the plane in Quito and fly commercially through the jungle and we went to a place called Guayaquil, a port city in Ecuador. I never expected to land in a port city in Ecuador. We had a layover before we could catch our next commercial flight to Lima and we got to Lima and another plane had been flown down.

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TAPE 1B

We flew into the commercial field to refuel. The military base had closed down for the night and we ended up landing at the commercial field where we were not cleared to land so we were somewhat illegally on Brazilian soil. The state department people who were with us cautioned us not to go too far from the plane and to take our passports with us which we did and we had visions of either being arrested or stranded in the jungle and then we had to hassle for jet fuel for two hours. [Allen laughs.] We haggled. Nobody spoke Portuguese, and somebody spoke Spanish and somehow we managed to negotiate but they were demanding cash payment for this jet fuel. They didn't know what a, is it a GTR, or whatever those chits are that are sort of an

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exchange from military base to military base all over the world. They wouldn't accept that so they were demanding cash which we didn't have, so finally we had to put it on a credit card. It was very strange. We finally got to Brasilia at 5:00 in the morning.

Anyway, we had a series of experiences like that. But anyway, we did finally get back to this country with a basic schedule for Mrs. Carter's trip that was based on a couple of receptions, one in each of the countries she visited and she would have substantive bilateral discussions with either the head of state or the head of government; that each visit would include an official dinner or luncheon, whatever the time frame. A state dinner in effect. In each of the countries she would have some kind of contact with the American community there, and hopefully again in each of the countries, some public event. We tried to vary the public events from country to country. In each country we did something that was meaningful in the context of that country and also was visually interesting for the press that was traveling with us. Costa Rica is a country which has no armed forces and that is a source of great pride to them. They put a great deal of the money that would ordinarily be spent on the military into education. There is something like a 98% literacy rate in Costa Rica which is unusual for that part of the world. There is universal public education. People are truly educated. As a result, they have schools for mentally retarded which is an advanced concept in the third world.

Outside of San Jose, in a town about a half hour outside the capital, there is a school for mentally retarded children. It is a public school and we visited it. It obviously tied in with Mrs. Carter's interests. It pointed out the great pride that Costa Rica has in its education in general and also the fact that not only does it educate most people but the least fortunate children. That's an example. In Peru we visited an experimental farm that was partially supported by AID. It was both experimental potato research and also they had this large agriculture research station where they were trying to develop a strain of guinea pigs that were edible because they are so fast breeding and they are a tremendous source of protein. They are called cuy in Spanish. So we visited a cuy farm and they had guinea pigs everywhere. Some of them were very interesting. I don't like guinea pigs but some of them were pretty good.

Allen: You had quite an education.

Fenderson: It was a very educational experience.

Allen: Did you find the embassies or the embassy staffers were the most informative as far as filling you in about these countries?

Fenderson: I think that we...they didn't know...of course, we were an unknown quantity to the embassy staff. Many of them had their most recent experience with VIP travel had been Secretary Kissinger who had been very demanding in many respects, both on a substantive basis and a personal basis and they didn't know what to expect from the First Lady, so I think they all approached us with some trepidation. It was a new administration and they didn't know that

much about us, our personalities, how demanding we would be and I think they found that in our approach to them, which was we have come to learn and we've got to rely on your judgement. We may disagree on certain things but let's see how we can work this all out. We want to be helpful to you all because that is the whole purpose of the trip. And I think they were all pretty pleasantly surprised. There were some problems. We did not send advance people on the trip as we did on every other trip from then on but on that particular trip we relied on the Secret Service and also on the local embassy on the ground to do the advanced arrangements. That was not ideal. It worked and they did an extraordinary good job under the circumstances but we learned then that that was not the way; we should not conduct a foreign trip without our own advance people going.

Allen: Just comment on why, why is it better to have your own advance people doing those things?

Fenderson: Because I think there a lot of things that it is not fair to ask the Secret Service to make judgments on and the embassy doesn't often know who should be sleeping in what room and who should be in relation to what. I mean things like that you really need your own representative to either smooth the way or answer questions. It shouldn't be left...it is not part of the Secret Service's job. Those kind of things and also sometimes it was very difficult sometimes when we got on the ground to know who to go to for the right answer even though there was always a control officer we didn't know them. We couldn't necessarily spot them by sight in this crowd of people because automatically when the First Lady goes in they would just appear out of nowhere. People that you never anticipated being there, not only our own embassy personnel and security, but then there would be sometimes as many of twenty host government people, protocol escorts, interpreters, more security, and sometimes there were just so many people around you didn't know who was what.

