

Oral History Number: 467-001

Interviewee: Bob Brown

Interviewer: Carol Van Valkenburg

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Carol Van Valkenburg: All right, it is May 30, 2019. This is Carol Van Valkenburg, and I am interviewing Bob Brown and we'll find out all about Bob's history and background by letting him tell us. Bob, could you tell us a little bit about your background—where you were born and a little bit about your growing up years?

Bob Brown: I was born here in Missoula on December 11, 1947, and my conservative Republican father always advised me not to talk too much about that. [laughs] We lived briefly in Thompson Falls for, I think, about four years and then moved up to the Flathead Valley. We lived, when I was a little kid, in Kalispell and then moved out in the country on some acreage, and that's where I primarily grew up. I had an idyllic boyhood. I fished and shot gophers and sat in the loft of the barn and read books and so on. It was a good life. My dad felt that my sister and I would be better off if we never got television, and it didn't come in well then, we had to have an antenna to get TV. Eventually that happened, but it happened about the time I graduated from high school. My dad told me he thought he was doing me a favor which he definitely was because I had to read, and I read extensively. I especially enjoyed military history—drum and bugle history—and I read a lot of biographies about old dead generals and politicians and that sort of thing. I became especially interested in Theodore Roosevelt, who seemed to me to be an idealistic and very good person and very good president who was also dynamic and flamboyant and interesting and that sort of thing. I've since accumulated somewhere around 80 books either by or about him, and I've read quite a few of them. I think probably my great respect for Roosevelt had something to do with defining my political philosophy.

CVV: So would you say that's why you became a Republican because of Teddy Roosevelt?

BB: No, my dad was a very outspoken Republican, and my mother actually more of a Democrat. My dad wasn't domineering by any means. He was a very good parent, but he felt more strongly about it I think than she did so I was brought up to believe that Republicans were the good guys. I can illustrate that with a quick story. My dad told me that when he was a little boy, he was seated on the big porch of the farmhouse in Iowa that belonged to his grandmother, and this was in 1928 when my dad was about nine years old. She, his grandmother, was just fulminating against the Democrats and Al Smith. Al Smith was a wet on prohibition. He was a Catholic. He was a Democrat. He was from New York City. There couldn't hardly be enough [more] wrong with anybody. Everything was wrong with him. Whereas Herbert Hoover was a Protestant and a small town honest man who had made his own way in life and was from Iowa. This was really obvious to her, and Dad said she went on for a minute or two. Then she said, "In fact, I wouldn't allow a Democrat to pass my front gate."

Dad said, "Well, why are you so much against the Democrats?"

She said, "Because the Democrats killed two of my brothers"—the Civil War. Just like in the south, the Solid South, where everybody in the in the South had been killed...in the Civil War had been killed by a Republican or somebody was sympathetic to them. Well, the same thing was true in the upper Midwest and so places like Michigan and Iowa and Minnesota and so on were nearly as one party Republican in the years after the Civil War as the South was one party Democrat. My dad said he honestly wasn't sure he knew one until he got into the military. His whole world was just that way. I had that influence in my life. It was just understood that the Democrats were people that shouldn't be trusted with power. They didn't know how to handle money. They wasted it. They were crooked. They had big city machines that were dominated by gangsters. Republicans were small town, virtuous, hardworking, industrious people who should actually be running the government.

CVV: But he married a Democrat.

BB: [laughs] Yeah, but kind of a passive Democrat. But that's true, that's true, and you and I have talked a little bit about this that influenced me a little bit too because my mother had grown up in the Depression—so had my dad—on a farm ranch over in the central part of Montana. She had an attitude that government isn't always bad and it isn't always wrong. Government had brought electricity to the farm communities, and they otherwise might not have been able to have it. The farm program it probably kept her family on the farm. So she had a little different philosophy than my dad had. She also told me things like, "Be especially kind to the children in school who may not have other friends or who may have handicaps of some kind or other because they kind of have a tougher life and you don't have the problems that they have. So try to be mindful of the kids that aren't as happy, and you be their special friend." Another thing she repeated to me many times was, "It's not whether you win or lose; it's how you play the game." So she didn't really have that competitive laissez-faire instinct that I think most Republicans are supposed to have. You know because I served with your husband in the state Senate for many years that what I've just told you may tend to describe my political philosophy a little bit. It was sometimes kind of conflicted. I think I was in the right party for most of my life, but there were times when I had difficulty being in my own party when certain issues would come up.

CVV: I think it sounds like that is why you are known as a moderate Republican throughout your career. Probably the influence of your mother and your father.

BB: I think that's true.

