Bob Brown: I’m interviewing Dan Harrington here at the University of Montana. It’s early October. What is it Dan, the eighth?

Dan Harrington: Eighth of October.

BB: The eighth of October, 2009. Dan and I served in the legislature together for over 20 years, together in the House of Representatives, and then in the legislature when I was in the Senate he was in the House and then he continued in the Senate after me. So he has how many years of experience in the legislature?

DH: Well, 32. Counting the Constitutional Convention it’d be 34.

BB: He was also a delegate to the Montana Constitutional Convention, and he represented the Butte-Silver Bow area. And so, I guess my first question would be, Dan, maybe you could kind of describe your political philosophy and what shaped it.

DH: Okay. I think as I grew up, my father and I used to carry on some real deep conversations concerning politics. He had worked for the Anaconda Company all his life, something like 40-some years. He was not a miner, but he was a time keeper and later a clerk and a chief clerk for the Anaconda Company. One of the things, I think, that we always brought out was how the Anaconda Company operated in the state of Montana over the period of time. And I think that one of the things that stuck with me more than anything else was they got what they wanted in every way, shape, and form. A number of people who had been elected to the legislature from Butte-Silver Bow went to the legislature. It seemed like it was just automatic that whatever the company wanted they got. As we go through this today, I’ll try to bring out a few of these points to show just exactly how this...I seemed too, as I grew up, I resented the fact that this kind of stuff went on. I think with this healthcare is a perfect example of how much power do the corporations really have as far as what they do and what they don’t do. And I think that this time, and I think one time, Bob, you asked me, I think when we were up in Kalispell at the Constitutional Convention reunion, “What were they called? Silvercrats, or what was the name given to them?” Over the years there was different names given to Democrats over in Butte, but I think that what always stuck with me more than anything else was when they referred to them as, referred to the Copper Collar. I don’t know if you’ve ever heard this expression.

BB: Yes, I have.
DH: And this Copper Collar was always something that the people that worked there, ordinarily they used to talk about how tight that Copper Collar was on individuals, how they reacted to what was going on. And this of course was true for the people who were in the legislature; it was the same thing. And that used to bother me a great deal and I think it used to bother my father a great deal. I asked my father many times why he did not, because of his knowledge of politics and his love for politics, why he did not run. And he said, well, he would not run because he could not go over there to begin with. He couldn’t do what they wanted; in other words, that would not be what he stood for. I first got into politics, I was vice-president of the Young Democrats in the 1960 election. I had been a little active in elections before that, even when I was in high school, I went out and checked precincts and so on. But I don’t think I really thought too much about running for any office or running for the legislature, but I liked the party. And at that time, I think things have changed a great deal to this date as far as the power of the parties was concerned. I don’t know if they really had too much power, but at least they were part of the system. Today I think that’s history. I think that today, as I watch my own people that are elected, United States Senator Max Baucus or Jon Tester or anybody, all these people and the governor’s office to boot, they seem...It’s how much money they can gain through the primary and the general election is how the game’s played.

BB: How much money they can raise for their personal campaign?

DH: Yes, for their personal campaign, definitely. This is a kind of, this is how the situation seems to be. This kind of always, this bothers me today, and I think I’ve kind of become even more disenchanted over what’s going on right now with this health care because it seems like the insurance companies are just flexing their muscles, and I watch the ads that are on TV. But I don’t want to spend any time, that’s not what you’re asking me about today. You’re asking me to try to give you a feeling why, how things went as far as I was concerned.

BB: And here’s an angle that I think you have a unique perspective on: If the Anaconda Company was very popular among the people in Butte, then it would be understandable that the legislators from the Silver Bow delegation would vote along with what the Anaconda Company wanted to do. But I get the impression that the Anaconda Company wasn’t always popular with the people in Butte, in fact, maybe somewhat controversial. And I guess I’ve also been left with the impression that sometimes candidates for public office in Butte would run against the company, at least in their rhetoric. And then when they got over to Helena, they’d generally vote with the company. If that’s accurate, why? What’s your understanding of how that happened that way?

DH: Exactly. Well, you know, I guess to start with why that happened—and you’re exactly right because the Anaconda Company was not popular with the people because they didn’t do that many things that the people liked and they did just the opposite. When I came into politics, it was getting to be the end of the era. The Anaconda Company had sold its newspapers, it had started to move. And you still had Lloyd Crippen and Denny Shea were still the chief lobbyists in the Montana Legislature.
BB: Now you served from what, about 1972?

DH: No, ’77. Actually from ’72 was the Constitutional Convention but from—

BB: Okay, then you came into the legislature in ’76.

DH: Seventy-seven.

BB: Okay, the ’77 session. And you served through the 2009 session, I think?

DH: Yes, I served in the 2007. My last session.

BB: You mentioned the lobbyists who were there when you were there?

DH: Yes, it was Denny Shea. When I first got there it was Denny Shea and Lloyd Crippen. And I liked these men. You know, one of the things I’d like to say before I really get into this is that I liked these lobbyists. I knew these lobbyists before, and I’d got to know them as a legislator, even though I didn’t vote with them a lot because I had feelings that many of the things that they were trying to do I didn’t think were right. But that was beside the point. I don’t think I ever really disliked any of these lobbyists. There’s a couple, I think, didn’t like me because I didn’t vote with them on a lot of issues. But most of them, even if I didn’t vote with them, they kind of got to the point where we were friends all the time. But the old statement, right to begin with I’d like to make a statement here. Jesse Unruh was a—I don’t know if we’ve talked about this before or not—but he was a person that worked for the Kennedys in California.

BB: Speaker of the California Assembly?

DH: California Assembly, yes. And I think he was Lieutenant Governor or something at one time. And he made a statement that I really don’t believe in that much and that statement was, “You drink our booze, you eat our food, and then you screw our women, but we vote against you.” Well, I’ve come to the conclusion of all the years that I’ve been in the legislature that that’s not true because if you vote against them you don’t get invited to those many functions that they put on. I’d just like to mention that.

BB: So if someone accepts a lot of hospitality from a lobbyist, generally that person votes with the lobbyist a lot of the time?

DH: Definitely. And I think they feel if they do that—you know I don’t mean if they do it once in a while here, once in a while there, that type of situation. But I think that becomes part of how this sets up. So I’m trying to point out that when I went to the legislature, I think I had this feeling that I was going to try to be independent from this type, that I wasn’t elected to go over and represent them. Well, they were at the end of the line as far as what they did and what they didn’t do as far as the company was concerned.

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I guess another part that I feel is I was a member of the Butte Teacher’s Union. I was an executive council of the Butte Teacher’s Union among other offices in the Butte Teacher’s Union. So my union politics and my political politics kind of went together on this. And I find that in Butte, that is exactly what happened.

To try to get to the bottom of this, if you came from Butte you always had two things pulling at you: one was what the company wanted and the other was what you felt was right. Even in the Democratic Party you had groups of people, and they used to have really downright arguments that would incur over issues that would come up over time. And it would be people that would be supporting the more conservative or the corporation-type situation; and you would have other people that would want to do the right thing. So that stood true within the unions in the state of Montana because that’s where I came in, actually, through the unions, the Butte Teacher’s Union and the MFT.

The people I worked with, I have to honestly say, when I talk about all the different people that I worked with, my delegation, as far as social issues were concerned, education, so on and so forth, they were very good. They voted very good on this.

By coming out of the Constitutional Convention, it gave me another, a new light into exactly how I felt about this. Because when we were studying the old Constitution, going through the process of developing a new Constitution, I think one of the things that came out that even made me more sure of the amount of influence the Anaconda Company had [was] in the area of taxation. It was unbelievable that they were able to control—I had known that in Butte, for example, they had a person that worked for the Anaconda Company—worked in the treasurer’s office and worked in the assessor’s office—and pretty much called the signals of what was going to happen. And that’s exactly what happened. And when we went through the hearings on the old Constitution as far as the revenue was concerned, one of the things that was brought out—and I think probably we talk about the Declaration of Rights in the new Constitution or we talk about the environmental progress, those were great steps forward and they were because many of those things were adopted shortly after the Constitution that made some major changes as far as environmental clean-up in the state of Montana—but the revenue was the thing that they got away with more than anything else. When I say, “Get away with,” that’s just exactly what happened. So we found out when we went through that, as I said before, they had two people that worked in the office and they pretty much called the shots of what taxes they would pay, there was no if, ands, or buts about that situation.

BB: Getting back just briefly to the legislature, though, Dan, although, I found what you just said extremely interesting. Would you agree you were somewhat out of step with the rest of the Butte-Silver Bow legislative delegation? You, I think, were regarded as somewhat more independent than their legislative colleagues, and yet you represent the same people. Your districts were very similar, some of the other fellas in the legislative delegation that you served with had labor union backgrounds like you did, and yet you voted somewhat differently. Why
was that? I mean it seems to me that as you say the politics in the area was that the people were kind of skeptical about the Anaconda Company and the Montana Power Company, and your votes indicated that. Why didn’t theirs? Why wouldn’t they? It seems like good politics would have been to have voted more like you did, and I just am curious to know because this tradition goes back as long as I can remember.