So, I think that was a lesson that we learned from that first trip and the trip itself from a substantive point of view, from a diplomatic point of view, and from a public relations point of view was enormously successful and we were all so proud of the First Lady. It was interesting to see her grow as she went from country to country. She was somewhat nervous in Jamaica which was the first stop and each country that she ---it would particularly show in her public statements, but her confidence just grew visibly and then she started using Spanish in her speeches. At first it would be just a few phrases and then she would continue and just use more and more and by the time at the end she was using whole opening remarks in Spanish.

Allen: Did she get very positive response to that?

Fenderson: Yes, yes she did and people would come up to me or any of us and say Mrs. Carter really has a beautiful accent. She really speaks good Spanish. They were very surprised, very pleased. It was a wonderful gesture and one that wasn't always...somewhat new and refreshing

and it was great to see as she became more and more confident just with the use of Spanish, for one example.

Allen: It was refreshing.

Fenderson: Exactly ---as she went from country to country along the way.

Allen: There was some discussion in the press, I remember, about the trepidation of Latin American officials dealing with a woman in a substantive capacity. Did you see any of that?

Fenderson: I think it varied from country to country. In some of the countries it did not seem to be such an issue. In other countries, like Brazil, it was very much a factor. The ambassador in Brazil at that time was Crimmins. He was a career ambassador, very tough, very good, and you know, he talked to me about some of the sensitivities of the Brazilians in dealing with a woman. They felt somewhat slighted and there was...it is also a very stiff country in terms of the protocol. Again, that varied from country to country too. Some places were much more relaxed than others. Others were much more fussy in protocol requirements.

But I think that Mrs. Carter helped personally to overcome a great deal of their trepidations because she was herself so well briefed and I think in particular; well, in each of the countries she had an impact but I think that in looking over, looking from the perspective of four years, it's obvious that the impact of her trip to Ecuador and Peru were beneficial in both the democratic and---both countries have since elected a democratic president and she helped to spur, obviously she was but one of many factors, but that was one of the reasons that she went to those countries, was to offer private encouragement by the United States that we wanted very much to do whatever we could to encourage the democratic process in both of those countries.

She told President Morales Perez who was President of the military junta in Peru that if he went through with his plan to permit democratic elections then she would come to the United Nations president, whoever he might be, which she did in 1979, and she had an opportunity to remind him that she had promised him, you know, and how it was not the easiest thing in the world because he and the incoming president elect were great foes, but he did go through with it and she did go back and President Belaunde, the incoming president of Peru, made a special gesture to her at his inaugural ceremony. She was seated in, I don't know, I was not there so I've only read about it. I know about it, but she was somewhat seated back with the dignitaries, but not with the heads of state who were there. They were somewhere on a different aisle and he left the podium and came over and embraced her in the middle of his speech and told her thank you for coming and it was just, it was very nice.

Allen: Now, that was very soon after the beginning of your job.

Fenderson: That's right. May and June of 1977.

Allen: Was that the largest foreign travel that the First Lady took on her own---the most extensive?

Fenderson: Yes, yes it was. She was gone for 13 days and we visited 7 countries in those 13 days.

Allen: Now her other major trips...

Fenderson: Which I would never recommend to do again, by the way. It was an extremely extensive and exhausting trip and it is the kind of thing that you learn by experience. We were all physical, we all got sick by the time...she was sick ...the next to the last day of the trip she got, you know, we also got tummy upsets. She was only forced to cancel one event and she managed to pull herself together and carry on with the rest of her schedule. It was an exhausting trip, yeah.

Allen: The other one that sticks out in my mind is the trip to Cambodia.

Fenderson: Yes.

Allen: What do you remember about that?

Fenderson: I remember it came about suddenly, wasn't planned. The first thing I knew about it she was talking to Kathy on the phone, I think. Someone asked me about it. I can't remember. She said Jimmy wants to go or I want to go to Cambodia or what do you think about this? The next thing we knew she called all of us, her senior staff together, and said what do you think. I have been talking about and looking at the pictures on the television and in the news magazines. It is so awful. What can I do? Do you think I should go to focus attention on the problem?

