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Transcript for Episode 07: Workers' Voice: Organized Labor and the Big Political & Governmental Changes

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[Begin James W. Murry]

00:00:00

[Music]

00:00:03

Narrator: From the beginning of Montana's distinctive yet troubled history, the Treasure State was dominated both economically and politically by powerful outside interests who shipped in capital and bought control of the State.

00:00:14

Historians tell us that as the Anaconda Company and its friends ran Montana, economic and political power flowed out into the hands of distant capitalists and corporations.

00:00:26

Policy was determined in far off New York City and control of the press was rigid. Anaconda's corporate dominance in Montana's political affairs was unique in American history. For its first 75 years, Montana was a one-company State. But then big winds of change roared across the Treasure State; between 1965 and 1980 Montanans ripped off their copper collar, transforming Montana from a corporate colony into a free modern State.

00:00:55

The people finally controlled their own destiny. The pitched battle between the people and the established power structure was not easily won but fired In a Crucible of Change a new Montana was born. Join Evan Barrett and real history makers of the time as they shine the light on this remarkable era.

00:01:21

Evan Barrett: Welcome back to *In the Crucible of Change*. We have a really special program today as we look upon this period of change and we have a--a really special guest. Today we're going to talk about the--the role, the--the kind of change that occurred in Montana that was done on behalf of Montana's workers--the political changes, the governmental changes that took place in the Labor Movement.

00:01:51

And our special guest here today is--in the interest of disclosure is for 46 years a dear friend of mine, mentor of mine, friend of mine to this very day, Jim Murry of the Montana State AFL-CIO and we've had enough history together that I want to say that we've made an agreement about a number of things that we will not talk about on the air. **[Laughs]**

00:02:18

Now I want to say in terms of Jim Murry and this period of change, remember we're looking at the--the change that took place between 1965 and 1980. That's the Crucible of Change period, a dramatic progressive change in the State of Montana. And in that period at the conclusion of that period, in 1982, the *Lee Newspapers* did a survey of 100 Montana leaders. They selected 100 leaders and they asked them the question; *who are the top five most influential people in the State of Montana?* And they didn't give any names; they just--open-ended; *who would you name as the top five?* And as a result of that they ran a series in the newspaper--who the top five most powerful people in Montana was. So obviously we're speaking about this whole period we--we just went through in the--in the Crucible of Change and perhaps to no surprise, the number one most powerful person in the State of Montana that was declared by those leaders in 1982 was Governor Ted Schwinden.

00:03:23

But the number two most powerful person in the State of Montana in that 1982 survey was Jim Murry. And I think that spoke to the involvement and impact of organized Labor under his leadership during the--during the period of the--of change in Montana. So Jim, welcome onboard.

00:03:46

James Murry: Thank you Evan; it's great to be here.

00:03:48

Evan Barrett: So it's--I guess we always say it's just great to be.

00:03:51

James Murry: That's right. **[Laughs]**

00:03:54

Evan Barrett: Jim, you know you were the face of Labor in Montana during this whole period. I mean we don't like to personify it, but you represented workers. You represented organized workers and you represented every worker in a way. Can you tell us about what it was that brought you into the Labor Movement at the beginning of this period?

00:04:16

James Murry: Well Evan, I grew up in Laurel and I got started in the Labor Movement there; followed in my dad's footsteps by the way because he was a Trade Unionist. The thing that--the thing that--that got me--drove me to the Movement, Labor Movement was I saw it as a vehicle for needed social change for a lot of people whether they carried a Union card or not. I wanted to be part of that bringing about that needed change and--and got to play that role.

00:04:49

Evan Barrett: So when you were--when you were struggling for--for change what kind of change was pent up, desire for change was pent up in--in the workers of Montana as you entered this period?

00:05:00

James Murry: Well it was an interesting time because Montana was always one of the most highly unionized States in the nation. We were probably at that time ranked three or four; we were always in the--in the--

00:05:11

Evan Barrett: That was because of the high industrialization and the Anaconda Company?

00:05:14

James Murry: That's right and everything--we had such a strong Union culture in Montana. Everything--just about everything was organized. And but--but at the same time, when--when I came to Helena, we had some of the worst worker protection laws in the nation. Our unemployment comp and workers' comp laws, benefits--compared

to States like Mississippi and Oklahoma. We didn't have--we didn't have a minimum wage law. We didn't have collective bargaining rights for public employees. We had what was called then--it was meet and confer. Instead of collective bargaining it was collective begging.

00:06:00

And so part of the--part of that change and the thing that really drove me was bringing about that change primarily for workers. But it also as we made the changes in the worker protection laws, workers' comp laws, and--and minimum wage, unemployment comp laws as an example--they served people that were not in Unions, too. They served--they served everybody and raised the standard of living for--for all workers in Montana. It was an exciting time.

00:06:30

Evan Barrett: Well one of the things I recall under your leadership that Labor was always fighting for--and believed that what was good for a Union worker was good for everybody.

00:06:41

James Murry: That's right.

00:06:41

Evan Barrett: And that meant things like strong support for public education.

00:06:47

James Murry: Always.

00:06:48

Evan Barrett: At all levels; the clean and healthful environment or places--it was Labor members and other workers who needed places to go fish, hunt, and camp and needed clean water and needed clean air and so on.

00:07:02

So your battle seemed to me to be much bigger than what people perceived in terms of the narrow mission of--of a Labor leader.

00:07:11

James Murry: Oh certainly. And--and as those Environmental Movements started, we were very strong supporters of--of changes in the laws to--to protect people not only in the workplace but in the communities. And those communities where there were dirty plants, the communities themselves were--were dirty.

00:07:32

I remember reading about in your hometown of Butte about how the--the ladies there were thought of--to be very attractive because their--their color was pale. Well it--the reason they were pale is they were sick. They were--the--

00:07:49

Evan Barrett: Arsenic poisoning and lead.

00:07:50

James Murry: Yeah, and everything that was being pumped into the air. I can remember there was a--a chemical plant down at the Garrison Junction. I don't know if you remember that.

00:07:59

Evan Barrett: Garrison; yeah.

00:08:00

James Murry: It put out terrible air pollution. Kids were being made sick. The--they were having a terrible time with it. It didn't get much attention until the cows started losing their teeth and dying. And that's what made people think more strongly about perhaps we need some changes. And so we--we were involved in making the fight to change that, to make it better for everybody, not just workers, but we--we also wanted it to improve in the--in those

plants because we didn't have very meaningful safety and--and safety laws either. That came about primarily with the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the--and we played a role in that.