DH: Well, I didn’t come here today to say anything about any particular legislator, and I don’t think I really want to do it. There’s certain things I might bring out. But I think many of them, you know one of the things that happens in the legislature is certain people benefit more than other people by being in the legislature. And I think that’s one of the things that happened in these areas. Being friends with one of the people that is doing this also brought these people in line. In other words, they did what their friends did, you know, on this issue. And I kind of, early in my legislature, sometimes they really didn’t want to have much to do with me over some of these major issues that we disagreed on. I think they just figured this was what was going to happen, and I wasn’t going to change.

Of course, I don’t know if they changed, but somehow we got to be pretty good friends actually when the bottom line came, or at least I feel we did. They disagreed with me over certain issues, but they really didn’t want to go after me or fight me on these issues. And I hope I’ve made that clear why it happened that way. But I always felt, one of the things I did, they were cleaning up Butte, started the clean-up of Butte, and I felt all the time that any issue that I dealt with that would set that back, in other words do more environmental harm, I would have problems with. And I wouldn’t vote for that and of course I had little problems with that.

BB: Now, the Montana Power Company also was a major influence in Butte. They’ve kind of been thought of as twin corporations, I think, in Montana history. Do you have any thoughts on the connection between the two, the rivalry between the two, the political influence of the two?

DH: Well, I went through one of the other recordings that you have as far as with the lobbyist John Lahr. And I always liked John Lahr, and John Lahr and I always got along well. There were some times I voted with him and some times I voted against him on issues, but I always kind of held him in high regard. But I think one of the things that is important in his statement to you, in his interview he said that he felt the new constitution was the beginning of the end of the Montana Power Company as we had known it. And I’d always felt that way. And the reason I felt that way was one of the things that came out of the new constitution was, by statutory law, was the setting up of the Public Service Commission because the constitution kind of left that up to the legislature to do that, which was right. But what it did was develop a strong Public Service Commission and no longer the Montana Power Company could do just about what they wanted to do as far as some of these issues were concerned. Not that even then they could do the things that they had in mind.
One of the things that happened, and when I go through the Montana Power Company, is that we come up to the point where—and it was one of the worst votes that I ever made in my life—was the deregulation vote in '97. I had real problems with that, and I knew it wasn’t the right thing to do. I knew because deregulation has never been something that I felt has helped anything. But one of the things that happened, there was so much pressure put on me from Butte. But as it came down, and this vote was a hard vote to take, you could see some of the things that was happening. We had a meeting with Bob Gannon not too long before.

BB: This was electrical power deregulation?

DH: Electrical power deregulation, right. And we had met with Bob Gannon.

BB: Who was a lobbyist from the Montana Power Company?

DH: Gannon was the president of the Montana Power Company at that time. And he told us that one of the reasons that they just weren’t making it anymore was the way that things were going with the Public Service Commission. And I think that this shows you why we’re coming out of a terrible recession, depression, whatever you want to call it today. Some of these major corporations, at one time they were satisfied to make so much profit, but now all of a sudden, they felt that they wanted more profit, more and more profit. And one of the things he said, “We can no longer do this.” Well, we should have recognized, right there and then, that the Anaconda Company was going to divorce themselves of their—

BB: You mean, the Montana Power Company?

DH: The Montana Power Company, excuse me. Were going to break up what was going on because they were going to sell this [part of the company]. But they told us no, that wasn’t what their main goal was. Well, it really was their main goal.

BB: You think they knew it at the time?

DH: I believe they did. You know, one of the things, if you remember, Bob, who came to the legislature to lobby when this was [being discussed?] It was Enron, and all of them were up there. And the only one—Montana-Dakota Utilities—the only one that said, “Hey, we’re not going to do this. We’re not going to get into this thing.” Well, I think they knew what was going on. The co-ops were the last to agree, and I can remember going through this. And I can remember the lobbyists trying to get us to sign that bill that it was so important. Well, I look back now, and one of the things that happened at that time, that I think was so important that we recognize, was why they did that was they had great ideas of grandeur that they were going to move out into a field and do some wonderful things. You know, I was on Revenue Oversight and Taxation and everything, and we went to San Francisco in early December.

BB: Revenue Oversight and Taxation are committees of the legislature.

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DH: Right. Excuse me, I guess I should be more clear on some of these things that I’m glad you’re kind of...But we went to San Francisco in December of that year, and it was the end of 1997 for a meeting on deregulation. California had passed deregulation which was (laughs) icing on the cake for some of the problems they have. But other states were supposed to be in line to do it. So we got down there and all of a sudden, the day we left on the plane was the day that the Anaconda Company announced they were selling all their assets, all their power assets.

BB: You mean, Montana Power Company?

DH: Did I say that again? Montana Power Company was going to sell their assets. Excuse me. I’m trying to get ahead of myself on some of these things. And so, by the time we got down there, we knew exactly what direction we were going to go in. We went down there and all of a sudden we found places like Idaho that were at this meeting who were not going to deregulate. There was some thought up to then, but that was one of the issues. So when we came back, the first thing we did was sign petitions to go into special sessions to try and change that.

BB: This was the Revenue Oversight Committee? The interim?

DH: Yes, the interim.

BB: And most of the members of that committee were of the same mind after going to California?

DH: Oh yes. Well, quite a few of them were. Well, not all of them because a lot of them, right to this day, they try to disclaim de-regulation, but they never [did at the time]. So anyhow, we tried twice to go have a special session at that time, and we weren’t able to get the votes. But I don’t know if you remember in 2000—we had a special session in the spring of 2000—and one of the things that happened at that meeting in 2000 was we tried to put that on the agenda to give the Public Service Commission the power to regulate the sale. The sale was just taking place with PP&L at that time, and had we been able to give the Public Service Commission back the right to regulate that sale, I think it would have made a big difference in the issue. We were not successful. The governor fought us. Actually, I could almost, and I have no problem doing this, the three people that stayed with me on those issues were: [William] “Red” Menahan from Anaconda and J. D. Lynch and myself. We’re the three that—and we did that in the two special sessions calls and this. But it just goes to show you that afterwards there was a lot of people that went after us over this issue. And I always said, “I’ll take the blame.” I knew better, and I didn’t do it. It’s just one of those votes that you know...It was very hard on Butte though. Butte took a terrible beating, but Butte also, they put all kinds of effort into passing deregulation to begin with, electrical deregulation.

BB: They knew?

DH: Yes, they had petitions and everything.

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BB: The Montana Power Company?

DH: The Montana Power Company did, but MRI did too.

BB: MRI?

DH: Montana Resources, the mining with the pit. They sent over stuff and said, if we didn’t do that, they were going to close. Well, the amazing thing was, they did close. They closed because of deregulation.

BB: (Laughs) How ironic.

DH: Well, that was one of the things that came up. But we always talk about how this came about. It’s kind of funny. I tell a little story here about how you feel towards these people. I’ve always, after that, I had pretty jaundiced feelings toward some of the things. When the power company particularly, in my last number of years in the legislature, would come to me with issues, I didn’t support them very often on issues because I could see always there was something in there that smacked of what went on before. But I was in a meeting in Gamer’s Café in Butte, and Bob Gannon came through the door, and I was sitting with a group of people that were officers in this Democratic club in Butte. When he went by he said, “Hi, Dan.”

I said, “Hi, Bob, how are you?” One of the women that was sitting at the table said, this was when he was really reaching the bottom—

BB: The company stock had plummeted and his leadership had resulted in the ruination of the Montana Power Company, so the people were really feeling down on him.

DH: As a matter of fact, 60 Minutes ran a couple shows about how bad it was. I said, “Hi, Bob.”

This woman said, “Why did you talk to him?”

I thought for a minute and I said, “I haven’t always agreed with people in the legislature, but that doesn’t mean that I don’t talk to them.” I think that kind of comes out of a different kind of feeling then than even now in politics because sometimes it seems like people are taking things a little more serious on their issue. Not that I didn’t think that Bob Gannon had done some terrible things, which I did. But I didn’t feel that by not speaking to him, I was going to solve any problems. I always thought that was kind of childish, that type of situation. But I think that kind of, the Montana Power Company as far as what they did, that kind of sums up the issue on that. I feel bad that all of those things came about. But as far as their power, as you pointed out, up until the time that they brought John Lahr in as a lobbyist, I have to agree with his interview that he pointed out that he was the one that was brought in to try. He did kind of consolidate a little bit more better feeling. Because even though the power company, by the people in Butte,
were liked better than the Anaconda Company, there was never that feeling between the legislature and the Montana Power Company. But I do think that as I watch the issues through those quite a few years after he came in that there was a much better feeling towards the Montana Power Company.

Whereas the Anaconda Company, I always had the feeling, and I guess where the unions—and I hope I’m not jumping into something a little bit different here—but the Anaconda Company always had the issues and labor issues were always a big one there. If you remember their strikes in ’59 and I think ’62, ’66, even up to when the Anaconda Company closed the smelter in 1980, these strikes were going on. And I have no proof of this and I’m certainly not saying that I know this for a fact. But I am saying that I always felt through those years, and I worked for the company early in those years. I was in college, I worked in the summertime and I worked when I was teaching. I worked for a number of years, went to work for the Anaconda Company and worked in the summer even as a teacher. But quite a few of those summers were when we went on strike. And a lot of people used to just blame the unions terribly about having these strikes. Animosity grew. And that’s why when Denny Washington took over Montana Resources that there was no union. They became union-free is the expression that was used. But I do believe that there was a cooperation. Whenever the company needed a shutdown, they had a strike, is my feeling on this issue.