CVV: Well, what interested you in getting into politics?

BB: I think my reading did, I think I wanted to be a U.S. senator. I wanted to be a general. I wanted to be somebody of prominence, somebody that I might someday read about in history,

or that people might someday read about in history. I rode on the school bus all the way into Kalispell. It was a long bus drive, bus ride, and I wasn't able to participate in any kind of extracurricular activities because I had to always ride the bus. When I graduated from high school and went over to Montana State University in Bozeman, I was just dying with the desire to become involved in things and to do things. I was immediately elected the president on my floor in the dormitory. I was inducted into a couple of different honoraries, and I was on the debate team. Soon afterwards, my second year in college, I was elected to the student senate, and I ended up having some pretty significant success on the debate team and enjoying the student senate. I made a ton of friends. Was probably as involved as anybody on campus, and I ended up being the student body president. That whole experience really whetted my appetite and I thought, 'Heck, this is great.' This is kind of what I'd always wanted to do, and I seemed to have somewhat of a talent for getting along with people and people would support me when I'd run for things and so on. Anyway, I thought it'd really be exciting to go into the legislature, and I'm just burning to want to do it.

Coincidentally, and I don't mean to go on and on here, Carol, but this is pretty good story. While I was student body president the Kent State episode occurred, and colleges all over the country closed down and the kids all went to Washington D.C. from all over the Eastern seaboard. There was even some turbulence, though not serious, at Montana State and University of Montana. So a couple of other student leaders, you would remember Kelly Addy, who was the Speaker Pro Tem of the Montana House a few years later and who was a Democrat, and a young fellow named Bob Quinn who is now a pretty successful rancher actually—they were student leaders with me, and we did a poll, a survey. We had the guidance and counselling department help us with this survey, and we polled the students essentially in our student body about various issues that pertained to the Vietnam War. It wasn't a bad survey, and so the other university campuses decided they wanted to do the same thing. What ended up was we had done a pretty good job of polling the university students and college students in our whole state. So the administration there at Montana State sent Addy and Quinn and I back to Washington D.C. with these poll results. We shared them with members of our congressional delegation and some other members of Congress. We stayed in a hotel downtown, and we got in the taxi cab to take us up to the Capitol building and you're familiar with the way Washington D.C. is designed. It's got these circles in it, and there're streets like spokes from a wheel that go out from the circle. We came to a circle—runs vaguely in my mind it was Dupont Circle, but it doesn't make any difference. It was completely plugged up with demonstrators. College kids were all over the place, and so the cabbie couldn't get through and the police, they didn't want trouble, so they would kind of gently escort the kids out of the circle and a new kid would go lay down in this place. Heck, I think it must've taken us an hour of threading our way through that circle to get up to the Capitol building. When we got up there, the hallways and corridors were absolutely packed with kids with knapsacks and that sort of thing from all over the Eastern seaboard. What would happen was there'd been an arrangement brokered by Senator Mark Hatfield from Oregon, who is someone else I came to know and admire greatly. Hatfield's arrangement was if the members of Congress could do their jobs in the morning, then their offices would be open to all the young people that wanted to come in and meet with them all afternoon. It was kind of

hard to broker that deal because there wasn't anybody really on the students' side to be the broker for the students, but the word got out. What happened was we got in, and we didn't necessarily concentrate on the Montana delegation, but certainly we wanted to talk to them and did. But we talked to some other delegations too. The neat thing about it was we were the only kids there, when we'd get into the presence of a senator or congressman, that had a poll—that had a survey—with actual questions from the students in their own state. So that kind of made this thing, maybe, a little more successful for us. We didn't just complain and rant and rave and so on.

CVV: Do you remember when this was going goes Kent was in May, May 4, 1970, so was it right then?

BB: Yeah, it was right at the end of my senior year.

CVV: So that you got that poll done before school was out in June?

BB: Yeah. [pauses] No, I think we were back there within a week or so of Kent State.

CVV: Really? Wow, that's a quick poll.

BB: Maybe ten days.

CVV: A poll of all the students in the state?

BB: What we did, as I remember and this is just vaguely, is we did second period all over the campus, and there have been kids absent and kids didn't have a class on second period. But I think we did something like that. The other ones did it too. So it wasn't more than ten days after Kent State, I don't think anyway.

