

Maureen and Mike

# Mansfield Library

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

## **Archives and Special Collections**

Mansfield Library, University of Montana

Missoula MT 59812-9936

Email: [library.archives@umontana.edu](mailto:library.archives@umontana.edu)

Telephone: (406) 243-2053

The following index lists the major topics in the audio recording and the approximate point when they occur in the recording according to an analog cassette recorder's tape counter. This tape counter index (TCI) has not been edited for accuracy by Archives and Special Collections.

Tom Payne-Bill Norman Debate 10/31/78  
Hal Stearns Moderator  
OH #45-1

[SIDE A]

- 000-050 Hal Stearns explains the rules of the debate. Stearns explains that each candidate will have 3 minutes for opening remarks and then questions will be asked of the candidates.
- 051-100 Stearns introduces the first speaker, Bill Norman. Norman says that the major problem facing the people of this district is the funding for the University of Montana. The problem doesn't come from lack of knowledge by the legislature, however. Norman comments that he was a member of the legislature when this problem came on. They were beginning to make progress on the problem.
- 101-117 Norman comments that the legislative finance committee will consider the Universities situation in three weeks, which will be helpful. The other thing that is being down to aid in this situation is the formation of a faculty union. Norman comments that the Republicans have proposed some very large tax cuts and he hopes this can be addressed this evening.
- 118-150 Thomas Payne is introduced. Payne states that the real decision to be made tonight is which of these two candidates can best represent Senate district 34. Payne quotes a message from one of President Lincoln's speeches.
- 151-190 Payne says that the funding for higher education in Montana is a disgrace. He quotes national figures stating that Montana is last in the nation with respect to increases for higher education. The average increase over the past 10 years for the 50 states has been 76%. Montana over the past ten years has increased education spending by only 19%.
- 191-260 Stearns asks three questions of the candidates. The first question is, how can Montanans represented by the legislature bring about a better financing system for the university system? The second question is, what are the merits and demerits of the faculty union in deciding things for the university? The final question is whether the new set up of the board of regents and commissioner of higher education is working and what can be done to make it better?
- 261-300 Norman answers the first question. Norman says that the funding process for the university system must be considered. The board of regents draws up a budget for

the system and then proposes it to the finance budget. After a number of hearings a bill is drafted and sent to the legislature.

301-370 Norman explains the process whereby the draft of the bill is changed and cut. He also notes that no senator from a district with a university in it has ever served on the committee deciding the budget. To get the university more funding there must be legislators on the inside, who know the process, and who know the other legislators so as to talk them into more funding.

371-407 Norman says that to get an idea of the amount of money there is to spend in the state budget one must look at how the budget balances. At this time the spending money is low and the legislators do not want to raise taxes.

408-500 Payne addresses the higher education spending question. He notes that his opponent, Norman, has been in the legislature for the past eight years and during the past eight years higher education in Montana has experienced its worst funding period ever. Payne says that the university system has been going down hill very fast in the last two years and the funding needs to be returned quickly otherwise there will be only two alternatives. One alternative would be to reduce the quality of the institutions. The other would be to eliminate and institution or to raise student fees.

501-542 Payne says that another thing to consider is the great value of the three major universities in the system. They bring in the majority of out of town revenue to their communities.

543-600 Norman addresses the second question of what the university teacher's union is and how it operates. He expects that it would work very closely with other groups to obtain funding for the system. He notes that the one reason why there isn't enough funding for the university system as it is, is because there are many other programs which must be funded. He asks what programs we should cut to fund higher education.

601-650 Norman continues by asking whether Payne intends to stand up with the rest of his party who want to make tax cuts. These tax cuts that the Republicans want to make constitute a large part of the general fund from which higher education is funded. If the Republican tax cuts are approved it will remove \$15 million from the income tax fund. Also property tax cuts have been proposed which will remove even more.

651-700 Norman says that the university teachers union will be very good for helping the legislature understand what

the system needs. He doesn't feel as though the faculty and the students can have any idea of what the university system needs because they are too busy being students and teaching.

701-800 Payne says that the teacher's union is a very important group. It will be the negotiating group for the university. He says that the union is and must continue to be an important group in the sight of the legislature. He also says that this is really not a partisan election for him. Although he is a Republican he is not about to go along with everything his party has to say. He notes that Norman in last years legislature only voted with his party 70% of the time.

801-870 Payne feels that Norman is oversimplifying the matter. He also wants to know why, since cuts have not been made in the last ten years, the university system is only getting 17% of the budget instead of 25%. Payne notes that the average salary for public officials has increased by 500% over the past ten years while the salaries of the faculty at these institutions have increased only even less than the cost of living.

871-950 Norman starts to answer the third question but before doing that he offers a couple of comments. He says that Payne does not understand the legislative process from what he has just said. When the budget is balanced it is education that is affected first of all. The problem with budget appropriations for the university system is that there is not a way to easily decide what good is coming out of the money spent.