00:08:42

Evan Barrett: So and today we're going to focus quite a bit on--on the--on the way this change was done through the political activities in the political world. And probably even though you focused in and took part in changing laws and--that affected the everyday life of all Montanans your hallmark was the role you played in getting that done through the political arena. And you first came; you came out of the OCAW, the Oil, Chemical, Atomic Workers Union.

00:09:12

James Murry: That's right.

00:09:13

Evan Barrett: And--and you worked at a refinery in--in Laurel. But in what year did you come to the State Fed and in what role?

00:09:20

James Murry: Arlene and I came to Helena in 1966 as the--and I was the COPE Director and it was my job to--

00:09:27

Evan Barrett: COPE is the political guy?

00:09:29

James Murry: Committee on Political Education.

00:09:30

Evan Barrett: Yeah.

00:09:30

James Murry: And so my responsibility was to develop a political--a political program out across the State. That was the year that Tim Babcock was challenging Lee Metcalf for Lee Metcalf's Senate seat and that was one of the most important Elections in--in the nation.

00:09:51

Evan Barrett: Think about it in today's terms. That was a sitting Senator being challenged by a sitting Governor--

00:09:58

James Murry: Republican Governor.

00:09:58

Evan Barrett: --of the other Party.

00:09:59

James Murry: That's right.

00:10:00

Evan Barrett: And so that was--had to be the big ticket race of maybe the decade.

00:10:05

James Murry: Oh a lot of attention, and we had--and there was some insistence on some changes as to how political--how--how Labor had participated in political campaigns in the past. I remember Al Barkan who was the National COPE Director insisted that I spend--I spend 20-some days--I don't remember how many--out of each month on the road talking to people and organizing out there. In other words, the--he made it clear that they didn't want me sitting around in an office talking to people on the telephone. I had to be out there with the troops.

00:10:41

And--and we--we--and so we--we changed--we changed that approach very dramatically.

00:10:50

Evan Barrett: So you came as a COPE Director. The Director of the State Fed, the AFL-CIO was who at the time?

00:10:56

James Murry: Jim Umber was the Executive Secretary of the State AFL-CIO. That was my predecessor.

00:11:02

Evan Barrett: And so--so you and he battled through the '66 Election and--and that's right at the beginning of the Crucible of Change if you will and it was maybe emblematic of what was going to come. I mean Lee Metcalf's victory meant a lot to the Progressive Movement in Montana didn't it?

00:11:23

James Murry: Oh yes; it--it meant everything, not only in Montana but nationally. It was--it was--it was really critical. The other thing we looked at, at that time was we realized that--that campaign, the Metcalf Campaign was going to have a tremendous impact on Legislative races for example and on the Congressional races at that time.

00:11:44

So we melded all of those activities in voter registration, *get-out-to-vote* efforts and gosh I can remember in the Great Falls, we had--we set up telephone banks. I think we had 20--25 or 27 telephones and telephone banks in a COPE Headquarters in Great Falls and kept those phones--phones manned--manned--we--they had those--worked on those phones from the Primary Election through the General.

00:12:12

So that took a tremendous number of volunteers. It was all done--all of the work was done by volunteers. And it was a great outpouring of support to bring about the change that we're talking about that came during this--

00:12:26

Evan Barrett: And in that--in that Election in addition to the Lee Metcalf victory which was obviously one that excited everyone, Arnold Olsen was reelected to Congress.

00:12:35

James Murry: That's right.

00:12:36

Evan Barrett: There wasn't a Governor's race and in the Eastern District there was a challenger to Representative Battin, by the name of John Melcher, who surfaced later.

00:12:45

James Murry: That's right; that's right.

00:12:47

Evan Barrett: And I think it was kind of an indication of the future a little bit. Now all of the sudden, we started moving up toward 1968--

00:12:56

James Murry: And by the way John Melcher, you might remember served in the Legislature before that and had a Legislative career here in Montana.

00:13:04

Evan Barrett: Right, and Mayor of Forsyth.

00:13:06

James Murry: That's right. *[Laughs]* I had forgotten about that.

00:13:09

Evan Barrett: You know we'll be having some programming on John Melcher and his role.

00:13:14

James Murry: Great.

00:13:14

Evan Barrett: So we move onto '68 and--and but before we do let me set a little tone for the '68 Election because in the 1967 Legislature where you were obviously up here working, the big battle royale was over the sales tax. Jim Felt, the Speaker of the House brought the sales tax up and pushed and pushed and pushed and the fight in the Senate against it was Senator Gene Mahoney. Can you discuss that and a little bit about how that affected the look at the race for Governor two years after that or a year after that?

00:13:47

James Murry: Well Gene Mahoney was really a--a kind of a hero of those--those in the Labor Movement. He had a very distinguished Legislative career, always made the fight for workers on worker protection laws, but also in that sales tax fight that you're talking about. So what that did is that--that kind of--that set the tone for us going into the Gubernatorial Election when Gene Mahoney faced Forrest Anderson in that Primary Election. And Forrest was a friend, too; he was--he was a friend also.

00:14:20

But our support for the most part went to Gene Mahoney. There was--I had some friends that were kind of distressed about that as was Forrest Anderson was upset about that and let me know about it.

00:14:32

Evan Barrett: Yeah; we're going to talk about that in just a second. But it's interesting looking at that race; Forrest Anderson ran and Gene Mahoney ran and those were the two that everyone remembers but of course the Western-- or Leroy--excuse me, Forrest ran and yeah and--and Leroy Anderson popped up out of Conrad and ran as well. And--and Willard Fraser ran.

00:14:59

James Murry: That's right from Billings; Willard Fraser from Billings.

00:15:01

Evan Barrett: Yeah and--but out of that Forrest won the Primary and most--you're telling me that most of Labor kind of threw in with Mahoney because of the sales tax and other things he did in the Legislature.

00:15:14

James Murry: That's right. And we didn't have--you know we didn't have any money. Everything we did was with volunteers and we were developing the ability to put more volunteers on the street than anybody around. And they really responded; workers really responded well on jobs all across the State of Montana.

00:15:32

So it was a--it was a--it was a fairly close Election but as Forrest told me, he was going to *kick my ass*.

[Laughs]

00:15:44

Evan Barrett: Now--now he won--it was fairly narrow; it was about 30--about four-percent difference between them.

00:15:49

James Murry: I don't remember; yeah, yeah, yeah.

00:15:51

Evan Barrett: And they were way ahead of Leroy Anderson and way, way ahead of Willard Fraser.

00:15:55

James Murry: Oh yes.

00:15:55

Evan Barrett: So obviously now there's a nominee of the Democratic Party that most or organized Labor including yourself had not actively supported in the Primary. What happened?