I want to tell you about Senator Metcalf. Metcalf resented this encroachment on his life and all these kids making life miserable for him, and he generally agreed with the kids but he didn't like having to put up with this stuff. So where most of the members of Congress would let you come into the ante room where there were a couple of sofas and some coffee tables and stuff and a little bit of space. Metcalf had everybody go back to his little cubbyhole office, and you could probably get 12 people just sandwiched in there. He was a big man with a kind of a big chest and tousled hair and that sort of thing, and he was gruff and so he kind of acted like he was putting up with us and listened to us and that sort of thing. Then he excused us, and he said, "Mr. Brown"—because I was the guy that had read the poll results, we took turns doing that. He said, "I was impressed with the fact that you guys had gone to more trouble than rest of these kids have, and I just want you to know that." But he said, "I see in the newspaper where you've just filed for the state legislature."

I said, "Yeah, I have."

He said, "I'm going to give you some advice. But the first thing you have to understand before I give you the advice is that you need to do this not because it's an ego trip. If you're running for the Montana legislature, you need to do it because you have a belief that you can make an important contribution and that Montana can be a little better place because you were elected to the legislature. You've got to really believe that about yourself to help you campaign for the office." He said, "I first ran for the Montana legislature when I was very little older than you are now. It was in a heavily Republican district down south of Missoula in the vicinity of Stevensville." He said, "I was running against an incumbent, and I didn't probably have that much of a chance. It was during the Depression era, though, so Democrats had somewhat of an advantage. It was 1938." So he said, "I campaigned my tail off because I believed in myself and I believed in what I wanted to do. I wanted to be a part of the spirit of the New Deal and to help rescue the country from its problems. I just wanted very much to be a part of that." So he said, "I was having dinner at my parents' house the night before the election, the eve of the election. My mother said, 'Well, Lee, you haven't been to the Johnsons, you haven't been to the Smiths, you haven't been to the Andersons. Lee said, 'Well, they've known me all my life. She said, 'But people like to be asked.'" So he said, "I was tired. I'd been going door to door for days, and that wasn't even commonly done. But I got up from the dinner table"—and of course, days are short in November—"I went to one farm family and I went to another one and I went to another one." He said, "I came back home, it was pitch dark ten o'clock, and I couldn't imagine another thing I could do." Well, he said, "When the votes were counted, I won the election by something like 13 votes or something like that. I think I won the election after I got up from the dinner table on that night." He said, "I literally think that's true because those families that lived around us for the most part were Republican families, but probably didn't take very much because they'd known me since I was a kid. I went in and told them I'd sure appreciate their support." He said, "I think I probably won the election after dinner that night so it was pretty important what I did after dinner that night, wasn't it?"

[laughs] I said, "Yes, sir, it was."

He said, "Well, if you really believe in yourself then you owe it not just to yourself but the people of Montana to campaign your tail off for the legislature. Because if you don't believe in anything, then it doesn't make any difference whether you win or not." He said, "You got me?"

I said, "Yes, sir." So I left, and I literally, definitely followed his advice in all my legislative races. I would think about that consciously and think about why are you running. When I was determined that I was the best guy and that it was important that I be elected or re-elected to the legislature, I could really put my heart into it.

Then one final part of the story. Years later, shortly after Metcalf died, so it wasn't a longtime later, probably seven or eight years later, there was an effort made to name a new—I believe it was a Department of Natural Resources building. Might have been Fish and Game, but I think this Department of Natural Resource. We built a new building, and the Democrats wanted to

name it after Metcalf because he was a kind of a conservationist and that was his reputation. So it was real close in the legislature then. We might have had one vote majority, or it might have been tied. Anyway in our caucus, we decided we were going to derail it. I remember Pete Storey, one of my good friends, very conservative Republican, said, "I have my least beliefs in and I really believe in them, and Metcalf had his," because Metcalf had just been dead for a year or so. He said, "Metcalf wouldn't want me to vote to name a building after him because Metcalf would have respected the fact that we don't agree on anything." So they went around the room and we needed to be unanimous as I remember. So I stood up and I said, "Well, fellows, it's not going to be unanimous."

"Oh, Brown, you're always out of line. How come you can't be a team player?"

I said, "I'm not going to take a lot of time explaining here when we've got to get back down to the floor, but [if] anybody wants to know, I've got a reason." Well, the reason is the one I just told you, so I paid him back.

CVV: Yeah, he didn't know at the time helping to elect a Republican, did he?

BB: [laughs] No, and he didn't know at the time that I was going to be the guy that got the building named after him. I told his widow that. I told Donna that story.

CVV: How old were you when you first ran, and what year was that?

BB: I was 22, and my birthday was in December so I was actually 23 when I was sworn in. J.D. Lynch from Butte and Dorothy Bradley from Bozeman and I were close to the same age although I was a little bit younger.

CVV: So you were the youngest.