And, let me see, I will try to focus back. We sat around for about two hours discussing the pros and cons and she sort of went around the table and asked each of us our opinions. Not everybody was totally in favor of her going, as I recall. It seems to me, and I wish I could say this with total certainty, but it seems to me that I looked at her and said "I think you should go. Not to do so would be...to do so is morally right and not to do so is..."Now, I remember, I think I said that. Now, someone said that. I would like to take credit for it. [They both laugh.] But anyway, she finally, she decided to go. And it was all pulled off in about, as I recall in less than 48 hours. I think it was like 36 hours from the time the decision was made to go and the time that the plane actually took off. It was somewhat, it was sort of funny because, I did not go on the trip but I did work on the schedule from here and it was just a very; by chance Ambassador Abramores are close personal friends of mine, and so I had total confidence in him which was nice because it was very nice to know that the schedule that he was recommending I was sure made sense. [Laughs.]Which is a nice way, you know, where a personal contact sometimes makes a great difference. But anyway they took off, and again it was I guess for everybody who went was a trip where the impact that those faces in the camps had on people. I mean, you just

cannot...She did, after she came back, a couple of days after she had a chance to rest, she called the whole staff together, the entire staff, and told us about her trip and what it meant and what she was going to do to call... and how we were going to try to focus to get, first of all, a tremendous outpouring of money, which was so important at the time and also to try to coordinate some of our government's efforts. I assume you talked to Kathy Cade and got her perspective because she worked much more closely.

Allen: Did you remember your impression that she was very much affected by that trip, the First Lady was?

Fenderson: Oh yeah. I think that everybody who went, each person that went, just came back and said it was an experience that was difficult to put in words, that the impact was one that would never, would never leave them.

Allen: What other trips that the First Lady took alone stick out in your mind? Which trips?

Fenderson: She had a very good trip, very successful, and a fun trip, to the inauguration of the president of Costa Rica in the spring of 1978, I believe. I think it was a year after we had been on the first trip. I didn't go, I didn't go on many of the trips. I did go on the first one and a couple of the others but I basically would sit back and that was one way that our scheduling concept changed. We would have people here who worried about all the details before the event and we didn't go on the trip. That was a good trip. She enjoyed it. It was fun. She stayed in town for a vacation and she went back to the school for retarded children that she had visited with before. She.... Obviously, there were all the trips that she took with the President for various reasons. Each of them was memorable.

Allen: How did the scheduling arrangements work on joint trips because the First Lady was going to see the Shah of Iran for New Year's or are going to the Middle East on a peacemaking mission? How would those two be scheduled?

Fenderson: In the first case, that trip to Iran was called, what was called originally, what was originally to be a nine nation trip. It was supposed to take place in late November, early December 1977. I was on the pre-advance for that trip. We took a group, a large group, a backup. It started in South America. We went first to Venezuela and Brazil and then to Africa. Because I had already been in Venezuela and Brazil twice that year and was pretty familiar with the physical structure and the layout and everything, I chose not to go on that leg of the trip because I was a very busy here. Instead, I flew commercially to Nigeria and picked up the rest of the trip in Africa. But anyway, this is the way it worked. Phi Wise who was at that time Deputy Department Secretary to the President, and Evan Dobbelle who at that time was Chief of Protocol and in charge and head of pre-advance. Each component, each operational component that had to do with a presidential trip was represented for instance. I represented from the scheduling office here and Barbara Hunterback who was at that time our press advance person went along and we

had a secret service agent from the First Lady detail, so there were three of us representing the First Lady. And obviously the NSD, State Department executives, (what are they called?); State Department (I'm blanking), the 7th Floor people. [They both laugh.] The representative or the State Department.

Allen: The Secretariat.

Fenderson: There, thank you. The press office, WHCA, secret service, military office, the helicopter pilots, you name it. The doctors, each operational unit that has to do with a foreign trip was represented. I would go... basically on that trip there were a lot of unanswered questions on the President's schedule. As I explained to you earlier about the campaign, until his basic schedule is settled then I sort of sit back and just have to wait. We may have some ideas about things that she might wish to do. In some cases she expressed a specific desire to see things, in other cases she didn't. In that very first trip we developed a concept that she would do a substantive meeting in each country, whether it was a meeting with people involved in various social programs or in India she went to a community hall, a community program which had various kinds of, whatever they do in the Indian community: children dancing, old people weaving, and things like that. But anyway, partly because that original trip, for two reasons, because one, the energy bill was stalled, the whole energy package had gotten stalled in congress; and secondly, and I think this is one of the underlying reasons that never came up, we all determined that the trip was too exhausting and too long. Those two factors went hand in hand.