BB: Oh is that right?

DH: That’s my feeling. And I’ll argue with anybody on that issue. Because I knew these labor leaders and none of them have ever said that’s what went on. But I always felt that there was that—

BB: Just to make sure I understand. You’re saying you can’t prove it, and I mean obviously you can’t. But I can see where, I think I can understand what you’re saying. There may be a time when the price of copper was low, there may be a time when a part of the facility needed to be renovated or something or other like that, when it would perhaps serve the company to shut down for a month or two. And what you’re saying is that they might’ve been able to induce some union leaders to create a situation that would result in a work stoppage or a strike of some kind for that purpose, that deliberate purpose.

DH: Sure. I feel that this is—and I know a lot of other people had this feeling when this happened. But they weren’t just two-month strikes, though. They were six-month, nine-month strikes, some of these big ones. They were shut down for this period of time, and I know some people might get very upset. Most of these union leaders are gone now that were part of this operation. But I knew them and of course, never did they...There was times when there was work stoppages that were caused that the workers did cause. I remember one time I think that they had a deal where they brought in all the big top officials from the Anaconda Company, and they were going to dedicate the new concentrator and it was supposed to be a big deal. And they pulled a wildcat strike, some of the workers did, over something. That was really bad
because they got really upset about it, and they moved—my father-in-law worked as an assayer, he was one of the top assayers on that—and they moved that operation to Tucson because of that. That was one of the reasons that took place was over this wildcat strike.

BB: That’s just an unplanned strike?

DH: The day that they were having all their big dedications, the new concentrator which they had built, then they had this big wildcat strike [that] took place. That’s a perfect example that they wouldn’t have orchestrated, you see what I mean, in any way, shape or form. Or at least I don’t think they would.

BB: It sounds like a deliberate act of defiance on the part of some guys, too.

DH: And there was always a certain amount of that that went on as far as the Anaconda Company was concerned. But I’d like to bring out that point that in the labor movement in the state of Montana there was always that. There was two different types of labor people. One were more conservative and more wanted to do certain things and wanted to build Colstrip Three and Four and the Public Service Commission wouldn’t give them the rights. Some of these labor people were coming in and they wanted the legislature to make an end run-around the siting act, if you remember when you were in the legislature.

BB: And the debating point would be, “We need these jobs. They’re union jobs, let’s bend the rules a little bit and make it possible to create them.”

DH: Well, you had union people that wanted to do that, but you had union people on the other side that said, “Well, we’ve got a law, let’s follow the law.” And what basically ended up, I think, is that Colstrip Four never went into the rate base after if finally came on, but it didn’t go into the rate base because the legislature never really gave the—I’m sure that’s what finally did occur; that’s why Colstrip Four stayed out of the sale with Northwest. I could be corrected on that, but I do believe that was part of the situation. But I had labor people come to me and say, “You got to vote to make an end run around the siting act.”

I said, “No, I’m not going to. The siting act was put there for a reason.” I believe that the people should have, it should be the Public Service Commission that still has the right to—

BB: Dan, related to this, in at least one other interview, I think we’ve discussed the possibility or probability that the Anaconda Company, for decades in Montana history and maybe sometimes in cooperation with other corporate business interests in the state, was actively involved in the recruitment of legislative candidates so that the legislative candidate might not even realize that he’s being recruited by the Anaconda Company. But they would try to identify people in communities, in your community, and other communities around the state who would probably be more or less generally cooperative with them, and they’d encourage them to run for the legislature and help them in various ways in the background. Did you see evidence of that?
DH: Well, when I came into the legislature, one of the things that occurred that short-circuited that type of situation was in the new Constitution, and the reason it was put in was more for Billings, was the fact that county-wide election, large elections, came to an end and we went to the single-member district. When we went to the single-member district, it seemed that we took away the power of any group. On a county-wide basis you could go in and pretty much influence a lot of the election and how they came out. In other words, you had seven legislators so the top seven were the ones that—especially in Butte, they were all Democrats—the seven Democrats that would be nominated would be the seven that would go into the general election and be elected. But I felt that once that occurred—but before that definitely that was what went on. And when somebody did something they didn’t like, they were gone. They were history.

BB: How did they do that?

DH: It’s hard to say. I knew one legislator who’s been dead a number of years now, and he had served a couple terms. His name was Henry Mernin. He was a barber, and I used to go to him as a barber.

BB: Mernin. How’s that spelled?

DH: M-e-r-n-i-n, I think. Henry Mernin was his name.

BB: He served before us, didn’t he?

DH: Oh yes. In the late ’50s and in the ’60s. Way back. And he told me one time, he says, “They wanted me beat,” because he told me something he did. I couldn’t even remember that today.

I said, “How did they do it?”

He said, “Well, they just go out and make sure they let their people know that this person is not going to get any vote. In other words, they cut you out.” They make sure that they do what they can—not out in front, by the way—but to the people that support them on what their issues are. They would kind of do that type of situation.

BB: Company management people? Is that what you’re talking about?

DH: Yes. They would push other people. I’ve often thought that I wonder what I would do if I had had to run county-wide with them, how many sessions I would have stayed in the legislature because I had real problems. I don’t know if you ever remember Senator Frank Reardon from Butte. He was a state senator from Butte. Well, he introduced a bill in the late ’50s that actually put into effect eminent domain for the Anaconda Company. He and I used to be friends. He was a plumber; he owned a plumbing store. He had done very well, Frank had, in
Butte. But he was a state senator and every day he would go uptown in the afternoon. That was when Butte was still a thriving city in the late '50s and '60s. He would sit in his car, and he would have guys like Paul Cannon would sit in there with him.

BB: Paul Cannon was at one time a lieutenant governor.

DH: Lieutenant governor in the state of Montana. Butte politician and a lieutenant governor. Another individual I can remember was Fergie McGill. Some of these people.

BB: Fergie McGill?

DH: Fergie McGill.

BB: Who was he?

DH: He was just an individual who had worked for the Anaconda Company, I believe. I’m not sure of that. But they’d all been buddies together, they were older gentlemen that used just go up there, and they’d talk politics. They’d sit in the car. And I’d come by, and they’d say, “Young man, come in and talk to us.” So I’d get in and sit in the car, and they’d ask me questions and what was going on. Because at that time, the Young Democrats were starting to—and they were doing things that if—the Anaconda Company in Butte pretty much kept control of the political party, and they kept control of the Democratic Party. Matter-of-fact, at that time in the late ’50s and early ’60s, the president of the Anaconda Company or the CEO in Butte was named Ed Renouard. His brother was—

BB: Ed what?

DH: Ed Renouard.

DH: He was actually the number one person in the Anaconda Company, and his brother, Bill Renouard, was the chairman of the Democratic Party. For years if you go back, that’s exactly how they kept control. I can remember in the 1960 election when John F. Kennedy was running. They had a headquarters that was up on Broadway Street, and they had all kinds of campaign material in there. The Young Democrats had another campaign headquarters down on Main Street, and we’d go in and they’d have all this campaign material. They said, “Well, we’re going to give this out one of these days.” Well, the election came and went, and I don’t know whatever happened, but not much of that campaign material ever came out of that headquarters. And you wonder why that never happened.

BB: You think they might have been secretly for Nixon? (Laughs)

DH: (laughs) Well, I don’t know, but that’s exactly what [happened.] We used to go in and ask when they were going to, if we could have, well, they gave us some stuff. There was some stuff
to distribute but not very much. But they did pretty much control the politics. So I guess he used to ask me all these questions about what we were doing and what we believed.

I have to give you this story. One time in 1964, Roland Renne was announcing that he was running for governor. At the time, in the legislature, and you were well acquainted with Dave Manning, was going to run for governor in ’64.

BB: Senator Dave Manning from Hysham?

DH: Senator Dave Manning from Hysham. All of these guys were backing Dave Manning, but—

BB: By most of these guys you mean the Frank Reardons and the corporate Democrat group, they were backing Manning?

DH: Oh yes. Big time. And I imagine if the truth was known, the Anaconda Company was backing Dave Manning. Of course, the election against Tim Babcock. [It] would be the ’64 election. So there was a big dinner, and they used to always have a big dinner in Butte. They’d come over from Helena, and I’m not sure if the legislature was in session at this time. It’s been that many years ago. But it was one of those dinners they had 1,000 people there, all the legislators from Helena and all the people from Butte. Pat Williams and I got together, and we ran a poll.

BB: Pat Williams, later a congressman, was active in the Silver Bow Young Democrats with you.

DH: Yes, he’d been president of the Young Democrats at one time. So we ran this poll, and in the poll we asked who you wanted. You know, we put Roland Renne and Dave Manning and all the people who were going to run. Well, in the poll, the people who were at the dinner that night, Roland Renne got about 75 percent of the vote, and they just got really upset.

BB: Reardon and his crew?

DH: Reardon and his crew, they got...They went after the unions because they said the unions, the Butte Teacher’s Union, was the ones who ran this poll. It really wasn’t. It was just us. And some of the people in the union came to me and said, “You can’t do that.”

I said, “We did it.” That’s what I said. Well, anyhow, Dave Manning withdrew from the race after that. He wouldn’t run.