BB: I was.

CVV: What do you recall about your first campaign for office other than you put a lot of time and effort into it?

BB: In the primary, you see, I was a college kid over in Bozeman so I'd have to come home on weekends. A couple of quick things. That's when there were, I think, five of us elected at large in Flathead County. So I just had to get one of the five votes in the Republican primary, and that was probably an advantage to me because I was unique. I mean, the other guys were pretty similar, but I was the kid so people could think, 'Well, you know, he's trying to be a conscientious kid. He's not carrying a sign and burning his draft card and that sort of thing,' which is probably half important in a Republican primary.

CVV: And he goes to MSU and not UM.

BB: And he goes to MSU and not U of M. So, 'We'll give him our fifth vote or something.' I think that's partly how I made it. Dorothy Bradley thinks the same thing may have benefited her in Bozeman when she first ran—the same kind of a situation. That was one thing, and I went to the doors where I knew there would be the heaviest Republican turnout. Republicans then predominated in Kalispell and especially the east side of Kalispell, so I didn't waste any time up in Whitefish, where the railroad unions and the sawmill workers unions and that sort of thing were. But I concentrated on the people that I assumed would be Republican primary voters. I think that probably helped.

The other thing that probably didn't help, but I love to tell the story, is that I knew tons of kids at the Montana State University campus. So I got the...several kids like the Miss Wohl—the Rodeo Queen of Montana—Miss MSU, I think I had five of them. The Crescent girl from my fraternity house. They agreed to go up for a weekend—they all stayed at my grandma's house—and I gave them matchbooks and they were just white, plain matchbooks and then in their feminine handwriting they would write, "Elect Bob Brown. Thank you," or something like that. We took them up to the plant gate at the aluminum plant in Columbia Falls where all those blue-collar workers were getting off shift. They stood there looking adorable at the plant gate, and they all said in a sweet voice, "Please vote for Bob Brown," and handed them a matchbook. We did that, I think, on two shifts.

CVV: They weren't looking at you.

BB: I know, and I wasn't even on the scene. I was back in the parking lot. I wasn't even around because we'd heard when Republicans go to the plant gate, they spit on your literature and cuss you out and that sort of thing, but I remember one of the local Republican legislators said, "But Bob you got to do it." I don't think any of them did it. Maybe they'd done it before. Anyway, they were going to try to give me a little baptism under fire. So that's how I handled it. I thought that would be a better way to handle it than trying to stand there by myself and getting abused. Those guys would come out of the gate, they'd see the girls and they'd smile and take them in. Then they go back around the back entrance and come back in so they could go through the gate again. I know that happened. Well, I came in roaring last in Columbia Falls. So I don't think it was very effective, but at least I was trying to come up with the original idea. [laughs]

As it ended up, I ran fifth in the Republican primary, and I ran fifth in the in the general election. That's all it took.

CVV: Do you have any idea—sort of a ballpark figure—how much you might have spent on that campaign?

BB: Oh golly, it wasn't very much. I didn't have hardly any money to spend, and the Republican Women's Club was just an angel for me. My mother and grandmother had gone to the

Republican Women's Club for years—I don't think real actively—but they had. It was kind of a nice social kind of a thing then for women. A lot of women belonged to it. That might have had something to do with it, but I came in and I was this young guy and I talked to them. That's kind of a strength I've had in life is to be able to make people like me. Anyway, they gave me a 250 dollar contribution. Well, heck, that would have been at least a 1,200 or 1,500 dollar contribution today, I guess. That really helped me. Then I had some money in my family and a few other things, but I doubt if I spent 1,000 dollars. I wore out some shoe leather that summer, of course.

CVV: How would you define the Republican philosophy at that time that you first ran?

BB: I was greatly influenced by Matt Himsl, who was a Republican state representative then and later on. I served with him both in the House and in the Senate. He, uniquely in the Flathead Valley then, had a master's degree in political science. They were pretty rare then. He had been the Republican county chairman. So I was developing an interest in politics when I was reading those biographies, and I had a few opportunities to go in and visit with him a little bit. He was just fascinated that a kid would be interested in the things he was interested in, and he was a natural teacher. He had been a teacher and the superintendent and a principal and so on. So he talked to me about lots of things. I wish I could remember all the things he talked to me about. I remember one kind of stands out in my mind is that we always need to remember that a government can't give what it hasn't first taken away. That would probably, philosophically that sounds like Republicans traditionally are. But he, I remember it late in life just despised Rush Limbaugh. Rush would come on the radio, and Rush at this bellicose kind of an enemy-making sort of an attitude toward things. Himsl said he couldn't understand how that guy could have any appeal to anybody. He died at the age of 95, and I don't know somewhere around maybe 2010, something like that. So he'd heard some of that, and he was aware of when the Tea Party started out. I can remember him just shaking his head about that, 'That's not going to take us any place, that's all angry negative stuff. Somewhere along the line people have to kind of get together if we're going to work anything out. We want to put the conservative imprimatur on most things to the extent we can, but if it doesn't work we can't do that anymore than they can do anything right.' He had a big influence on me as did Jean Turnage, who later became Chief Justice of the state Supreme Court. That was more when I was in the legislature. But I knew Himsl, and he was my seat mate too when I was in the House of Representatives for the first session that I was there.