00:16:08

James Murry: You know the funny thing about that; we really felt that Forrest was too close to the Montana Power Company. That was one of the--the issues that--that--that we talked about all the time.

00:16:19

But Forrest was able--was able to win that. The thing I remember that--and it was really a delight; Forrest called me and because you know he had been Attorney General and--and we were--we were friends and we--we talked to each other. Forrest called me and asked me to come to the Four Bs. He wanted to meet with me. This was right after the Election. And so I went down to the Four Bs and we sat down together. And he looked at me and he said well I told you just what I was going to do; I was going to *kick your ass*. And he said *now what are you going to do?* And he looked at me just like that. **[Gestures]** *Now what are you going to do?* I said we're going to be the most supportive organization you have behind you in your race for Governor. He said *do you mean that?* And I said you damn right I mean that.

00:17:03

And so we went from there. And--and we were; and we--we fulfilled that promise.

00:17:09

Evan Barrett: Now that brings us to that General Election in 1968 and the core issue of that Election I think it was--somebody tells me it was our--our friend Jim **[Graf]** who was working for **Bob Hinkle** at the time came up with those four words to suggest to Forrest--

00:17:28

James Murry: *Pay more what for?*

00:17:31

Evan Barrett: *Pay more what for?*

00:17:31

James Murry: Interesting, too; Jim [Graf] and I went to school in Laurel. We grew up together. He was a couple of years ahead of me in school but we played--we played football and--and baseball together.

00:17:42

Evan Barrett: And it--don't we always say that Montana is a--a small town with really long streets? We all seem to know each other.

00:17:48

James Murry: That's right. [Laughs] Well and related, and most of us are related but--.

00:17:53

Evan Barrett: Yeah; now so *pay more what for*--came to the fore and--and in essence that was the--the crux of the Election with--with Babcock and Anderson and Labor played--went right in there obviously very strongly, huh?

00:18:05

James Murry: Well we had a--we had a very strong position in favor of fair taxes and sales taxes. The sales tax was clearly unfair to--to workers and to low-income people. And that was--and--and the--

00:18:22

Evan Barrett: The State had shifted taxes.

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James Murry: That's right; that's right.

00:18:24

Evan Barrett: Yeah; from business to little people.

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James Murry: People of wealth to--to middle-income and low-income people--

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Evan Barrett: And that of course ended up being the--the premier political battle of that whole era and it did set the tone for a lot. But--but when Forrest was elected and he was elected by a fairly substantial margin--

00:18:45

James Murry: Yes.

00:18:47

Evan Barrett: --by 12-percentage points--

00:18:47

James Murry: In the General Election; yeah.

00:18:48

Evan Barrett: --in the General Election when he was elected over Babcock it was like a 12-percentage point win. That was a lot. It kind of put the sales tax to bed for a little while so when the '69 session hit they didn't bring up the sales tax having just kind of suffered through it and--and it--it wasn't in the forefront. There were a few other things that happened in '69 but the interesting political thing that emerged out of '69 and--I think we could do a whole show on the rest of the '68 Election which had to do with the Democratic Party in Chicago and Hubert Humphry and--and all that and--and we might even do a show on that, but--but--was that when Richard Nixon was elected President he immediately upon going into office in late January had to name some District Judges and he named Jim Battin to be the District--Federal Judge in Montana which opened up the Eastern District Congressional Seat.

00:19:51

And here was an opportunity in a Special Election for the grassroots empowerment of people to show itself. That was what was happening in a lot of cases on things. People were feeling very-empowered and very active on a lot of fronts. Suddenly we had a Special Election in June of 1969; can you reflect on that and your--and Labor's role in it?

00:20:13

James Murry: Well and that--the--the Montana AFL-CIO became very involved in that campaign supporting John Melcher. And you might remember that--that his win was by a fairly narrow margin, almost by the--almost by the absentee ballots that were cast. And we mounted probably the most aggressive absentee ballot campaign ever before in the history of the State.

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And--and it was--and it was very, very successful. But it was a hard fought; that was a hard fought campaign.

00:20:46

Evan Barrett: That was in June of '69.

00:20:48

James Murry: Yes.

00:20:49

Evan Barrett: He had come out of the Legislature and he went into a Nominating Convention with--among the Democrats.

00:20:54

James Murry: Over in Lewistown; yes.

00:20:55

Evan Barrett: Yeah in Lewistown as I remember. And there's some pretty interesting names that ran against him but it's--but he emerged. And--and he had a--he had a seatmate in the Legislature who went over into the Eastern Montana from Butte to help out with the Election. Do you remember who that was?

00:21:12

James Murry: I think that was a guy by the name of Pat Williams wasn't it?

00:21:14

Evan Barrett: Jeez you never know--

00:21:16

James Murry: [*Laughs*]

00:21:15

Evan Barrett: It's funny how all this kind of emerges.

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James Murry: Small world.

00:21:18

Evan Barrett: And everything else and--

00:21:19

James Murry: That's right; that's right.

00:21:20

Evan Barrett: --when John was--by the way and it gives; there's a continuum to it all in a sense that this is--Pat went to Congress to be the Top Aide to Melcher and it simply wetted his appetite for wanting to be a Member of Congress, which he later was for 18 years.

00:21:33

James Murry: That's right; that's right. That's right.

00:21:35

Evan Barrett: So the story goes on and on and on. Now in--now we end up with the 1970 Election and one of the--what came out of that was it was a bad--bad news in the sense that our friend Arnold Olsen got beat. And the Western District which was highly Democratic, suddenly had a--a Republican who was Dick Shoup who was the Mayor of Missoula.

00:22:03

James Murry: That's right.

00:22:04

Evan Barrett: But you know it's a lot of stuff going on, the '70 Election, but the big thing was when the '70--when it was over, when it was over, and the Legislature met, the sales tax rose back up again. And that became the kind of premier political battle of the '71 session which Alec Hansen recalled for me--remember in those days the Legislature met for 60-calendar days under the *old* Constitution, not legislative days, 60-calendar days. And if they went home for a day it counted as a day. And if they went to the 60th day and they--they weren't done with their work, they would stop the clock at 11:59 and hang--

00:22:49

James Murry: Put a shroud over the clock.

00:22:51

Evan Barrett: --put a shroud over the clock.

00:22:51

James Murry: That's right.

00:22:52

Evan Barrett: And keep working without pay.

00:22:53

James Murry: That's right; that's right.

00:22:54

Evan Barrett: And Alec indicated there were 102 days when you counted that session and the special session over the sales tax and the--and the--the Summit Committees that were meeting to try to find a solution to the sales tax and--and the Foothills Committees and that they finally ended up putting--deciding to put it on the ballot. And in those days you could put choices on the ballot. And Forrest Anderson and the Democrats opted for what sounds a pretty radical thing--a 40-percent income tax surcharge as opposed to a 2-percent sales tax.