BB: He was counting on some pretty solid corporate Democratic support from senators in Butte, and when that evaporated he didn’t see any point in running.
DH: No. And Frank Reardon said after that, he says, “Young man,” he says, “I’ll tell you. You made a big mistake. Because the Republicans are going to win this governorship again. And no matter what you do, that’s what’s going to happen.” That’s what Frank Reardon said to me.

BB: I don’t know if Babcock could have beaten Manning or not, but he did beat Renne.

DH: So that was kind of the situation. I often wonder afterwards how that—but that’s just one of the instances. Another time, as far as speaking to the Anaconda Company, if you want me to bring this kind of an issue [up.] I don’t know if you remember, I think you were in the legislature. Matter-of-fact, I’m sure you were in the legislature when this happened. But I introduced a bill in when they shut the smelter in Anaconda. I think that was in ’80 or ’81. We were in session in ’81, then after that. But they had shut the smelter.

One of the things that happened when we kind of got into this situation was, I introduced a bill so that any ore that was now shipped would be shipped to—out of country or to other places in the United States—that all that ore that was going to be shipped had to be assayed. They had to keep track of that. The state could ask for this so that we would know what was going out. When they were shipping that ore out, we would know what it was and how much, what the composite of that [was], through the assay, what the percentage was that was in that ore. So I introduced this bill, and they brought everybody up from Denver. ARCO was running the Anaconda Company, and they kind of fought it. I had more people come up on that bill than I ever did in my whole life. But anyhow, we passed the damn bill, as far as what happened. In the meantime, I got an anonymous letter from somebody, and it said that the Anaconda Company’s not telling the truth on what ore they’re shipping, on gold and silver, and to check the Spokane mint markets. Well, at that time, Rick Foote was the editor at the *Standard*, so we went and got the...I talked to him.

BB: Now the Standard is the *Montana Standard* newspaper?

DH: *Montana Standard* newspaper. And we went and checked out the Spokane mint markets, and I went to—remember Dave Hoffman was the Department of Revenue? Is it Dave Hoffman? I’m trying to think of his first name. But he was on the metals that the Department of Revenue as far as—

BB: Oh, I don’t think...I remember a guy named Dave Hoffman that was the director.

DH: No, it was...I keep thinking of the other one that ran for attorney general and is a lobbyist for PP and L now.

BB: Yes, that’s Dave Hoffman.

DH: But this was Hoffman, but I can’t remember his first name. But Hoffman. So I checked with him, and he went and did some checking on this. And they found, he came back to me and says,
“You know, they’re not...Whoever’s giving that information, it’s true. They’re not reporting their gold and silver sales and what was going on.” So they started a big investigation. They did an audit. And they came up with all kinds of money or that they hadn’t paid all this money. Well, Don Peoples was chief executive in Butte, and we went to Helena a lot during that winter, I think it was ’83. I’m just thinking it was ’83, 1983 when Don Peoples was the chief executive. And we went back and forth to Helena, and we did all these things. And pretty soon they came up—and it was ARCO that was in charge at that time—and so they finally said, well, they would settle. They drew this settlement. I felt that, this is one of the things that bothered me was—

BB: The Department of Revenue for more taxes than they originally paid—

DH: Going back over a number of years, it had gone back a long, long way that they hadn’t been paying their taxes on their gold and silver shares that had come out of the pit.

BB: Just to make sure I understand: the Anaconda Company sold out to Atlantic Richfield Company?

DH: Well, they actually didn’t sell. What happened was there was a merger that took place. And that’s why they were solely responsible for the cleanup. ARCO became solely responsible for the cleanup. Because that merger took place, and a lot of people wonder why ARCO did that. Well, Anaconda was a cash-rich company at that time, you know, from my understanding. They were a cash-rich company, and another reason was that—I don’t know why ARCO needed this type of operation, but somebody else could explain that better than I could. But the one thing was they were a cash-rich company. So they did inherit a lot of costs, ARCO did, as far as the cleanup was concerned. But anyhow, they finally came to a settlement.

BB: ARCO wanted the merger because they wanted the money, and then once they merged, they ended up with the obligation for the cleanup.

DH: Sure they did, and lots of other obligations, I understand too. Anyhow, the Department of Revenue went after them then, and they said, “Well, we’ll settle.” They settled for...I don’t know. I guess that’s a problem I always had was, if you owe money or I owe money to the Department of Revenue or anybody else, you pay all of that money that you owe if you did something. Well, they only paid a percentage of it, but they came to about something like 20-some million or 25 million was what the final settlement was that they paid Butte-Silver Bow over that, over taxes that they hadn’t paid on those precious metals because they just hadn’t counted.

Later on, the person that had sent me the letter identified himself to me, and his name is Frank Benich. And he had been a guy that had been in mining operations in Butte. I don’t think he worked for the Anaconda Company, maybe at one time he did, but he was a man that had a great deal of mining holdings all around Montana, had these patented claims. He had a great number of these. And I don’t think he was too happy with what the company had done, so he’s
the one that had sent me this anonymous letter and then later said that he was the one that had done it, that I was on the right track.

BB: Benich?

DH: Frank Benich was his name.

BB: Spell it.

DH: B-E-N-I-C-H.

BB: Okay, is he still living?

DH: No, he's been dead a number of years now. But anyhow, Frank did that, and I talked to him many times after that. And he just said, he told me one time if the truth was known that was a common thing that went on. And under the old constitution that’s exactly what did happen.

BB: They were able to cook their books so they didn’t have to pay taxes.

DH: Sure, that’s exactly what was going on. And they paid what they wanted to. And even afterwards, even after the new constitution came in, they came up and said, “This is how much we’re going to pay.”

Don Peoples told me this one time, and he said, “No, that’s not what, that’s not what’s going to happen.”

BB: How did the new constitution fix that?

DH: Well, what it did is it took away from the county assessor the power to do this and gave it to the state. And it set up an appraisal system on the state level and of course that was the same in Butte. If you owned a house and you were friends with the assessor, he assessed your house at what you tell him what you thought it was worth and that’s what it ended up on the books. But these are all the testimonials that we got during the Constitutional Convention. So anyhow, this kind of was the situation that I feel that—what happened then was that they did pay. And one of the things that happened, they remodeled Butte High School at that time. Butte High School had to be remodeled, and they used that money to remodel Butte High School. And they set up kind of a fund that’s still there, and I asked somebody from Economic Development the other day if there was still money in it, he says, yes there was, and it was being used. They set up a fund that was used for economic development as part of this settlement that occurred. But this is how this happened. There’ll be a lot of stories as to what happened. But that was the actual story, and they did get away [with it]. And they still got away, but that was part of the game.
BB: And I know the thinking of the Constitutional Convention was that county assessors, locally elected county assessors, sometimes abuse their discretion in terms of what property got on the tax rolls and at what rates. And so by centralizing that assessment responsibility, by essentially making all the assessors state government employees, the state was able to keep better track of the money that was paid in. And so the '72 Constitution was probably critically important in the story you just told.

DH: Well, just to go back even further than that, one of the things that happened at that time was that they said...I think the company and I think that most of the lobbyists in the state, most of these major corporations, thought the new constitution was not going to pass. And you know it was a real miracle, I think it was a real miracle that it did pass. And in my county we went out and campaigned for it. But they had the people so convinced they were going to take a beating because of this.

BB: Who would? The Anaconda Company?

DH: The Anaconda Company, well all of them. They just absolutely went after—

BB: The corporations, the business community essentially—

DH: —went after the new constitution. I can’t even believe what would be going on in Montana today if that new constitution hadn’t passed.

BB: A couple more questions I want to ask you. It’s kind of part of the folklore of Montana that one of the reasons that the constitution did pass is because it gave people an opportunity to vote to eliminate that prohibition against gambling that was in the old 1889 Constitution. And in your area, the Butte-Silver Bow area, gambling had been popular. So many people in your area voted to eliminate the prohibition against gambling, and then I suppose if they wanted that out, they had to vote for the constitution in addition to that. I don’t know if they thought that far along the line, but the gambling angle, some people think, is what was important in passing the constitution. Do you have any comments?

DH: Well, one of the things that happened was gambling was a side issue. It was not—but I do believe that probably some people did vote that way. But actually in Silver Bow County, 74 percent of the people voted against the new constitution, I believe. It was pretty close to that. It was a big vote against the new constitution. [Vote in Silver Bow was 47 percent for, 53 percent opposed.]

BB: That shows enormous influence on the part of the business interest.

DH: Oh yes. It was. We talked—

BB: Do you remember what their argument was? It must have been—

Dan Harrington Interview, OH 396-061, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
DH: Well, one of the things that was absolutely ridiculous that was in the old constitution was the net proceeds tax. And the Anaconda Company only paid their proportional share of the net proceeds tax for approximately 7 out of the last 20 years.

BB: They paid taxes in the 7 out of the last 20 years?

DH: Yes, on the net proceeds—there was a net proceeds. I went to the legislature in ’77. Joe Quilici carried the bill, but we passed a gross proceeds tax because the net proceeds tax was gone. It had been gone, but it should never have been in the [old constitution.] The Anaconda Company got that put in the constitution, the net proceeds.

BB: You can make net proceeds into about anything you want it to be, depending on what you deduct and charge off and that sort of thing. But Joe Quilici carried the bill to do that?