CVV: We're going to talk about both of those men a little bit later. But first you were elected and served under the old constitution. Then of course, you served many years after the new constitution was adopted. Do you think the legislature was significantly different in the pre-new constitution days?

BB: I don't think it was dramatically and significantly different, but it was a huge and extremely important change. To give you an example, I was on a committee, and the committee's always met under closed doors. If you had a standing committee, the chairman might invite half a

dozen lobbyists or a couple of lobbyists that he had confidence in and who he thought could provide us good important background information, but excuse everybody else. Then the votes were taken. One time—I wasn't in on this meeting, but I remember Himsl told me about and he shook his head about it—there was a guy named Bill Goin from Billings who was chairman of the Taxation Committee. This must have been in 1969. It had a caucus, and taxation bills always have philosophy in them. So they made up their mind in the caucus which bills they wanted to pass and which bills they didn't want to pass. When they came into the taxation committee room, Goin had two stacks of bills, and he had the numbers. Maybe he recited them to the members of the committee. Democrats, of course, didn't know anything about this. He said, "Okay, boys, here's how it's going to be." He said, "You can vote on them one at a time if you want to, or if you don't want to do that, we can just take them—just recite the numbers the bills aren't going to pass and we'll kill them and then we'll recite the numbers the bills that are going to pass. But just so y'all know, this stacks going to pass, and this stack isn't." There wasn't any discussion. There wasn't anything. That obviously couldn't possibly happen in the 1972 constitution, and it may not have happened very often then, but it could happen.

In the meetings, the hearings would occur, and there wouldn't be anything posted so no one would know when the hearing had taken place. The second reading votes—that means that a bill is as a first reading when it goes to a standing committee, and then a second reading when it goes to the floor, and a third reading when it's voted on the final time. The debate takes place on the second reading, and then the bill is passed without debate on third reading. Anyway under the old constitution, there was only one vote of record. There wasn't a vote of record in the committee. Nobody knew how anybody voted in the standing committee, and nobody knew how anybody voted on second reading at the end of the debate. The only vote of record was the one at the end of third reading. Most states didn't have that. Most states you voted for or against it once when it got to the floor and it went to the other chamber if it passed. But the Anaconda Company in Montana thought, 'If something gets away from us, then we want to be able to catch it 24 hours later, and we'll know who the guys we need to work on are by how that second reading vote went.' So that's why we had three readings in Montana.

CVV: Which we still do.

BB: Which we still do, yeah. I don't know whether it's any big problem or not. [laughs] Sometimes I think some guy gets swayed by a particularly good piece of oratory, and then sobers up the next day and comes in and thinks, 'I really shouldn't have done that.' So that's probably...I don't remember thinking in my life, it is particularly bad. But I was told that's the reason it happened. I've got a friend in Iowa, and he said, "We've just got two readings in Iowa," and he said he thought that's the way most states were. I don't even know if they called them readings.

Anyway, great, great story is we had this bill on territorial integrity that helps to illustrate what we're talking about now. It meant that the investor-owned utility companies, the privately-owned utility companies, had serviced the parts of Montana that were profitable to service. But