00:23:33

James Murry: Sales tax.

00:23:35

Evan Barrett: And that was the battle and they decided to put the Election that was late, they decided that in June; they said well how do we do this Election? Well we've got this little Election for the Constitutional Convention in November.

00:23:49

James Murry: The Delegates, yes.

00:23:51

Evan Barrett: The Delegates; why don't we piggyback this and there's some big history--occurred between June and November related to that--that I think impacted Montana for two decades. Can you talk a little bit about that?

00:24:06

James Murry: Well that was--that was really--that was really an interesting time. The sales tax supporters were making the case that their contributions supporting the sales tax came from little old retired ladies and--and--and poor people and--that wanted a sales tax. Well we knew that--that wasn't the case.

00:24:29

And of course during all of that we were able to find the records [*Laughs*] of--of the--the contributors to the sales tax and--and they were--and it was supported by the major corporations.

00:24:43

Evan Barrett: It was a very interesting thing by the way and just at the personal level, it was during this period in June of 1971 after the Legislature was over and I was involved in the reorganization, executive reorganization effort including in the Legislature; Governor Anderson through his Executive Assistant Ron Richards, and I forgot to ask you about that and I'm going to come back to that about the--the relationship you had there, but--but they said would you--we want you to go down and be the Executive Secretary it was called back then of the Democratic--

00:25:17

James Murry: That's right.

00:25:18

Evan Barrett: --Party. So you and I got seriously involved in June of 1971 because the primary opposition to the sales tax was the Farmers' Union, the AFL-CIO, and the Democratic Party.

00:25:32

James Murry: And that was the Coalition. That was primarily the Coalition that--kind of the foundation for progressive politics in Montana for a long time. So it came together; it--it--it had been together but it really kind of solidified around that issue at the time.

00:25:48

Evan Barrett: And let me ask you a little bit about that relationship in terms of how it was personified back in 1966 and--and '68 in your relationship with Ron Richards, Ron who was then the Executive Secretary of the Party and later the Executive Assistant to the Governor?

00:26:07

James Murry: Yes; well Ron Richards as you know was one of my best friends. He was one of your best friends. We all worked together for so many years. I met Ron when he was doing an internship for Lee Metcalf.

00:26:23

Evan Barrett: Metcalf intern.

00:26:25

James Murry: And that was before--even before Arlene and I came to Helena in 1966. I was active in the political things in Yellowstone County and Laurel, President of my Local Union and--and--and all of that. But I was--I was working with Ron even then. And as time went by and--and we--and we came to Helena, we really worked closely together in the Metcalf Campaign when challenged by Tim Babcock.

00:26:52

So we were--we confided in each other. We were good friends; philosophically we were good friends. Sometimes had some disagreements at times, like especially after he went to work for Forrest Anderson we had a pretty harsh disagreement over the appointment of the Labor Commissioner [*Laughs*] and almost ended up breaking up our families it was so bad. We had it--but those things happened. We--we--we could have those disagreements. It was an interesting time. We could have those disagreements, feel real strongly about the point we were making at the time, but we knew who our adversaries were and we knew who our friends were. And so we hung onto our

friends [*Laughs*] just as tight as we could. And that was the kind of relationship that Ron and I had and that--you know, and that relationship continued until--until he passed away.

00:27:42

Evan Barrett: Now so Ron became Executive Assistant to Governor Anderson once he was elected. And so he was in that position. And--and after the '71 session when the sales tax was brought to the fore and that was a big issue--

00:27:55

James Murry: That's right.

00:27:56

Evan Barrett: --I mean it was a big Election and if the sales--a lot of people were feeling if the sales tax would have passed that the Speaker of the House Jim Lucas would have been slam dunk for Governor.

00:28:05

James Murry: That's right.

00:28:06

Evan Barrett: And it's--it was kind of an interesting period. And there was a--a major group formed called SOS, Save Our State, which purportedly was filled with little contributions from little old ladies, but they had a lot of money to promote a sales tax. And everyone thought that it was--

00:28:25

James Murry: A little more than they would be able to raise from little old ladies.

00:28:29

Evan Barrett: And that--but there was a lot of denial about--about where that money was coming from was it not?

00:28:36

James Murry: Yes.

00:28:36

Evan Barrett: It turned out it was from all the corporate interests, the big giant corporate interests and--

00:28:39

James Murry: And we were able--working together we were able to disclose where those contributions were coming from.

00:28:45

Evan Barrett: Now it's--and I remember the day and this goes to the issue; you always were such a hard worker. You always worked harder than anybody else ever worked and you made--you drug people along behind you and you shamed them into working harder. If you were not up at midnight with your lights on in your office then you were going to get a call from you the next morning saying why were your lights off? You know it was midnight; I drove by and your lights were off. And you--

00:29:07

James Murry: Are you on vacation? [*Laughs*]

00:29:08

Evan Barrett: Yeah; and so you always drove people to that. And so on a day, and I believe it would have been Columbus Day when everyone else had the day off, it was a public holiday, and--and--

00:29:21

James Murry: That's right.

00:29:21

Evan Barrett: --you and I and COPE Director Ernie Post were sitting in your office and we were joined by two people, Gordon Bennett and Duke Crowley.

00:29:31

James Murry: Duke Crowley that's right.

00:29:31

Evan Barrett: And we were sitting around just BSing and we were saying--and Harry Billings--

00:29:35

James Murry: That's right and Harry Billings was there.

00:29:37

Evan Barrett: Harry was the head of the group called COST, Citizens Opposed to Sales Tax.

00:29:41

James Murry: And he had been--Harry had been the Editor for the *People's Voice* and when we had to shut the *People's Voice* down I was on that Board when we--when we shut it down; then Harry went to work for the Liquor Control Board for a while and I--I talked him into leaving there and coming over and going to work for us at the AFL-CIO.

00:30:01

Evan Barrett: So he took--so he ended up moving into COST--C-O-S-T, Citizens Opposes to Sales Tax. Now for the--for our listeners, *People's Voice* was an independent weekly newspaper for progressive thinkers in Montana that was big in a time when the Anaconda Company owned virtually all of the press in Montana.

00:30:19

James Murry: And it was supported--the *People's Voice* was supported primarily by that Coalition of people that we were talking about earlier. There were Trade Unionists, the Farmers' Union, the members of those organizations, and the Democratic Party.