The trip was postponed and broken down into two separate segments, both of which were ambitious but not nearly as bad as the original concept. The original concept made no sense and it became obvious to all of us who were on that trip immediately that no one was going to be able to make it through anyway. Apparently as a result of the fact that it all got turned around, much of the work that we had done on the first part of the trip was nullified so in a few cases we had to start over again rescheduling some of the things. For instance, in Poland, I visited a new children's health clinic that was being built as part of Warsaw's part of the International Year of the Child and it was being built by contributions from Color Shark, an American business, and that is indeed what she visited in Poland. So, some of the things stayed the same and other things changed.

Allen: But first you would get a final schedule from Phil Wise?

Fenderson: That's right.

Allen: And then you would send them to Beth to review with the First Lady.

Fenderson: They were always very ---we had a very good working relationship....always going on and I was always included in all of the meetings so that I had a complete understanding and knowledge of what was going on even in some of the most sensitive areas, which was very

helpful and I always appreciated that. I think it's essential because if you are left out you don't know what's going on and it is very difficult.

Allen: [inaudible]

Fenderson: Exactly, exactly. For basic things, Mrs. Carter will accompany the President on X, Y, and Z. As much as possible, her private time will coincide. They will be together when they are having private time, with few exceptions. So then we could immediately see what places in the schedule were open, and those are usually times when he was having bilateral talks or working luncheons or something like that.

Allen: In the four years that you have been the scheduler for the First Lady what have you learned about scheduling that has been a surprise that you wouldn't have expected?

Fenderson: [Laughs] I think early on and it still sometimes comes up and hits me in the face, and this is in terms of scheduling appointments and access, people who want to see the principal, is that you never can take anything at face value. There are almost always hidden agendas and that is something that, as I say, sometimes still comes back, comes up and hits me in the face, that Mr. X wants to pay a courtesy call on the First Lady, just a courtesy call...ten minutes, that's all. It's very easy. Mr. X, for whatever reason, is a legitimate person who is being recommended by X, Y, or Z, or is a close personal friend, or whatever. So it is determined that he will indeed have this 10 minutes courtesy call, and then Mr. X comes up with an agenda of things or he indeed wants her to get involved in this, that or the other project, or he has a friend that he wants to bring with him or something like that. And I think that is something I would advise any successor of mine to always make sure that the right questions are asked or that you know, you think about what the questions are. Are you bringing someone else? Who is this person? Why? What? You have to ask certain questions and not take it at face value and not be bought.

Allen: Uh huh. There's a protection there.

Fenderson: Yeah, there's a protection there. Another thing about scheduling the First Lady and the President that surprises me is the extraordinary number of people who think that it is an easy matter to get in to see the President or the First Lady. They will pick up the phone to call and say "I'm going to be in Washington and thought I would like to drop by." And sometimes, I guess it is just sheer naiveté on their part. At other times I just think [inaudible]. You don't know, but it is amazing the number of people who just call in and say I want to speak to them. That is the other thing. And also that they have...there is an assumption about the President of the United States that he can do anything. I remember one time I got a call late at night from a woman at a pay phone somewhere in Pennsylvania and she really was hysterical. She wanted the President to call up a television station in Pennsylvania and order them to take off a movie that was scheduled to be shown that night that she considered to be pornographic. And the woman was really hysterical. I tried to calm her down and said you know, "Ma'am, I certainly

understand your concern but there really is nothing the President can do about that. But she was unreasonable. You could not reason with her.

Allen: How have the scheduling arrangements for the First Lady changed over the four years that you have been here? You have learned about the length of the trips to take. You've learned about managing the trip and checking things added on the schedule.

Fenderson: That's not on trips, that's just in general.

Allen: Has the First Lady changed some of her desires for trips as a result of her experiences?

Fenderson: Yes, I think that after the first foreign trip where she did a number of interesting things, but I think that she decided that she was sort of ---well, maybe not overscheduled but as we got into more foreign trips we started to do more traditional sightseeing. Of course, well, part of that was because Amy was along on all the other ones. She was not on the very first one, but she did go on all the others with her parents with the exception of Israel. I can't remember, but she was on most of the other trips. And partly because Amy was with her, then they could do fun things and go sightseeing. We found that she enjoyed, oh, when they went to the summit in Vienna we had this day on the Rhine. Am I right?

Allen: The Rhine. Yes.