if people live way out in the country and it cost way more to build the lines than it did to get revenue from people who lived out there, then they didn't build the lines obviously. Eventually, that got fixed up by the Rural Electrification Administration and federal money helped to do that. But as the towns that had been out on the end of the line, and I think Conrad was a good example, Conrad wasn't profitable to serve for a while. Then of course, after enough people settled there, then it became profitable to serve. Well, the REA, the Rural Electric Co-op had run its line out from wherever to Conrad. So the Montana Power Company thought, 'Well, we're going to run a parallel line in there.' Nobody thought that made any sense, but the investor-owned utility said, "Look they built their line in there with government money. They're completely subsidized now. Now that it's profitable to serve, why do we have to pay the price? Why shouldn't we be able to serve it? They should only be able to serve people that aren't profitable to serve." Well, you can kind of see where there is a lot of friction involved in that. So they had fought this out a couple of sessions before I got there, I think, in '67 and '69 and no conclusion. So there was a lot of negotiation that took place over the interim before I arrived, and in 1971, they'd arrived at a compromise. Sun River Electric Co-op, which is pretty much in the middle of the state,—that would be Lewistown and that area—was the co-op that was solidly on board with the negotiations that had taken place with Montana Power Company. Not everybody on the co-op side thought it was a fair compromise. So the bill was originally carried by a Democrat from Lewistown with the name of Brad Parish and he got so much heat for carrying a bill that wasn't a fair compromise in the position of a lot of co-op people that he didn't want to carry the bill, so it ended up being carried by a Republican by the name Boots Osbornson. I'm not sure I even remember what Boots' first name was. Anyway, Boots carried the bill, very predictable very reliable Republican. I'm seated at my desk. I hadn't been there very long, maybe two weeks or something. It was early in the session, and I was going to be a legislator that read all the bills. Stupid! So I had this haystack of introduced bills on my desk. Up in front of me the only other guy in the House chamber was this big, broad-shouldered man by the name of Ed Smith. Nickname was Big Ed Smith. He was there, working at his desk, it was probably 7:15 or something in morning. This guy, kind of a striking looking guy with white hair and kind of handsome features and pretty good physique and that sort of thing, he strolls in with kind of a confident stroll and sat down next to Smith, and they're probably two seats ahead of me but right in front of me. They didn't say anything. You know how silence is kind of noticeable? They just sat there for maybe a minute, but it seemed like a long time.

CVV: And this wasn't another legislator?

BB: No, it was a lobbyist, and I didn't know who the heck he was. He said to Ed Smith, "You going to amend that bill of Osbornson's on second reading today?"

Smith said, "Yeah, I'm going to give it a try."

He said, "Don't do it." He said, "If you do, we'll kill the bill for damn sure, and we might make life pretty miserable for you in other respects too." In fact, it runs in my mind, he said, "We'll ruin you in more than one way," or something like that. It was really a personal threat.

Ed just said, "Well you guys are willing to...You can do whatever you want to do." But he said, "I'm going to try to get the bill amended. I don't know if I got the votes or not, but I'm sure as hell going to try." They back and forthed a little bit, but it was...the guy was aggressive toward Smith, and Smith was less so toward him. Then the guy got up and walked out with some anger on his face right by my desk again. Well, my little virgin ears were burning about that. So I went up to Smith who I barely knew, and I said, "Who was that?"

He said, "That was Everett Shuey, and he's the Montana Power Company lobbyist."

I said, "Well, where does he get off talking to you like that? That was a threat."

He said, "Oh, I wouldn't worry about that. I've known him since he lobbied for the Wool Growers Association. I used to raise sheep. He's a big talker, but there isn't anything he can do to me. I'm not afraid of him."

I said, "Are you going to go ahead?"

He said, "Absolutely I'm going to offer the amendment today."

I said, "I don't know much about the issue. In fact, I know almost nothing about the issue" — because it wasn't an issue up in the northwestern part of the state. We had Pacific Power and Light Company, didn't even have Montana Power. I said, "You got my vote. You can make book on that." So he just kind of smiled and nodded and said he appreciated it.

That day the bill came up on second reading, and it was quite a debate. Went back and forth. Some of the main legislators were involved on both sides. When the vote finally was called in at the end of the debate on second reading, then we all voted with these old-fashioned coggle switches. We didn't have the buttons. I'm sitting there and I vote "green," and everybody's just fixated on the board. For some reason or other, this is carrying by one vote. It was a win by one vote. Everybody was trying to figure out how that happened because I think the count was maybe supposed to go one or two the other way. Then one of my dear friends—and I kind of hate to identify him in this context, but it's true. He was kind of the titular head of our delegation, name was Jim Murphy from Kalispell, an elegant lawyer a brilliant man a charming man. He saw I was voting "green," and Jim sat several seats down from me in my row. So he jumped up, kind of bumping against guys, and came down to me, and he said, "Bobby, Bobby, change your vote."

I said, "I'm not going to change my vote, Jim. Give up because I'm not going to change my vote. I got my reasons." That was kind of the beginning of Bob Brown of being an independent legislator. I kind of got off to that foot as a result of that, and of course, Murphy would have had no way of knowing that. My seatmate Conn Lundgren was as a reliable regular as anybody could be, and I don't think Conn paid any attention to how I was voting. Eventually, it passed.