00:30:31

Evan Barrett: So--so we're sitting around. Harry and Ernie and you and me and suddenly Duke and Gordon are there and we kind of raised the question *well wouldn't it be nice if we knew where this money was coming from?* And I can't remember if it was Duke or Gordon but one of them said *you know; in the old 1912 Corrupt Practices Act that was passed by an initiative of the people of Montana--the very Act which was recently thrown out by Citizens United by the way--*

00:31:02

James Murry: That's right.

00:31:03

Evan Barrett: *--there's a provision that says the treasure of one political Party has to open their books up to the Treasurer of a competitive political Party.*

00:31:13

James Murry: I think that was Duke Crowley that made that argument and--

00:31:14

Evan Barrett: And--

00:31:15

James Murry: --but Gordon was somewhat familiar with it.

00:31:16

Evan Barrett: And so they went off and grabbed the law books and came back and showed us the law. And we said well that means Harry Billings gets to go look at the books of SOS. And Harry started the--the next day he started knocking on the door of SOS asking for their books. And they kept not answering it and not answering it and finally he got the Sheriff to go with him and we knew the Sheriff and--and they still weren't going to do it. And I was--then he brought Dan Foley. Dan Foley was an investigative reporter with the *Lee Newspaper*.

00:31:50

James Murry: In Laurel by the way.

00:31:52

Evan Barrett: [*Laughs*] Another Laurel connection.

00:31:53

James Murry: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

00:31:55

Evan Barrett: Oh no kidding; it's all Laurel. And so Harry walked up to the doors of SOS with--with Dan Foley there and the Treasurer of that Committee was called--was a guy named Ken Nybo.

00:32:09

James Murry: Nybo.

00:32:10

Evan Barrett: And the lady answered the door and--and Harry said, *where are your books?* And she said *I don't have them*. He said *well where are they? I need to look at them. The law says I should be able to look at them*. And the reporter is sitting there taking all notes--

00:32:23

James Murry: Ken Nybo had them.

00:32:24

Evan Barrett: Yeah; and *well Ken Nybo has them. Well where is Ken Nybo? Well he's hunting.* **[Laughs]** I never-- I have never forgotten; the next day the big story in all the *Lee Newspapers* of Montana--

00:32:34

James Murry: And the front--and front page stories.

00:32:36

Evan Barrett: --yeah said--started the following way: *Oh where oh where has Ken Nybo gone? Oh where, oh where can he be? He's off in the hills a 'hunting with the books that no one can see.*

00:32:49

James Murry: That's right. **[Laughs]**

00:32:52

Evan Barrett: And it set the tone; the big question was *well what's with these hidden books?* And of course a mystery always interests people politically. And you remember that Arnold Olsen who is now an ex-Congressman was kind of--had some time on his hands and he wasn't a Judge yet and on behalf of SOS he--he went to file a suit in Victor Fall's Court.

00:33:14

James Murry: And we didn't have--and we didn't have any money to pay anybody--

00:33:18

Evan Barrett: So Arnold said I'll do it.

00:33:20

James Murry: *[Laughs]*

00:33:20

Evan Barrett: And he went and filed a suit in Victor Fall's Court and Victor Fall said--the District Judge set a show-cause hearing that said you shall show up with the books on a given date or show cause why you should not. And the date he set was the day before the Election. And then there's an ensuing story that unfolds on that thing. But let's jump back a little bit to the debate about the sales tax. How--I mean how many times did you go out and give speeches on that would you--?

00:33:52

James Murry: Oh gosh; we all--you know we just lived on the road. We just--we lived on the road talking to--I spent my time, most of my time with workers at Local Union meetings and--and Council meetings and things--and things like that. But we all--we all just--just literally lived on the road during that period.

00:34:13

Evan Barrett: It thrust me into the forefront of having to deal with this stuff--

00:34:15

James Murry: It sure did.

00:34:16

Evan Barrett: --politically.

00:34:17

James Murry: It sure did.

00:34:18

Evan Barrett: I was wet behind the ears and all of the sudden I'm standing up as if I'm an authority on--on the sales tax and--and rabble rousing the troops and--

00:34:26

James Murry: We all--we all became tax experts.

00:34:29

Evan Barrett: Yeah. [*Laughs*] And you know by gosh you know for 20 years thereafter I had a high degree of interest in taxes, maybe 30 years in front of the Legislative Committees and actually thought I knew what I was talking about.

00:34:40

Now Clyde Jarvis did the same thing with the Farmers' Union and that was Clyde before he had his toupee right?

00:34:44

James Murry: That's right; that's right.

00:34:46

Evan Barrett: Clyde was well known because the Farmers' Union had a presence on the radio.

00:34:53

James Murry: Well but Clyde had been--remember; Clyde had been a PR guy for the Farmers' Union and served in that--in that capacity I think when Leonard Kenfield was the President and then you remember Leonard was killed in a car accident and we went through a period there of where Gordon Tweet was the President of the Montana Farmers' Union. And then as--as time went by, Clyde ended up as the President of the Montana Farmers' Union.

00:35:22

Evan Barrett: But he has a full-throated voice and he used--what he used to do during the Legislature, every day they had a radio program--

00:35:28

James Murry: Called *Featuring the Facts*.

00:35:30

Evan Barrett: --*Featuring the Facts*. So he was a voice that everyone in Montana knew. So he was out there speaking and you were out there speaking and I was just tagging along to try to do this stuff. But remember that interesting thing that happened in Missoula? I learned a lot of things from you but this was very, very instrumental in this whole battle over corporate money that eventually Montana has made a decision that corporate money meant corporate influence and that was bad at the time. And that resulted in the--the sales tax going down so overwhelmingly.

00:36:03

James Murry: And at the insistence on transparency for all of this.

00:36:08

Evan Barrett: Yeah; but--you know because it was all hidden. It was all hidden.

00:36:11

James Murry: That's right.

00:36:11

Evan Barrett: And--and so you were prodding the Speaker of the House Jim Lucas to reveal if he was involved in this and if the corporations were involved in this SOS and they kept saying no, no; it's not us. It's the little old ladies and so on. And one day I went to KGBO Television over in Missoula and a--a gentleman there who shall maybe go unnamed for now--

00:36:33

James Murry: Probably be better. *[Laughs]*

00:36:35

Evan Barrett: --at the conclusion of my interview said *would you like to know what's in Jim Lucas' briefcase?* And I said *gee; I don't know.* And he said *well maybe if you come back at 8 o'clock tonight--and he said because we can talk about it.* And I said *well okay.* And I come back and he says *well Jim was here a few days ago and he left his briefcase and it's still here.* And so he reached in the briefcase and he pulls out--and in here are all these letters to--

00:36:59

James Murry: Donors letters.