Fenderson: Yes, the Danube. She went on the Rhine in Germany. In Germany it was the Rhine and then next year in Vienna they took a boat trip on the Danube and they just loved it. And it was a great outing for the press too, which is always a matter of concern when you are carrying press on a foreign trip. A very important lesson to learn. If they are not happy, nothing gets reported right. [Both laugh.] Or favorably, anyway. So, I think that the schedule tended to be a little bit more sightseeing oriented for the last couple of years than they were the first year. She liked, as much as possible, to interact with people in the country she was visiting and in some cases would have terrible difficulty doing that. In Japan, for instance, at the economic summit in 1979, security was so awful and so tight. It was the one time that President Carter personally asked the host government to ease up on security for his wife and daughter because they were isolated to such a degree. They went into a train station to catch a train to take the bullet train from Tokyo to Kyoto and the way it was set up, had been set up, was that the entire station had been isolated. There were just troops in there shutting it off, so that they never saw any ordinary Japanese people. There was no opportunity to even shake hands with them. They went to some of the beautiful gardens and palaces in Kyoto. They were totally sealed off from the public. They were in there in an isolated way which they didn't enjoy. It was very artificial. It was a beautiful place and a very artificial atmosphere. We had a terrible time in Tokyo and the President did as well. They were very concerned about the terrorist activities, I'm sure, but we managed to get around those. There were similar problems in Venice last spring [inaudible]. But somehow they

worked it out so that they were able to do fun things within the limits of security and still see people.

Allen: And you never had a really frightening experience on a trip, then, with the First Lady?

Fenderson: Not from a security point of view. We had a couple of accidents which were frightening or terribly nerve-racking. We had a motorcade accident in Seattle during a political visit in the fall of 1979.

End of tape 1B.

Beginning of Tape 2A

Fenderson: Two of the press vans in her motorcade were actually in an accident and two reporters were hurt enough so that one of them was hospitalized after they got back to Washington. They were able to bring her back to Washington and she was then hospitalized. That was just a horrible thing. It was no one's fault. It was a freak accident if I recall, a piece of lumber that had fallen into the road from a truck and they were going along. I don't know. I shouldn't be saying this. There was an accident and a pile up and people were hurt and it was a terribly nerve-racking thing.

Allen: Fortunately you had security.

Fenderson: Military security from what I

Allen: [Inaudible]

Fenderson: I don't believe so. I'm not sure. Let me think. I don't know off the top of my head.

Allen: Let me ask you a quick question about the campaign. You did all the scheduling for two campaigns...

Fenderson: That's right.

Allen: For Mrs. Carter. How would you compare this job in the 1980 campaign to the job of 1976 campaign?

Fenderson: Well, the job in the 1980 campaign was made greatly easier by the fact that we had tremendously more resources at our command.... more people. We had four years of experience under our belts. We were incumbents. It was just...you know, we had our own plane which made so many things that were easier. But on the other hand, the demands were greater. More was expected of us. It was much more elaborate. But when I look at them and compare schedules that I wrote in 1976 which were usually one or two pages a day with the huge schedules that we prepared, you know, for this campaign. I sometimes laugh because it's so

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much more elaborate. Obviously she gets much more information on her schedule now than she did four years ago, but just to see a comparison of the two is very funny. I sometimes laugh. I get them for a laugh.

Allen: Did you have the weighting system that had points for each place for the President and Vice President?

Fenderson: There was some sort of an overall weighting system that was developed but it wasn't—I wasn't as much aware of it as I was in '76. You almost could look at the map and realize what the weighting would be. But it don't think...it didn't seem to me that we paid as much attention to it as we did in '76, or at least I didn't.

Allen: Did you and Mrs. Carter make primary decisions about where she was going to or did she work with people in the campaign administration?

Fenderson: She basically would rely on what the requests were that came from the campaign. Obviously she had input if she disagreed, and sometimes she did. Or sometimes she thought it was very important for her to go somewhere where she wasn't scheduled to go. And she had a direct impact that way. And she was also the kind of person and always will be, I'm sure, that has no hesitation in picking up the phone and calling someone she doesn't know and asking a question like why am I doing this. She was concerned about several states this fall where she had not yet been scheduled to appear and so I said ...

Allen: [Allen interrupts.] Do you remember what they were specifically?