What happened, too, is right after that vote was taken, in the back of the House chamber there was a big flash. Someone had taken a picture of the voting board on second reading, which is supposed to not be a vote of record, and it was the rural electric co-op lobbyist, a guy named Rod Hansen. Lucas was Speaker of the House, and he yelled at the sergeant at arms. But Rod got out of the back gallery, and the sergeant couldn't catch him before he got out of the building. Then in the REA publication, they published this. That night—I wasn't in on it. I don't know whether there was a caucus or not, but I wasn't in on it. The next day when we voted on it on third reading, guess what? It was a green board. Every single person in both parties voted on it on third reading. That was kind of the beginning of me being kind of an independent.

CVV: Just to clarify, Ed Smith was a Democrat.

BB: No, Ed Smith was a Republican.

CVV: I thought so.

BB: In fact, he ran for governor a little bit later on as a Republican, but some of the powers that be never liked him real well. He won the Republican primary, but he couldn't get through the general. He had trouble in places like Butte.

CVV: You mentioned Ev Shuey. Could you talk a little bit about when you were first there about the influence of lobbyists in particular from the Anaconda Company, Montana Power Company, the famous watering hole? Did you ever have experience with that, and then did that change after the new constitution?

BB: I think it did, but it didn't...What had happened is the watering holes got some bad publicity after the '69 session. So they were pretty much closed down by the '71 session.

CVV: You want to explain to...about the watering holes?

BB: Yeah. They were sometimes called hospitality rooms. What that meant was that the Anaconda Company, I believe, the Montana Association of Railroads, there even was one—the Green Stamps—I don't know 20 years from now if anyone is listening to this tape, they know of...trading stamps where people when you'd buy your groceries, they give you stamps. If you've got enough books full of stamps, you could buy 20 dollars worth of groceries or something.

CVV: Or teapots. You could buy things.

BB: A lot of people were mad about it because they thought if they'd reduce the prices, they wouldn't have the trading stamps, and they're a pain in the patoot and that sort of thing anyway. They were controversial enough that their lobbyist, a guy named Jerry Anderson, Jerome Anderson, had his own hospitality room. There were maybe as many as...I don't think

any of the, I don't think organized labor. They were essentially the liberal group then, and I'm sure they didn't have one but there were at least three, maybe four, business interests that did. The way they worked was at the end of the day about 5:00, the legislature would adjourn, and they'd go to one of them. The main one was the Anaconda Company one, and it was located on the sixth floor of the...Why am I not remembering that?

CVV: The Placer.

BB: The Placer Hotel. They always had a big baron of beef, and lot of times they'd have a turkey, and they'd have you know nice warm bread and lots of drinks and lots of comfortable furniture. They just encouraged everybody to go in, and apparently it was pretty well attended by Democrats too because they only earned ten dollars a day then. But they closed it down at 8:00, and at 8:00 everybody left so they didn't want somebody to get drunk and have disorderly problems and that sort of thing. Then I learned when I'm about to tell you from a guy who had been the Western General Counsel for the Anaconda Company in the 1950s, and his name was Bill Kirkpatrick. Wise old lawyer with silver hair, very cultivated, urbane looking sort of a guy. He'd married into the Anaconda Company. He'd married some Anaconda princess or something, but he had a real good job and he was good at it, I'm sure—really a good lobbyist. When I knew him, he lobbied for plywood. He lobbied for Champion International, which was the timber part of the old Anaconda Company. Anyway, I asked Bill, I said, "We hear these stories about how the Anaconda Company had a controlling influence over the legislature, and that would have been, some of that would have been, the time when you were the Western General Counsel," which I think was 1953 and 1955 those two sessions. I said, "How did you do it?"

He said, "We had some influence, no question about that." He said, "One of the things we did is we usually had a connection to rural newspapers around Montana and law firms, and we'd pay the law firms in places like Malta and Roundup and Stanford and that sort of thing, a little retainer each year. We had almost no legal business to do with them, but we might sometime and it didn't cost us very much. We'd always buy a little advertising in these little local newspapers. Just because we kind of wanted to remain on friendly terms with people all over the state." So he said, "Let's just say that Representative Snodgrass decides not to run for re-election, and we find out about that. Then I'd call up the lawyer that we know in that community, and I'd say, 'Who do you think is the strong legislative candidate?' The guy would say, 'Well, I've got a couple of ideas. Let me think about it. I'll call you back tomorrow,' something like that. So they eventually come up with this young guy named Dave Johnson, who's about 40 years old and kind of an up and comer in the community. Has a pretty wife and four children, and he's been on the school board of some rural school district for a while. Most everybody likes him. So the lawyer said, 'If you can talk him into it. I think he can win the election.'" They couldn't care less whether he's a Democrat or Republican. So what would happen is Bill or Denny Shea or some other Anaconda Company lobbyist would stop on the train or in his car or something, oh, maybe a month or something after that, and the lawyer would arrange to have lunch with this young fellow and Bill Kirkpatrick at the same time. The