00:37:01

Evan Barrett: --the Anaconda Company and the Montana Power Company and Burlington Northern and Plum Creek Lumber, Montana Chamber of Commerce, and all the big corporations--

00:37:09

James Murry: Contractors.

00:37:10

Evan Barrett: The Contractors Association saying *would you be part of this?* So it was just straight up evidence that all the corporate money was there.

00:37:17

James Murry: And it was--and it also showed a record as I recall; it showed a--showed a record of some of the significant contributions that had been made.

00:37:25

Evan Barrett: Yeah; and you know we often look back on that and say--but I didn't know what to do with it. I came back and said *Jim what do you do with these letters?* And you said *well we ask him 10 more times to say no before we reveal the letters.* And the letters went out and it really exploded that race.

00:37:40

James Murry: Oh it sure did.

00:37:41

Evan Barrett: Which I think people thought was a little bit closer until that point because it was as long as the--

00:37:46

James Murry: Yeah; I--I--you know and the polling wasn't as extensive as it is now. It probably wasn't--it probably--it wasn't as technical and everything but as I recall it was showing us that we--that--that was going to be a tough race. We had to fight right up until the last minute. But with all of that with the not being able to get the records and the denial, the Jim Lucas-denial of--of where the money came from it--the whole thing just exploded. And not only did we win in that--in that--in that Election over the sales tax, but it impacted the Election to the Constitutional Convention.

00:38:27

Evan Barrett: Yeah; I was going to say that--that's kind of the thing that the--the kind of unknown or unrecognized impact of the sales tax on so many things was the impact on the Constitution--

00:38:40

James Murry: Yeah; but we didn't have any trouble recognizing the impact that--that had on Elections.

00:38:44

Evan Barrett: [*Laughs*] Now and so the Election is held in November. Let's before we get to the results of the Election back up to Victor Fall's Court because all this is happening in the press and Arnold had filed the lawsuit and the story--all of the sudden the day before the Election comes and they have to show up with either the books or say why not. And my recollection is they came with the books and said why not, but they made apparently a little mistake. They took the books and they gave them to the Clerk of the Court and they became part of the record. And while they were in there arguing in Court, Harry Billings who knew everybody in Montana [*Laughs*] and everybody in Montana was thumbing through the records--

00:39:31

James Murry: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

00:39:31

Evan Barrett: --and finding all the money in there that came from all the big corporations and all the connections and everything else and the next thing you know all the press people are not in the Courtroom. They're standing over Harry's shoulder--

00:39:40

James Murry: Looking--looking--

00:39:41

Evan Barrett: --and he's saying *look at this and look at this and look at this and look at that.*

00:39:43

James Murry: That's right; oh yeah.

00:39:44

Evan Barrett: And the next day was Election Day and on Election Day the front page of every State newspaper in Montana said *Corporate Giants Fund the Sales Tax.*

00:39:58

James Murry: Yeah; that's right. It was pretty clear.

00:40:00

Evan Barrett: So everybody who got up to vote saw that and then went to vote. And what was the result of the Election? It was 70-plus--

00:40:08

James Murry: Oh--

00:40:09

Evan Barrett: --70-percent plus against the sales tax.

00:40:11

James Murry: Overwhelming; overwhelming. Just overwhelming--

00:40:15

Evan Barrett: And it had an impact, even though there was a really, really good group of progressive people interested in good Constitutional change it was a Partisan Election. It ended up being an Election where the sales tax vote kind of tipped the playing field.

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James Murry: Oh it really--I don't think it kind of did; I think it did just very, very significantly. It really had an impact.

00:40:38

Evan Barrett: So you ended up--we as a State ended up with electing a--a Constitutional Convention that consisted of almost 60-percent Democrats and--and actually to the credit of those Delegates they were interested in Constitutional change.

00:40:58

James Murry: Oh they sure were.

00:40:58

Evan Barrett: So there were so many progressive Republicans running in that as well as a number of Independents. So the makeup of that Constitutional Convention was the next--the next big thing for Labor to be looking at was suddenly we had a--a Constitutional Convention convening.

00:41:17

James Murry: Well and this--and this demand--something to remember about that too is this demand for change that had been going on since, well it had been going on since in the '60s and that--that demand for change just kept building. And the result of that was that there were--you were talking about the progressive Republicans that were--were Delegates; there were a--there were a lot of progressive Republicans in the Legislature in those days.

00:41:46

They--they--they could feel that demand and that demand for change, and so they responded to it and they--they responded very favorably. But yes; there were some Republicans in the--in the Constitutional Convention that--that made quite a contribution to the success of that--of that document.

00:42:08

But remember, too that the--now you have this--this divide between Democrats and Republicans with--I think most Republicans not being very supportive of environmental regulations and things like that. And in those days we had a number of--of Republicans that stood up for and supported very strongly changes in the laws. Well at that time we were enacting the Environmental Laws. But they played a role; they played a role in that--.

00:42:43

Evan Barrett: Well in fact, we're going to feature some of them in--in--

00:42:45

James Murry: And that's wonderful.

00:42:46

Evan Barrett: Some of those Republican Legislators of the time who were the leaders and the sponsors of the Environmental Bills.

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James Murry: That's right; that's right.

00:42:53

Evan Barrett: It's a little hard to see that in today's context but it's--but it's true.

00:42:59

James Murry: I think that people today--you know that's a long time ago and it's--and it really is; it's almost ancient history. And people have--just have a very difficult time understanding the Republican role in those--in those changes, but those were good changes. And they--they--they did good work; did some good work.

00:43:19

Evan Barrett: And when you talk about the pent up demand for change which is really what this whole series is about, I think it's good to reflect upon the fact that in a Democratic society people in the political world ultimately unless--if they can't convince the electorate, the body politic to go along with them, they end up going along with the body politic. I mean or you don't stay in office.

00:43:48

James Murry: That's right.

00:43:48

Evan Barrett: Now there's a lot of manipulation of that in the political processes, but that being said, Ted Schwinden said right after World War II, you came back with the people who were becoming enlightened. They had been around the world. They--they had been seeing the world at--during the War. They came back under the GI Bill. They got educated and suddenly there was this new perspective on things.

00:44:14

James Murry: And they had a sense of--and they had a sense of what could happen if they--if people worked together.

00:44:19

Evan Barrett: Yeah.

00:44:21

James Murry: That was another--

00:44:21

Evan Barrett: Well you learn that in the Military for sure.

00:44:24

James Murry: Yes; yes, yes.

00:44:25

Evan Barrett: And the impacts of that and then women were emerging in a big way, and we haven't talked about that.

00:44:28

James Murry: That's right.

