

“U.S. Flags and Strange Behavior,” by Dr. Chris Jones

President Jimmy Carter, who was the oldest living U.S. President, passed on December 29, 2024 and the nation has been mourning this loss and remembering his legacy.

The U.S. Flag Code requires that flags be flown at half-staff for 30 days following the death of a president or former president. However, governors from at least eight states, including Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, North Dakota, Tennessee, and Texas, have ignored this protocol. Their decision appears to be influenced by a social media complaint suggesting that flags might have been at half-staff during the Presidential swearing-in ceremony. This breach of tradition and law is both disrespectful and deeply concerning.

President Carter, regardless of political affiliation, deserves to be honored for his lifetime of service to the nation.

His accomplishments extend far beyond his presidency. After leaving office, he founded the Carter Center, a global leader in efforts to eradicate diseases, monitor elections, and promote human rights. Through Habitat for Humanity, he helped provide homes for thousands of families in need. His diplomatic work often succeeded where official channels faltered, earning him the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 for his contributions to international peace and conflict resolution.

These achievements transcend party lines. Democrats and Republicans alike have praised President Carter’s humanitarian work and his dedication to public service.

His passing should inspire national unity, a moment to reflect on the values of compassion, integrity, and selflessness that he embodied throughout his life. Yet, instead of honoring his legacy, some officials have chosen to prioritize political agendas over respect for tradition.

This decision to disregard the U.S. Flag Code suggests a troubling trend: **a willingness to abandon established norms to curry favor with a particular political figure.** This behavior undermines the dignity of public office and dishonors the memory of a great American leader.

Governors and legislators on both sides of the aisle must take a stand against such blatant disregard for protocol. They must uphold American values, prioritize national unity, and represent the best interests of their constituents.

President Carter's legacy offers a model of the statesmanship and humility that the nation needs. His life of service reminds us that the strength of democracy lies in shared values, not in blind loyalty to individuals.

As we reflect on his remarkable contributions, we should demand that our leaders honor his memory with the respect it deserves, demonstrating a commitment to unity and tradition that transcends partisan divisions. In doing so, we reaffirm the principles that have long united us as a nation.

Share your thoughts and comments at chrisjoneslistens@gmail.com.