DH: To do that, yes. I was going to carry it, but Joe was the long-term [senator] that carried it. But I—

BB: That must have been pretty unpopular with the Anaconda Company.

DH: Well, they came to negotiate it.

BB: —given up on it.

DH: Well, they came. We negotiated with them, Quilici and I met for, we used to meet every morning at six o’clock or seven. They’d come over from Butte, the Anaconda Company people would, and we’d meet with them. And we’d talk over this issue, and we argued over one, two...It ended up three percent. But the county assessor in Butte came over actually after the new government passed in Butte in that same year, in ’77, in the spring of ’77.

BB: The combination Butte-Silver Bow county-city government?

DH: Yes, consolidation government. The county assessor came in right after that passed and went out to dinner with them and come back the next morning and told us—that was [George] Nig McGrath—that they had settled at three percent.

BB: Nig McGrath?

DH: Nig, N-I-G.

BB: And he was the county assessor?
DH: He was the county assessor. He had settled it. I said, “Well, how did you? We’ve been doing this.” Well, that was the way it ended. We were arguing over five percent, but it’s been beneficial.

BB: Was your assumption that McGrath was pretty much influenced by the Anaconda Company?

DH: Oh, definitely.

BB: He was the elected assessor, but—

DH: Yes. But he came in and said, “This is what’s…” So that’s—

BB: But it was similar to what you and Quilici had worked out anyway, sounds like.

DH: Yes, he had been pretty close. The settlement was not a problem. I didn’t know if we’d go any higher than that. Anyway, that was what it ended up. You know how you do with situations like this, you kind of go, “Well this is better than…” But we did get the gross proceeds tax and that was a step in the right direction. I think that of all the things that I’ve done in politics, I think the new constitution was one of the things. And I can look back on certain things that I did that were important. But I guess that kind of gives you, it frames the Anaconda Company as how I— One time afterwards, one the lawyers for the Anaconda Company gave me the sale agreement when ARCO, well not ARCO, but Montana Resources, gave me a copy of the sale agreement. And so I knew what was pretty much in the sale agreement. And (laughs) I told a few people, and it didn’t make some of the people very happy that I knew. But he actually gave it to me. That was after he was retired a number of years so—

BB: Dan, I don’t know if you’d be comfortable in discussing this or not, but it runs in mind that there was some suspicion that Senator Frank Reardon, the fella who was—oh, I don’t know if it’s unfair to characterize him as a copper-collar Democrat or not, but he was certainly a borderline case—might also have been involved in the lynching of Frank Little. Had you ever heard that rumor?

DH: Yes, I had. And I’m going to just be very straightforward on this, I think, as you are. I like to be a student of Montana history, and I’ve, over the years—and there was a person in Butte, and I don’t want to use his name, but he was a businessman in Butte and owned a restaurant in Butte and so on. One time, we used to have coffee at Burger King, he has been very ill and he’s still alive and he’s in Arizona. And I was actually going to tell you this, but I don’t know if I wanted to put—but one of the things that he told me was that there was four or five of these people that participated in that when they had lynched—

BB: Four or five people that had participated in the lynching of Frank Little, the labor leader [for the Industrial Workers of the World].

Dan Harrington Interview, OH 396-061, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
DH: Yes, the labor leader, and he was mentioned as being one of the—

BB: And this fellow mentioned Frank Reardon as one of the five that lynched Little.

DH: Yes, and that’s kind of Montana history when you look at it. He told me this and I questioned him about it. I was really interested in it, and he was very—and he says that, well, right after that happened, they wanted him to get out of Butte for a while so they all went, were going to San Francisco. They got into a terrible automobile wreck down in someplace in Idaho or down someplace south of here on their way to San Francisco. And a couple of them were killed in that auto wreck, and they were all injured. So that was kind of—

BB: Including Reardon?

DH: Yes. They were going down there and the way he put it...He had run a restaurant in Butte, and you know how those uptown Buttes for years and years a lot of this stuff. Anyhow—

BB: He would have been in a position to have picked up on a lot of gossip.

DH: Oh yes, he did, and he was an old Butte Pol [Polish], and these guys that listen to everything, everything took place in his restaurant, all the talk.

BB: It wasn’t Gamers?

DH: Yes, when I first got into the Democrats, that’s where the Silver Bow Democratic Central Committee.

BB: At Gamers?

DH: No it was a café. Well, if I tell you what the café is—

BB: (laughs) Well, that’s what I’m trying to get you to do.

DH: Okay, Bill Harrington was the guy’s name.

BB: Okay.

DH: Bill Harrington. It’s no biggie. It was the Harrington’s Restaurant on Broadway Street. And it used to be Harrington’s Sirloin Room. And he used to have a restaurant next to it. But he had a bar there and a restaurant. But he told me that, and he was just—matter-of-fact, he never told me—if he’d told me, “Don’t you ever say this.” He never told me that, he just said, “This is what happened.” He said this is what his, this indication. He’s actually in his ‘90s, and they had a deal in the paper the other day where he was one of these Golden B’s. There are only two of them
alive that have lived this long. And I read the story about him, and he’s in Arizona and he’s on dialysis. One time, a group of guys I used to sit there and talk to, they said he wasn’t going to be coming. I’ve always wanted to talk to him again about it, but you know, but he wasn’t going to be coming up because he was on this dialysis.

BB: Golden B’s?

DH: Yes, they played for Butte High School.

BB: Oh, okay, I see.

DH: They have the Silver B’s and the Golden B’s—the number of years.

BB: He was on a great team of the Butte High School football team.

DH: And he had been a number of years there. I’d like to get into some of this union stuff.

BB: Well, do. Is there something on your mind?

DH: I do, and I’d like to bring this out, kind of a situation that’s kind of ended my [political career]. You know, I’ve kind of had a sour taste in my mouth as far as my politics are concerned when it came to an end. And it’s over some of the things that occurred within the labor movement that happened. You know all through the years, as I mentioned before, there was a controversy between—there was a big controversy going on—between those who wanted to be more corporate-like within the unions and those that were [not]. When the Jim Murrys and Don Judges...they were more liberal in their labor, as far as labor—

BB: Jim Murry and Don Judge were more?

DH: Jim Murry was the executive secretary of the AFLC[IO], and then Don Judge followed him. Jim Murray had gone back [East] with the steelworkers, and he’s retired and lives back here now. But there’s always been that. And you had other people in the labor movement who were more conservative in what they were doing, the IBW-type people, and some of that had—So there was always this controversy that—and Jim McGarvey and these people had a lot of dislike for each other—

BB: So McGarvey would be in the more conservative faction?

DH: Well, he ended up that way now. I’d like to be very clear on it when I bring this up because McGarvey was a teacher in Butte, same as I. He had been picked by Butte to be the head of the MFT [Montana Federation of Teachers], and he moved to Helena and became part of the MFT. And for years, through the period when the MFT was by itself not combined, well, you know,
we had a lot of conversations together and so on. But there was always this animosity between the two different groups.

BB: Well, I think there was personal animosity between McGarvey and Murry. They didn’t like each other.

DH: That’s right.

BB: I’m not sure how that enters into all that.

DH: It got in with Don Judge too.

BB: Because Judge was kind of the understudy of Murry and took over for Murry when Murry left the state. The same bad relationship continued between McGarvey and Judge.

DH: Yes, because Murry and Judge had been friends, but you know this kind of stuff went on and on. All the way up until, I think the real turning point in labor history as far as the state of Montana’s concerned, was when Marc Racicot ran for re-election. And that would have been 2004, right?

BB: No, Marc ran for re-election, was elected in ’92 and re-elected in ’96.

DH: Oh yes, excuse me. I get my years—’96 when there was a move to combine MFT and the MEA [Montana Education Association]. And of course a lot of us had served in the legislature a number of years, and I’d always got along with Eric Feaver, but there had been—

BB: Eric Feaver was the president of the MEA.

DH: President of the MEA.

BB: And Jim McGarvey, the fella we were just discussing, was the president of the MFT.

DH: Right.

BB: And so there was a big debate about whether the two of those unions would merge: the Montana Education Association, MEA, and the Montana Federation of Teachers, MFT.

DH: Right. And I guess that kind of gets into it. But you know, one of the things that happened all through the years previous to this was McGarvey would come and be very upset if Democrats weren’t voting as Democrats. All of a sudden there was this kind of a coalition that occurred and the first thing between the MEA and the MFT. Actually, ultimately they did become part of one union when they were brought together. But I think that one of the things that happened after that was all of a sudden McGarvey became one of these people that could
go either way, that he criticized people that didn’t always stay with the Democratic Party. Well, that is exactly what happened. At this particular time we had always been friends, got along. I got along with him because I’d been part of the union, but one of the things that happened—and he’s probably going to be very upset because I’m puttin’ this into this thing, but I think it should, this whole story should be brought out—is that what happened, they endorsed Marc Racicot for governor at that time.

BB: The MEA did.

DH: The MEA, the MFT both.

BB: Oh, had they already combined then?

DH: They had.

BB: So Racicot’s a Republican. This is unusual for the Teachers’ Union.