950-1030 As far as the third question is concerned the Board of Regents is in a very peculiar situation. The legislature decides how much money the university system is appropriated but the Board of Regents has the duty of trying to get the money in the first place. Norman talks about the accomplishments in the past few years. The University of Montana has a new science complex, a new \$6 million fine arts building and a great deal of improvements have been done to the field house.

1031-1100 Norman says that all of these things have been accomplished in the last few years and the people who were responsible, like him, didn't publicize their contributions although congratulations are deserved. He mentions that the Board of Regents represents the people of the state not the faculty and students. Norman says that these three groups usually have the same interests, however. He feels that the Board of Regents is beyond the legislature. It is not really a part of the state system.

1101-1130 Norman says that the Board of Regents is quite often too noisy and this isn't good for funding.

[END OF SIDE A]

[SIDE B]

000-149 [Nothing].

149-200 Payne continues talking about the problem era that is in existence in Montana budgetary matters. He again talks about the study done that puts Montana at the bottom of the fifty states in rank of spending for higher education. Another study done considering all of the universities and colleges of the western 11 states was done and Montana's six institutions came at the bottom of this list also.

201-250 Payne goes on to say that he is definitely not on the side of the people who want major tax cuts. He would propose no tax cuts until after the state has a stable working monetary base. He raises the question of whether education is so much less important than medical care that it should suffer. He wants to see education as a whole strengthened in the near future. He also wants to reorder the priorities of the state government.

251-300 After some of these problems are taken care of then maybe the tax structure can be looked at and cuts be made. As far as Norman's contention's that Payne doesn't know the legislature, Payne says that he knows the people and his way around capital hill very well. Payne says that many of his former students are now legislative leaders and he feels that he could have good ties with them. Payne says that another thing the senators have problems with is that they don't know what is all in the bills by the time they go through so many revisions.

301-380 [Break in tape of about ten minutes while people submit questions to the moderator]. Stearns says that from the questions he received he has chosen two to ask to audience. The first question is how can both parties work together to best help fund the university system.

381-450 Payne is to answer the question first. Payne says that there aren't even totally agreeable situations between members of the same party. Sometimes the parties will agree and sometimes they won't. He now concerns himself with the Montana legislature and the Missoula delegation. He says that he has been going to Helena every year since 1951 and making new ties every year. He says that there is a need for a two party system but the party system, as it is today, it not like what

Norman alludes to with the parties being separate and very distinct and the members in each party cannot agree with what the other parties are saying.

451-475 Payne says that he will not go along with his own party just to satisfy his party friends. He will represent the people in his district no matter how far their views differ from those of his own party.

476-545 Norman answers the question. He says that the parties do have partisanship whether people like it or not. He says that when the idea of tax cuts come up partisanship is always very sharply seen, as it is today in the Montana legislature. He says that the Democrats always are willing to spend more on the university system than the Republicans. He says that the parties can try to work together but in the end there will be partisanism.

546-555 The next question is, what will people do if the sixth mill levy fails.

556-620 Norman says that the sixth mill levy is important because it means about \$9 million to the state every year. Norman says that he is for the sixth mill levy and he urges the people to vote for it. What would we do if the mill levy didn't pass. Norman says that the state is fairly well stuck with what we have because the taxes cannot be increased much farther. He says that there would have to be cuts in some agencies.

621-700 Payne addresses the question. He assumes that the mill levy will pass. If the levy fails then he will take it as a view from the people that they don't want their property taxes used to fund the schools. He says that he would see that other sources are found to replace the taxes lost, even if it means raises other taxes. He states that the problem over the past 10 years in the legislature has been their failure to recognize the importance of higher education to the state. He says that he could never support any tax cuts until the budget is balanced.

701-717 Stearns states that the next round has begun. Each person will have four minutes for their summations. Payne is to speak first.

718-800 Payne is glad for the chance to have gotten together. He proposes that there is a need for a different messenger to send the message to Helena voicing the communities concern over these issues. He is furious that Montana is last on the list of increases in higher education. He is also indignant of the way the legislature has treated the budget issue over the last year and if elected he will fight for more money for

the education system.

801-900 Norman gives his summation. He says that the Republicans will have their tax cuts because there is no way to go home until the budget is balanced. He says that Payne will have to end up voting with his own party otherwise he will be the only candidate from his party voting with the Democrats and this won't do much to help the University. He says that there is more to this campaign than funding for the university. Norman says that the university needs funding, however, or else it will fold up and that would be a tragic loss because of how much the university means to the entire western part of Montana.

901-910 Norman says that there is hope so he would like the vote so that he may continue his job. He says that the fate of the universities in the state are up to the voter and he asks for their support to continue his job.

911-989 Stearns gets up and talks about his travelling around the state and he believes the sixth mill levy will pass. He talks a little more about some of the people he has talked to in Montana and most support the higher education system. He then thanks the people for their attention.

[END OF TAPE]