00:44:29

Evan Barrett: And I want to ask you to do it. But there was this--there was a demand in the body politic for change. It wasn't imposed upon them. And the question might be well what shape would the change be and you know when you get to the--you know the 1971 session my recollection was there was--there were two women in the Legislature, [Toni Rozelle] and Dorothy Bradley.

00:44:57

James Murry: That's right. I think that's right.

00:44:58

Evan Barrett: Am I right on that? If it was more than two it might have been--

00:45:00

James Murry: Well there was another lady from up--and gee I'm embarrassed I can't remember her name--from up in Calais Ville area I think that--

00:45:09

Evan Barrett: Okay.

00:45:11

James Murry: --had--had--

00:45:13

Evan Barrett: Yeah; I remember--I know who you're talking about.

00:45:15

James Murry: Gosh I think--

00:45:15

Evan Barrett: But I don't think she was there that year but she might have been. But--but think about that as opposed to with the Constitutional Convention which had like 20 women and then the emergence of women and women's issues through the '70s, what was Labor's feel and involvement because women always played a strong role in Labor?

00:45:33

James Murry: Well yeah and--and the Labor Movement for the most part was a--a very liberal--was a very liberal body. Now we--we fought and we had a lot of disagreements internally over how we were going to reach goals but for the most part it was a pretty liberal--pretty liberal body.

00:45:53

Liberals, the difference between liberals and conservatives, liberals are always struggling and fighting to bring about change. Conservatives tend to--to fight to maintain the status quo. And so as women became involved we--we not only welcomed that; we encouraged it and we encouraged Union women to participate in the process. They were participating in the process in the political process out in the field where we were. I mean they--they played a very important role with the--with the Central Labor Councils and with Local Unions. There was some--there were ladies that were really giants in the Labor Movement and great--and great leaders.

00:46:40

So it--so it just--it just fell into place that we would be supportive of the Women's Movement. And--and the Women's Movement became very much a part of the Coalition that--that we had formed with groups like the Montana Farmers' Union and the Democratic Party and--and they--they became a part; they became that--a part of that effort as did the Environmental Groups.

00:47:04

Evan Barrett: Now we move into after the Election of '71 and the Con-Cons taking place in '72, '72 was an important Election year in a lot of ways, one of which was Lee Metcalf was up for reelection.

00:47:17

James Murry: That's right.

00:47:17

Evan Barrett: And Lee wasn't feeling well health-wise. He didn't really want to run again. He had only had two terms but he was not doing well with his health and he didn't want to run.

00:47:28

James Murry: He was exhausted. He was exhausted.

00:47:30

Evan Barrett: And yet he was such a--an impactful Senator on the right side of every issue that from a Labor perspective he had to somehow run. Tell us about the efforts to get Lee to run.

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James Murry: Well that all--that all came down to the Convention up in Great Falls. And Lee Metcalf spoke to that Convention and everyone knew that he would be making an announcement--

00:47:56

Evan Barrett: One way or the other.

00:47:57

James Murry: --one way or the other. And boy that was a desperate time--desperate time for me and Lee and Donna had a couple of us come up to the room, the--the COPE Director for the National AFL-CIO at the time and I up to the room to talk to Lee because he wanted to visit with us about his feelings.

00:48:19

And you know and looking back I almost feel guilty about the pressure that we put on him. And we really did. We said, *Lee you have to do it; you have to--you have to run again. You just have to do that for us. You have to do that for workers and you have to do it for little people.* That was the best way to ever get to Lee Metcalf because he felt so strongly about--about people and helping people.

00:48:42

But when we left the room we weren't sure that--we weren't sure that he was going to announce that he was going to run. In fact, I really thought--I really thought his announcement would be that he wasn't going to run. He wanted so--he wanted so badly to just come home and--and--

00:49:00

Evan Barrett: He was a gardener and he wanted just to tend his garden.

00:49:02

James Murry: That's right.

00:49:03

Evan Barrett: You know--

00:49:04

James Murry: That's right; that's right, and yeah. And he just wanted to be like other people and--and I--and he wanted that. And he made such an argument about that. I thought that his--that he was going to announce that he wasn't going to run. He--

00:49:20

Evan Barrett: That speech was in front of about 700 people at the Rainbow Hotel.

00:49:23

James Murry: That's right; it was at the Rainbow--700 is that right?

00:49:26

Evan Barrett: Yeah.

00:49:26

James Murry: I can remember--

00:49:26

Evan Barrett: Huge--

00:49:28

James Murry: --it was a huge crowd.

00:49:27

Evan Barrett: Everyone was there to find out what is Lee Metcalf going to do.

00:49:30

James Murry: And do you remember he had two speeches? He had one speech that he was announcing that he wasn't going to run. And the other speech was that he would--that he would seek reelection.

00:49:42

Evan Barrett: I remember how he toyed with the audience.

00:49:44

James Murry: Well and he got into--well and see, what he was doing--

00:49:46

Evan Barrett: Back and forth.

00:49:47

James Murry: --yeah but he was using--he was using the speech that he wasn't--remember that he wasn't going to run. And I'm just sitting there jeez; I'm just--I'm just perspiring you know because I think oh it's over. We're going to have to--we've got to have another candidate. And then when he announced that he was going to **[Laughs]** seek reelection oh, wow.

00:50:08

Evan Barrett: The place exploded.

00:50:09

James Murry: Wow; wow. I'll never forget that. It just--it did; it just exploded.

00:50:12

Evan Barrett: And the irony of course in this thing was that--that he didn't even--he didn't--his health was so bad that he didn't serve out the term; that a year before the end of the term he passed away.

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James Murry: That's right.

00:50:26

Evan Barrett: And I think we all felt a little bit of guilt about not letting him get back to Montana to--to garden enough. But--

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James Murry: I think--yeah we all felt guilty about that.

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Evan Barrett: But during that period again, Lee Metcalf did all kinds of progressive things in--in the Senate that were a result of his commitment, a big part of which was his commitment to workers, you know in--in a big way.

00:50:48

I always remember that when he was running that he was running against Hank Hibbard.

00:50:54

James Murry: That's right.

00:50:56

Evan Barrett: And Hank Hibbard was a Republican Senator from Lewis and Clark County and--

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James Murry: A Republican State Senator.

00:51:02

Evan Barrett: --State Senator, State Senator from--from-- . And--and Lee had a notorious temper. We used to call him the Bull of the Woods; remember?

00:51:12

James Murry: [*Laughs*]

00:51:13

Evan Barrett: You know and you didn't want to be around when he--.

00:51:14

James Murry: I was the recipient a couple of times of Lee--of his anger.