DH: Especially the MFT, the Montana Federation of Teachers or the AFT, American Federation of Teachers. And it all occurred after this. One of the things that happened was that McGarvey and I had a big split. He actually, and now to be truthful, he called me down to a restaurant that night and told me that that’s what they were going to do. And I told him I was really upset about that. And I don’t know if I’d have been as upset over who, depending on the candidate, but Chet Blaylock had been such an outstanding member of the—

BB: Now Chet Blaylock was a state senator.

DH: State senator from Laurel.

BB: And a teacher from Laurel and a longtime member of the Teachers’ Union. And he’s running for governor and the Teachers’ Union endorses his opponent.

DH: Right. And he’d even gotten his Golden Apples from—I guess the MEA always gave these to people—he’d got a couple of them for his outstanding work as far as—

BB: At the end of the legislative session, the Teachers’ Union would give the legislator that they thought was most outstanding for their issues a Golden Apple at the end of the session. And Blaylock had gotten at least one and maybe more than one Golden Apple. And the thanks he gets when he runs for governor is that they endorse his opponent.

DH: So we had words. And actually since then one, well, what happened after that was, the first thing that happened that I thought was really—was they brought into the AFL-CIO statewide organization, not too long after that, was they brought, the MEA was brought in.
BB: Because of the merger, the MEA became a part of the AFL-CIO.

DH: And what happened was this, was a big move that was made. What happened because of this—all of a sudden the greatest number, you know, who had the votes—changed the whole complexion of the labor movement in the state of Montana.

BB: Bring all these Montana Education Association teachers, 12- or 14,000 of them or however many of them there are, you bring them into the AFL-CIO and they become the single biggest voting block by far. And so they were able then to, that made it possible for Jim McGarvey to basically—

DH: Call the shots.

BB: Yes. He completely deposed the Murry-Judge faction.

DH: Exactly.

BB: He blew them out of the water with all those teachers behind him.

DH: And a lot of people say, “Well did all those teachers...” Well, no because Eric Feaver had the control of all those. The MFT always—

BB: But he was McGarvey’s ally?

DH: That’s right. And that’s what happened. When it came down to it, there was a lot of controversy that occurred at that AFL-CIO meeting. Matter of fact, before—I retired in ’97 from teaching in Butte so I kind of got away from being as far as the labor—but up ‘til that time even after that for awhile, Butte Teachers’ Union always kept its own votes and voted its own votes. I don’t think now, I think all control votes are controllable by Jim McGarvey and that’s kind of the way they worked that, as far as how the votes are. It’s not like you got 14,000 people, 14,000 teachers coming in and voting; you have Eric Feaver calling. Now I have to honestly say right now, I thought I got along pretty well with Eric Feaver all through the years because I dealt with him for a lot of years. There were some controversies we had because Montana Education Association and the MFT did not always see eye-to-eye on lots of issues that occurred.

BB: He had a sort of a demeanor that I think wasn’t, didn’t endear him to a lot of legislators.

DH: I used to tell, even when I was in leadership in the House and these young legislators, I would tell them, “Don’t let him do that to you. Don’t let him belittle you in any way, shape, or form.” Sometimes Eric would, if they weren’t doing what he thought they should do. I says, “You got to make your own decision.”
BB: He could be pretty overbearing. He had a, kind of an arrogant persona, and sort of thing. I guess I felt he was never very popular among legislators. He was respected for his knowledge, but I don’t think many people ever liked him really.

DH: No, I think you’re probably really close. But one of the things that happened out of that, after they took over and made Jerry Driscoll the issue. And Jerry Driscoll, he became the executive secretary.

BB: He replaced Judge.

DH: He replaced Judge.

BB: He was a former legislator from Butte, Jerry Driscoll.

DH: No, from Billings.

BB: Excuse me, from Billings. He replaced, with the teachers’ votes—importantly with the teachers’ votes—he replaced Judge as the executive secretary.

DH: The AFL-CIO took on a completely different complexion as far as where they were going to go on some of these issues. And I mean, the feeling, some of the more conservative feelings were pro-corporation, became more and more. So out of that came—

BB: You saw more corporate influence in the AFL-CIO.

DH: Oh, definitely. You know, I have to honestly say this and being very blunt when I say it, is that Jerry Driscoll was a, after he got defeated...You know, we were really good friends and we even lived together one session in the legislature, but what happened was after he got defeated, then he came back to Helena and he became—

BB: As a lobbyist.

DH: As a lobbyist. Well he didn’t lobby for, he wasn’t AFL-CIO lobbyist. He was a lobbyist for anybody who would pay him the amount of money. That was pretty much—and I, you could go back and check who he lobbied for because he had to register when he lobbied for these different groups—but I always referred to him as a hired gun after that because that’s exactly what [he was]. And now he became executive secretary of the AFL-CIO.

BB: So he was defeated for the legislature. I think he was Majority Floor Leader, actually. And he lost his seat in the legislature probably in the early ‘90s.

DH: Well, he lost it because, and one of the reasons he lost it is he had picked up two DUls in one legislative session. And that’s a plain (?) and that’s not.
BB: So then he returned to the legislature as a lobbyist for business groups and whatever, whoever wanted to hire him. And of course he had a wonderful knowledge of the legislature, having served there.

DH: Sure he did. He was a very smart guy.

BB: A smart guy. And then after that, but he remained active in the AFL-CIO. And then when the teachers got the power in the AFL-CIO, he was their candidate initially to defeat Don Judge.

DH: That’s right. And that’s who, and they put him in there. And you know I don’t know how animosity between any of these people was, because I was never really part of the state labor movement other than later on as I was in the legislature. I took part in a lot of the different things that they did. But what happened was he moved into that position, and of course then there were some big changes that occurred. And I’d like to take some time just to try to point out some—what really—and how I ended up having some problems with what went on. So shortly after that there was what they called a progressive labor movement was founded. And Gene Fenderson was the one was responsible. He’s a former labor union leader.

BB: From Helena.

DH: From Helena, yes. He founded this—worked out with the rest of some of these other labor people—the Progressive Labor Caucus.

BB: And they would have been allies with Murry and Judge.

DH: That’s right. That’s exact. And so this group, and so anyhow, I joined it. And I became part of that because I had some real problems. Well, the other group became very disenchanted with me because certain things came up.

BB: The majority group.

DH: Yes. But as it worked out, I ended up to be president of this—

BB: PLC.

DH: Progressive Labor Caucus. Well, we went through lots of different things that occurred in the legislature. There was a lot of changes and these changes, I think, are still very present where different companies introduce legislation on environmental stuff that these different unions come in and support those issues. So I became—I had real problems with these people—and I was very outspoken. But what happened then, I ran for my final election, and that occurred in 2004. And they didn’t endorse me. I had a 97 percent labor record for all the years that I served in the legislature, but the AFL-CIO did not endorse me. And they endorsed
people there that had sometimes 30 percent. See, the new group tried to bring Republicans into this endorsement thing. I don’t know if they thought that they were going to change their whole philosophies or—but they did bring them in. But I was—and of course I hold Jerry Driscoll kind of responsible for that. Other people, Jim McGarvey was part of that. And I have to say Feaver, because Eric Feaver was, well, he called the shots. He still calls the shots of what goes on.

BB: You think he’s single most influential labor leader in Montana?

DH: I’d say, yes, he is. I mean right now he controls the votes.

BB: He controls that big teacher’s block of votes in the AFL-CIO, which dominates the AFL-CIO.

DH: That’s right. But they got, the only thing that came out of that was they didn’t endorse me. And the paper, and quite a few stories came out because they didn’t endorse me. Because I did have a, actually overall for all my years—12, 14, 16 whatever, 14 sessions or whatever the legislature had—I had a 97 percent voting record. But I think that kind of really upset me, the fact that I didn’t get the endorsement. And one of the things that happened out of that was that the papers really kind of went after them and brought out all this stuff that I’ve brought out to you. You know what I mean—that all this different stuff that had gone on and who went on. And you know this yourself, even for teachers, I always fought hard for teachers as far as all through the years. Well, the teachers did endorse me.

BB: Butte Teachers’ Union?

DH: Well, the Butte Teachers’ Union did, and the MEA and the MFT.

BB: Was there still a Butte Teachers’ Union then or—

DH: Oh yes. Butte Teachers’ Union, they’re still—

BB: You knew them all, so they were going to support you anyway.

DH: They did endorse me. But the MEA and MFT endorsed me but wouldn’t give me any money. That’s separate from the AFL-CIO. But I had certain labor unions that still gave me a contribution. Not very many though, not very many of them.

BB: Who was your opponent?

DH: Oh, I can’t even, a guy named Crosby, I think his name was. And I can’t even remember his first name, but it was a minimal opposition. But anyhow this is what happened. And it’s always bothered me, the fact that this went on. But what bothered me more than anything else was because of my more liberal stance on issues was the reason that I didn’t buy into some of the
stuff that was going on with the labor. And I don’t know what’s going to happen to the labor movement right now.

BB: Where is it now? Is it still in the same posture?

DH: Yes.

BB: I guess we should mention this too, just to clarify for some listeners later on, that Driscoll was replaced two or three years ago by Jim McGarvey.

DH: That’s right.

BB: And they’d been allies to begin with. Now, I’m not sure they are anymore either. I don’t know. But maybe McGarvey deposed Driscoll, and so you were about to say where you think—

DH: I have no—

BB: —where this thing is headed now.