Fenderson: One of them was Maryland. One of them was... [She mumbles inaudibly] I'll have to go back and reconstruct. I remember specifically the Maryland situation. We went back and forth and at that point we were very far ahead and it didn't seem necessary to go and the judgement lasted. It was one of the few states that didn't stay the way it had been predicted to be. Once in a while she would be very concerned in the primaries about spending more time here or there. I remember one time on Saturday morning and I was just exhausted. I was taking the day off because I was going through week after week after week and night after night after night, and staying here until nine or ten o'clock. It was snowing outside and it was eleven o'clock in the morning and the phone rang and it was the First Lady and she said she had just gotten back late the night before from a grueling trip to New Hampshire, or somewhere. I believe it was either Maine or New Hampshire. And she said "Jane," she said "I think I better spend some more time in New Hampshire. She said, "I've been going over the schedule for next week. I've seen the schedule. And I think I need to spend more time and do this and that... [Allen corrects herself.] Oh no! That was it. She said, "I really need to spend more time in Boston" and not the New Hampshire situation. [She laughs.] And I'm just saying "OK" [which Allen says in an exhausted voice]. "I can't stand it. I will have to schedule an entire new day." [Laughs] And she

said “Are you OK?” to me. And I then felt embarrassed because here she is the one who has been out killing herself out on the road and I was the one who sounded tired.

Allen: She sounds as though she is lady with a tremendous amount of energy. Is that true?

Fenderson: She is. It is not that she doesn't get tired, but she is able to summon up reserves of energy that I think some people don't have. I think also that she is able to rest which is another benefit. I think the President can too. When they go away, and that is why the week-ends at Camp David have been so important to them, they really get away. They are not bothered by staff and we try as much as possible not to call him over the week-end. They are up there where they can really rest. Once she took us all to Camp David. Shortly after the election she took her entire staff up there for the day. We had lunch and ran and did whatever we wanted and it was just lovely. Most of us had never been there before. You just get the sense of the tremendous isolation and the sense of being away from it all which they must feel. I was very envious once I had been up there to realize just what it had meant to them.

She is able also to hide sometimes her fatigue from other people. I see her frequently when she has been so tired that she can hardly talk but she will throw her shoulders back and walk in and carry through with whatever it is she has to do. So it's both a combination of having tremendous reserves and to restore them over the week-end or whatever and also to summon up that extra *umph* when you really need it. I know once in a while, especially when she's been to the west coast, that just knocks you out so much when you come back after a couple of days. I remember when she went out there the last time I had given her the entire next day off. She had gotten in like two O'clock in the morning and she had absolutely nothing the next day, which was a rarity especially at this point. I remember talking to her the following day and I said are you feeling all right and she said “I am. I think I slept most of yesterday. I'd get up and then I would go back to sleep.” [Laughs] She was laughing and feeling a little bit guilty. And I said, “I'm just so glad you were able to catch up on a little sleep.”

Allen: This has been delightful. Thank you. Can I get your address, if you were to come look for you five years from now to sit down and do some more specific and detailed conversation where can we find you? Do you have a permanent address?

Fenderson: No, I don't. I think probably the best thing I could give to you would be my parents' address in Maine. And really I just have no way of knowing.

Allen: What is it in Maine?

Fenderson: It is Charles Fenderson and the address is 25 Cross St., Saco, Maine, 04072.

Allen: Do you belong to an alumni association that will always be updated with where you are?

Fenderson: No, not really. No. That's a good thing; I know where you are going, but I'm not sure they would have my address.

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Allen: I hope you will come to the Carter Presidential Library.

Fenderson: Are you going to be down there?

Allen: I may. I don't know. I'm unsure. I've asked the questions. Is there anything else I haven't asked you that you would like to say? Just your impressions or anything like that.

Fenderson: Well, obviously, I have mixed feelings. I look around at all the boxes in the room and it brings a lot of tears. Despite all the obvious time that it's over and over and in a way that we didn't want it to be over, I think that I feel, and I know my colleagues feel, both tremendous gratitude to have had the opportunity to work, not only in the White House, but more specifically for Rosalyn Carter. She was just an extraordinary woman, by any measure. She is someone that we love and someone that we admire and since I have known her now for four and a half years and the one thing that has stood out in my observation of her is her total capacity to grow. She has just constantly grown in these elections, taken on new obligations, developed new interests, spoken out increasingly, effectively, for a different variety of causes and that to me is just really exciting and she has made our jobs, all of our jobs, so much more fulfilling and enriching to see her grow because we had to grow with her. And, I have such admiration for her. I think in how you measure greatness, it is a hard subject in many respects. I'm convinced that she will be remembered as one of the greatest First Ladies we have ever had.