00:51:17

Evan Barrett: Yeah. And--

00:51:18

James Murry: And I was told that--that was--that I should--that I should take that as a compliment because Lee Metcalf never picked on cripples. [*Laughs*] I didn't know if that was really logical or not but he--he would let me know his feelings. And--and--

00:51:36

Evan Barrett: He--I always remember that he had--he finally agreed to one debate with--with Hibbard and the rules of the debate were--it was in Great Falls; the rules of the debate were you couldn't bring notes. And--and but Hibbard walked in and he had a loose leaf notebook that thick [*Gestures*] with everything that he needed to know in it and he just plopped it down and that was it. And Lee walked in with a paper plate, a round paper plate--

00:52:02

James Murry: And we had--we had all talked to him extensively about don't lose your temper.

00:52:09

Evan Barrett: Right; don't lose your temper. That's the only thing that could happen. If you lose your temper on TV--

00:52:13

James Murry: It's over.

00:52:13

Evan Barrett: But--but don't, so he walked out and he had a paper plate. And so through the whole debate--

00:52:18

James Murry: [*Laughs*]

00:52:18

Evan Barrett: --Hibbard was doing all the details and everything else and--and Lee would just look down at that plate and then he would talk about all the stuff that he knew about. And then--

00:52:27

James Murry: And he knew about a lot.

00:52:28

Evan Barrett: --of course when it was all over one of our partners walked up and picked up the plate and you know what it was? It was a smiley face, just a smiley face with the worlds underneath that said *don't let the SOB get you mad.*

00:52:46

James Murry: That's right.

00:52:47

Evan Barrett: And that's all he had in front of him for the debate.

00:52:49

James Murry: That's right.

00:52:49

Evan Barrett: So he knew his--his game so to speak, but that was a very important Election in that sense and it--it kept the continuity going in the Labor Movement for many years to come. The '72 Election--Forrest Anderson didn't run and it ended up Tom Judge. What were your thoughts about the--the transition because you had a new Governor for the first time in four years, a Governor you could work with as a Labor Movement and now you had a

different Governor and--but there was amazing continuity in terms of the change of Governors but not a big change in the staff. What was your sense of that?

00:53:29

James Murry: That's right. Well but another thing you know we talked about how we--we all--we all had a relationship with each other. We had been friends forever. And so as that change came about it--it wasn't like all of the sudden we had a Governor that we didn't know. He was somebody that had served in the Legislature; he was somebody that was part of the Farm Labor Coalition, was very involved with all of that, so we had a--a sense, a real sense of who it was that we're dealing with.

00:54:00

But one of the points I want to make about Lee Metcalf; we talked about you know how the--the Coalitions came together and--and I--and through the years I've been given a lot of credit for developing Coalitions and--and adding to that--that Coalition effort in the State. That wasn't my idea; I--I--that wasn't something that I came up with. Lee Metcalf was the guy that was--that--that--that developed the Coalitions in Montana, the Farm Labor Coalition that was so strong; Lee Metcalf--Lee Metcalf was the engineer of all of that.

00:54:35

He was--he was--he was so involved with Conservation Groups and the Environmental Groups that all of that came into that Coalition naturally. You--you were asking about the Women's Groups; see it all came together. Lee Metcalf was a guy that really understood Coalitions and when I went to work as the COPE Director for the State Fed and later became the Executive Secretary I spent a lot of time talking with him about how we needed to bring people together.

00:55:04

And he always reminded me we had--we had really tough Right to Work fights in 1953 and '58 in Montana and we didn't have a lot of money to make the fight but the--the reason that we won was because of the Coalition primarily with Farmers' Union at that time. And--and Lee always said look; we don't--we--we have to have all the friends that we can get. We have to bring in as many people as we can in--into our political efforts to be successful.

00:55:32

And he was--he was so right about that. But Ted Schwinden was from that school--

00:55:39

Evan Barrett: And that's part of the continuity; people like Ted Schwinden and Tom Judge came in and he kept 80-percent of the Department Directors.

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James Murry: That's right.

00:55:45

Evan Barrett: Unheard of but there was a--a period in there which we'll go into in a subsequent program which is that whole period in the 1970s when the political activity resulted in a lot of Legislative change--change in the laws that you were--

00:56:03

James Murry: Yeah; and it was a tough--that was a tough time, too because we were going through some really tough economic changes and impacted the Labor Movement tremendously. We were losing members. There were plant closures and there were you know dramatic changes in that regard. Ted Schwinden had to deal with all of that when he was--

00:56:22

Evan Barrett: He did. And I remember when Lee--when we had to run over to--to--to Butte with Lee when they closed the Underground Mine.

00:56:29

James Murry: That's right.

00:56:30

Evan Barrett: And the meeting that we had.

00:56:30

James Murry: Had the hearing; had the hearing.

00:56:31

Evan Barrett: And the Miners' Union Hall.

00:56:33

James Murry: We had the hearing over there; that's right.

00:56:34

Evan Barrett: Yeah; and--and--

00:56:35

James Murry: And I remember--the thing I remember about that; Lee was--Lee's health was so bad and I met him over there the night before and talked about you know the presentation and what we were going to do. And I remember going--going into the Miners' Hall and he had to go up some stairs. And he could hardly make it. And he was--he was having such a difficult time. He got in there, conducted the hearing, and it's just like he came to life. It was an amazing--just an amazing thing to watch.

00:57:06

Evan Barrett: Yeah; it is and you know we're coming to a conclusion here of this hour. There's so much that you as the second most powerful man in Montana of the period--

00:57:20

James Murry: That was grossly overstated. *[Laughs]*

00:57:23

Evan Barrett: *[Laughs]* Well, we may want to wonder did you fix the boat? But no; *[Laughs]* in all seriousness there's so much that came out of that period that we haven't dealt with which is the issue of policies, the issue of the laws that govern Montana, the laws that govern the nation, and what the representatives of workers in this period of change, the difference they made in it.

00:57:46

You again played a big, big role in that and so as we move forward with this series on--of *In the Crucible of Change* we're going to get back together with you and some other folks to talk about those specific--excuse me, those specific accomplishments and they're myriad, but they--the leveraging point for all of that was the political activity we've discussed today. And you have a heart for politics and a skill for politics that is unmatched in my knowledge.

00:58:19

James Murry: Thank you.

00:58:20

Evan Barrett: And again, it's in full disclosure, I--I'm a real fan of Jim Murry because much of what I've learned about government, politics, and people I learned at your knee and it's made a big difference for me and it really--what you brought to the table made a big difference *In the Crucible of Change*.

00:58:47

James Murry: Well thank you Evan but remember, too that there were so many people that contributed to that--to the culture that--with the *Crucible of Change*; you were one of those guys. Thank you.

00:59:03

[Music]

01:00:02

[End James W. Murry]