DH: I have no insight into why that occurred other than I think Jerry had some problems. And I think that Eric Feaver decided that—and I’ve heard, and I’m just going to be very blunt when I say this—I heard he no longer wanted McGarvey to be in the upper echelons of the two unions, MFT and MEA.

BB: Who’s he?

DH: Eric Feaver.

BB: No longer wanted who?

DH: McGarvey.

BB: McGarvey?

DH: Yes, see McGarvey was always, like, vice-president, or under Eric Feaver in the MEA-MFT after they went together. But I’ve heard, whether it’s true or not I have no [idea], other than the fact that I believe that at that time they got him, they moved him over into executive secretary for the AFL-CIO and that was what occurred. And whether that’s true or not, I don’t know.

BB: Okay, so that would leave Feaver totally the chieftain of the teachers, the biggest voting block. And then Jim McGarvey would become the executive secretary or the most important figure in the whole AFL-CIO. So they have equally, similarly important, responsibilities maybe. I
don’t know if that’s a good way to put it or not. But anyway, Driscoll was the guy that lost out of that.

DH: Yes. And he was gone. I don’t know, I asked if he...I only went to the legislature a couple of times. You know how you do when you’re not, last time. And somebody told me that he hadn’t been up there that much, but I don’t know what the story is. But he did very well as a lobbyist, Jerry did. I think one of the things that—I guess one of the things to end up on—what really happened and I think this is kind of interesting, the Progressive Labor Caucus, Jim Keane, who is now a state senator from Butte that took my place, was running for the House. I think it was his last term running for the House.

BB: He was in the House several sessions before replacing you.

DH: And what happened was that he—there had been some animosity between the Progressive Labor Caucus and him. He was a labor leader also, the Operating Engineers, Jimmy Keane. So what happened there was there was a move of a group of people put together to defeat, to try to get somebody to run against Keane. Well, they had—

BB: The Progressive Labor Caucus people tried to find somebody to run against Keane?

DH: Yes. But, it actually wasn’t the Progressive Labor; it was another group that formed to oppose Keane for this.

BB: Because he was considered more conservative.

DH: Yes, more conservative. And what happened out of that, after Keane was re-elected and what he did though was went to all these—because he was still in the union—he went to these big, I don’t know, out-of-state or state-core labor leaders and got them to withdraw what unions were part of the Progressive Labor Caucus, that had gone into the Progressive Labor Caucus—that were still fairly liberal groups that had gone in there. Well, he got these major labor bosses to make them withdraw from them and that was the end of the Progressive Labor Caucus. But that’s kind of a situation.

BB: So it no longer exists?

DH: No it doesn’t. It doesn’t exist anymore. Instead of that you had the Progressive Democrats or whatever else. But all of this kind of comes back to the point that it just shows you what has happened as far as the labor movement is in the state of Montana. And I think that’s kind of an integral part of things that we—and I hope I’ve been real clear and concise. I tried to stay in that. I think one of the things you asked me, and I can do that real quick, is go over governors and so one who I—
BB: Yes. I guess just to conclude the labor thing, the labor movement in Montana took a twist in a different direction when Judge was replaced by Driscoll. Then since then, Driscoll has been replaced by McGarvey and I guess, if I’m understanding you correctly, maybe the jury’s kind of out on where the labor movement is now.

DH: I would say that, yes. I find it to be pretty much the same as it was before.

BB: Before, back in the Judge-Murry era?

DH: Labor people, you know even though I thought I had a good labor record, I have had people in Butte that are part of the labor movement that don’t seem to want—they still are part of this group, they’re part of this group—so I’ve had some problems with them over this.

BB: They were part of the more conservative group, but you’re tenuously back under the same umbrella again it sounds like. Okay, I would be interested, Dan, since you’ve served in many legislative sessions with many different governors, to just maybe have you share your thoughts and observations on some of the prominent politicians you’ve served with. And if you have stories about them, it’d be interesting to hear those. Did you ever—

DH: Well, I just don’t want to, I know that you want to—

BB: We’ve got about 15 minutes.

DH: Well, I’ll do this very quickly. I think as far as governors are concerned that I served under in one way or another in the Constitution or the legislature, Forrest Anderson. You know one of the things that happened was kind of another interesting little story: when Forrest Anderson was running for governor, another individual by the name of Eugene Mahoney was running.

BB: State senator from Sanders County

DH: Sanders County, yes, Eugene Mahoney. So Forrest Anderson would have been the attorney general. I got into the Eugene Mahoney [camp], I knew Eugene and I got into his campaign. I guess at that time Pat Williams and I were—another venture into gubernatorial politics—we were campaigning for Eugene Mahoney. We did campaign hard for him. Afterwards, Forrest Anderson was a little upset about what went on. One of the things that happened, from 1970 to 1990, I was chairman of the Democratic party in Silver Bow County for 20 years, the Democratic Central Committee. We’ve talked of many ventures of people that I’m going to talk about because I was chairman of the party, and that was kind of one of them. But Mahoney ran in ’68. That was just the election after it when Forrest Anderson, and Forrest Anderson was successful in that election.

BB: The primary election?
DH: The primary.

BB: And in the general?

DH: The primary and the general, and he was elected. I guess the thing was because we had campaigned, I had campaigned on the other side, I never became very close to him. You can imagine that’s what happened in political parties.

BB: Why did you support Mahoney?

DH: Well, I liked him. I always thought that Forrest was sometimes a little, you know, and I guess he was—I think he was a good governor. I think he did a good job as governor.

BB: He was a little what?

DH: A little abrasive sometimes the way he, you know—

BB: Small man with a tough, put-your-dukes-up personality.

DH: He was very tough (laughs). I liked Gene Mahoney, and so I campaigned for him. Of course in the election Forrest won, so really I didn’t have, even through the period, not much to do. I wasn’t one of the ones that was brought into the inner circle, to say the least. So that was really too much. I really didn’t have to say much. I thought he did a good job as governor, and he did what he wanted to do. That was pretty much, and I think you were in the, weren’t you in the legislature?

But Tom Judge, of all the governors that have been governors since then, I think he was the more sincere as far as issues were concerned. I think Tom Judge believed very strongly as he went through this. You know there was always, you know one of the things, as I told you before, we had some problems—Silver Bow County, between the Central Committee and some of the legislators, that was before I went in—over this conservative voting corporation-type situations. So there was times when the Central Committee took issue with some of the legislators over what was going on. And they also took issue with Tom Judge, saying that he was on certain issues. And I met with him a few times to talk over issues, and he was always—I think, after he was not governor any longer—we got together and I really got to see how real sincere he really was as a governor. He was a very sincere person, and he believed very strongly. And of all the governors, I’d say that he had more, he felt, issues that would benefit people. Tom Judge had a stronger feeling than probably any other one.

BB: He would have been the most genuine liberal?

DH: Liberal, yes.
BB: And the one probably closest to your own philosophical point of view?

DH: I would say that that would be his, how he was. Ted Schwinden was, and I’m going to give you a little... You’ve served with Pat Regan and we loved Pat Regan—

BB: Senator from Billings.

DH: She was a whip in the Senate and I was a whip in the House. I believe that would have been the ’83 session and Ted Schwinden was governor. We met at transmittal, and we went over and met with the governor in one of the rooms in the capitol. He came in and the first time we had ever passed anything for school equalization. I think they had passed 30 mills. The Senate had passed the 30 mills.

BB: It was 30 mill [tax] statewide on property.

DH: On property tax, yes. You can X this out after [but] it’s kind of an interesting situation occurred (laughs). But one of the things that I think—so Ted Schwinden came in and sat down and he said, “Well, I want to congratulate you senators for doing that.” But he said, “I’ll tell you, I just don’t think we can hang in with this. That’s the first time that you were using statewide mills other than the six mills for the university system.”

Pat Regan was sitting there, and she had worked her butt off to get this school equalization, and she said, “Governor, you touch that 30 mills,” and she says, “I’ll cut your balls off.” (Laughs)

BB: (Laughs) Wow.

DH: That was the statement that she made to him at this meeting.

BB: Right to his face?

DH: Right there.

BB: What did, how did Ted react?

DH: Just kind of laughed.

BB: But a startled laugh?

DH: Yes. But I think that’s worth giving you that, that scenario, because that was Pat Regan, I mean as far—and I hope you don’t mind, but I mean—and of course that was only the start of the school equalization. Of course ’89, we all were in the special session of ’89, spent the whole summer up there.
BB: That’s when [Stan] Stephens was governor.

DH: And he got real mad at me. I was chairing Taxation [Committee] in the House and he got real mad at me and told me not to come down to his office anymore. (Laughs)

BB: You had gone down to his office for discussions?

DH: Oh yes. He had called a Butte delegation down but told them to tell me not to come because he was mad at me over, he was sending stuff up. You know how the governor would send stuff, certain stuff up. And anyhow, and J.D. [Lynch] and I used to go, Allen Kolstad and I went over to their house for dinner a couple of times because J.D. was good friends with them, and he’d say, “Why don’t you come over with me? I’m going over to [Stephens’ house].” I always got along good with them before.

BB: So the governor’s mansion?

DH: No, this was before, when he was still Montana state senator.

BB: Oh, they had the big house in Helena, the Bill Wheeler (?) house.

DH: Yes.

BB: So Stephens and Kolstad had rented that house together and once in a while they’d invite their friend J.D. Lynch and once in a while he’d invite you and the four of you would have dinner together?

DH: Yes.

BB: So you had a cordial personal relationship with Stephens at that point?

DH: At that point. But afterwards, it seemed like he was really upset during those—if you remember that special session he ended up going to the hospital the day the special session ended. But I kind of felt bad about that. But he did get mad at me over—because there was a lot of controversy that occurred during that special session as far as education was concerned.

BB: Marc Racicot. What do you remember about him?

DH: Well, Marc, and I always got along well with Marc, but he always told you what you wanted to hear anyway so I remember I go into him one time and I told him, I says, “You know, Marc, you’re cutting...” That was when they cut all that money out in ’93 in a lot of education and that was just after the school equalization. I says, “You know, this is really going to hurt. And I just wanted to come down and talk to you about it.”
“Dan,” he says, “I really appreciate you coming down. I’ll always take to heart what you say because you’ve been here a long time.” I thought it was very nice. Well, it didn’t make any difference.

But another time I went down had to do with this reclamation, over there was a number of people that wanted to kill the reclamation, natural resource damage reclamation. And I think Swysgood was one of them. Chuck Swysgood was a senator, state senator from Beaverhead. And there was a few more that they told me, they just said they absolutely didn’t want, didn’t think that the legislature should fund the suit against ARCO at that time and what was going on or go through the rest of it, MRI [Montana Resources], as it ended up. But I went down to see him then, and I says, “You know we got real problems with this. If they kill that suit, then there’s a lot of things that could be done that won’t be done, that actually have been done and will be done still.”

He said, “I really appreciate you coming down. And I will do...,” and he did. He made sure that that bill got out. I don’t know if you remember the controversy there was in the Senate about that. He said that he did, and I probably believed that he did do [what he could]. So that gives you two sides of the same, but he did do it. He did go up. He did do it. I saw him a few weeks ago at a Carroll game. He was in Helena, the first time I’ve seen him in a long time. I guess that’s part of, there’s a lot of things I disagreed with him with. But just like anybody else that you serve with or deal with, I always thought we were friends. I’ve seen him a number of times.

BB: And you remain friends.

DH: Yes.

BB: Judy Martz.

DH: I first taught in 1960. I got out of school and Arnold Olsen was elected to Congress and Pat McCartney, who was a sociology teacher at Butte High School, went to become his top assistant in Washington. And he had been a teacher for a number of years. I was subbing at the time. I had just gotten out of college. They put me in that sociology job, and I had Judy Martz in class. I later taught her daughter.

BB: She was you student?

DH: Yes, that’s right. I always got along good with Judy over the years in Butte with different academic—

BB: What do you remember about her as a student? Anything?

DH: Oh I don’t, I really don’t.
BB: But you’d had that time when she became governor?

DH: Yes. She was always a very nice girl. I think one of the things that happened right after she was elected governor, and I always wondered why she did this, that was when the mines were shut down in Butte and they were going for an extension on their unemployment compensation—and really, she didn’t have to do this, this just shows you where she kind of got off—she made the statement that she’d veto any bill to give them an extended unemployment.

BB: She’d lived in Butte for many years.

DH: Oh, she still lives there. So, the press came to me and they said, “Well, you’re, what do you think about her stance.”

I said, “Well, I don’t think she understands the unemployment laws.” She said it would break the unemployment laws. It wasn’t going to break the unemployment law to give them 13 more weeks that they had been out of work. But I said, “You know, she is a very—I just don’t know why she did that. But I don’t think she understands.” I just said, “I don’t think she understands the unemployment laws by making the statement she did.” Well, I was in committee the next day and she called me down. Well, I didn’t go down right away, I told her. So anyway, I went down and she was in there.

She says, “I’m not going to say anything to you until I get a witness in here.” This was our first and probably our last real [meeting]. I think, Shane Hedges was still down there then.

BB: Shane Hedges?

DH: Shane Hedges who had been one of her assistants, and I can’t remember who else was in there. But she said, “I want you to know right now that I do understand the unemployment laws.”

I said, “Okay. You do.” So we kind of got into a little controversy there. She said, as much as told me that, and I kind of got the—and I don’t know if she exactly said it that way, that she didn’t care if I ever came into the governor’s office again. This type of situation. So I never did. Really, I’ve seen her a few times. I see her daughter and talk to her daughter all the time in Butte. But I’ve never had much, I don’t think she’s ever really spoke to me. I saw her down here after a Grizzly game down here in Missoula.

BB: So she tended to personalize things more than the other governors.

DH: I think she did personalize things.

BB: Did you have any experience with Schweitzer?
DH: Oh yes. I’ve got along with Schweitzer since he’s been governor. I did. I was in leadership in
his two sessions; I’d been in the two. I was president pro tem in the Senate both sessions, so I
dealt with him on the leadership board. I got along fine with him. I think his—what he does as
governor still, the jury’s still out as far as—I think he’s a very smart guy. It’s hard to try to say
what you think about a governor. I think he’s done some good things.

BB: Just briefly because we’re almost to the end of our tape. You also served in the legislature
at the same time that Mike Mansfield and Lee Metcalf and Max Baucus and John Melcher were
members of the U.S. Senate. We’ve got just a small amount of time, so if there’s an anecdote or
an experience with one of them or a couple of them, just briefly.

DH: Okay, I’ll try to go through this as quickly as I can. Mike Mansfield, I met him a number of
times. I was chairman of the party from 1970. So he came to Butte. He was always there to give
us a check for the party going into an election. Very smart guy, intelligent guy. Lee Metcalf. And
I like Mike Mansfield, but Lee Metcalf was always my favorite. He was the kind of guy that was
a crusty guy that was out there doing things that I felt was, that I thought were good. And he
took on the people I thought he should take on: the Anaconda Company, the Montana Power
Company. He was one—

BB: Do you have a memorable conversation with him of any kind?

DH: Oh yes, I guess the worst was when he didn’t get...I was elected as a delegate to the
Democratic Convention, and that would have been when McGovern [ran] in ’72. What
happened there was that he, Metcalf ran, and I told Tom Towe at that time that I was going
to—Towe was kind of the head of the delegation at that time—that I was going to vote for Lee
Metcalf because I thought the world of him. And I did vote for him, but he didn’t make it.

BB: Okay, so Tom Towe was the leader of the McGovern forces in Montana in ’72. He was trying
to get every delegate that he could for McGovern to the National Convention. Metcalf wanted
to go, but he wouldn’t agree to pledge himself to McGovern. So Towe said, “Well then we can’t
support him.” You went ahead and supported Metcalf anyway.

DH: I did support Metcalf. I didn’t support some of the other labor people who were my friends
at that time because I said I was going to [vote for Metcalf instead] and they got real angry with
me so there was a little (laughs) controversy. But I just felt that Lee Metcalf was a different
case. Lee Metcalf should have been [a delegate].

BB: So did Metcalf ever speak to you about that?

DH: Oh yes, he did. He talked to me about it afterwards.

BB: What was his—
DH: His feel was, I told him that I voted for him and I would always vote for him and I thought a great deal about him. And he said he was very upset, and I don’t think he ever forgave Tom Towe for what happened at that, over that situation. But he was, I always thought the world of him.

I guess, to go on, as far as Max Baucus is concerned, when he was first elected to the House, he used to even stay at my house. I worked hard, and he did very well in Butte to start out. He beat Dick Shoup and Shoup was kind of a popular congressman at that time. It’s been a lot of years since I’ve had much to do with Max, and Max is…I think he’s really hurt himself. I don’t care what anybody says on this healthcare thing. He’s tried to make himself as the guy that says whether people are going to have health insurance or not in the whole United States. I think that, as I watched last night on one of those programs, they were really going after him, and it’s coming from the Democratic side. I think Max always thinks that he’s going to be elected in Montana. But I think if the Republicans [are] with him, if they [voters] feel that he’s lost that much, it won’t take them a minute to run somebody against him. I don’t blame them for doing it when it comes right down to it.

BB: Because the Democrats are divided.

DH: That’s not what I would vote for. But there’s such division right now over what he’s done, I guess. And Jon Tester, he was president of the Senate and I was president pro tem. We got along very well. I wish him luck. I hope he makes the right decision on these healthcare votes. I hope he doesn’t vote; you know what I mean. I just hope he does the right thing, that’s all. Because I think he’s got, if he gets elected one more time, then I think he’s in a position of a little more strength. But I think the next election’s the one that I hope he does the right thing.

BB: Anything in conclusion, Dan?

DH: No, I would like to thank you, Bob, for doing this. I think there’s certain things that I said today, that I feel that are a part of what I felt was important, I didn’t go into. I thought legislation that I introduced over the years was important. I think I did accomplish something as a House member and a state senator in the state of Montana. I don’t know if I’ll run for anything again. I can’t say I won’t, but right now I don’t think I will. I felt that I did my best, and I always felt that I upheld my conviction that, and I always felt that if corporations do the right thing I’ll vote for them, if they don’t then I’m going to and I would not vote for them. And I think that sums up where I came from as being a legislator. I always felt, and I’d like to point this out, I always felt that if I thought something was right, that’s what I had to do no matter what. And that’s what I did.

BB: Well, greatly appreciate your public service, Dan.

[End of Interview]