lawyer would say—or it might even be the newspaper editor, but that kind of a connection—he'd say, "This is my friend Bill Kirkpatrick over from Butte," and they'd shake hands. Bill's very charming of course and that sort of thing. He'll say [the lawyer], "I mentioned to Dave that he might be interested in running for the state legislature." Now Bill's [Bill Kirkpatrick] been around the legislature a fair amount. He can tell you a little bit about us, so Bill would put a real good face on it and that sort of thing and encourage him. Maybe they'd talked to his wife—somebody would and kind of make her understand this is an honor and a significant deal and Dave ought to do it. So when Dave agrees and files and wins the election, and as I say it doesn't make any difference whether you're D [Democrat] or R [Republican] who you are, then Bill Kirkpatrick would meet him at the train depot when he gets there. He'd known he was coming over, and he'd warmly shake hands and say, "Geez, I'm glad you ran for this. I think you're really going to enjoy this. It's going to be a wonderful experience for you. Can I help you find a place to stay?" He'd line him up with somebody's basement apartment or something or other like that. He was kind of this guy's big brother, you know. He was the guy, he knew the best and most trustworthy, kindly guy you could ever imagine. Bill said, "Chances were almost 100 percent that we never asked that guy for anything ever again in legislative session. But we probably could get some help from him or likely could if we had to."

I said, "Then how did you control the legislature so well?"

He said, "We had a network of guys that were pretty close to us. That kind of were the establishment. The stock growers, usually there were a rancher or two that were favorable to us. And the utility companies and the railroads and the banks and so on—basically the business community of the state of Montana." So he said, "Do you remember being lobbied?"

I said, "No."

He said, "Well, you probably were. Conn Lundgren probably lobbied you on more than one thing, and you didn't know that. You didn't even know who he was talking to you for." So he said, "That's how we had a fairly significant controlling influence." Then he said, "What we'd do after the meeting, about two times a week, we closed the water hole down—the hospitality room. We'd go to an adjacent room with several of the key legislators—wasn't even always the same ones—and we'd talk over what was before the committees and what was yet to be acted on and where we were"—this was in the years before status sheets. "But the company kept track of all of this stuff. So they'd review it with the guys."

I said, "Did you decide which bills you wanted to pass, and which ones you wanted to kill?"

He said, "Yes."

I said, "Were you ever wrong?"

He said, "Never once, Robert. Never once." [laughs]

CVV: In those days, the company wrote the bills.

BB: Yeah, they wrote the bills as well. I think they had what amounted to ironclad control, but in a kind of a soft way. I don't think they threatened anybody or anything like that. We were probably, many of us, influenced and didn't even know that we were that we were being influenced.

CVV: So the Ev Shuey story that you told us probably more of an aberration where he sort of threatened Ed Smith?

BB: And he was Montana Power, and remember, Carol, too there was somewhat of a difference in culture there to. The Montana Power Company was a little bit more free enterprise and a little bit more conservative and hard-nosed. The Democrats, many of them didn't mind working with the Anaconda Company. Maybe some of them knew—the copper collar Democrats—maybe some of them realized that's what they were. The ones that were the closest to the Anaconda Company, in fact, generally were Democrats. But that's not the case with the Montana Power Company. Then the final thing about this story is, do you remember Dave Manning?

CVV: Sure do.

BB: He was the Dean of the Senate for many years. He served 54 years in the Montana Legislature. He was the most senior legislator in the country. I enjoy visiting with older people and what I can learn from them. So when I was having a visit with him one day in...let's see, how did this go? [pauses]

Yeah! When I talked to Bill Kirkpatrick, Bill said that it was not unknown in the legislature that we had these little gatherings periodically. He said they called the little gathering “the school,” so the guys that were in it were “the school boys.” They were taking orders from the instructor, and it wasn't a complimentary kind of thing to refer to “the school” or “the school boys.” So I mentioned that term to Dave Manning, and he just “Ugh!” just choked up and didn't want to talk about that at all. I knew there was something there. So I asked Kirkpatrick about that, and he chuckled, “Oh yeah. Dave was in the school.” [laughs]

CVV: Well, when the new constitution was passed, that made a significant difference to the state as a whole, but certainly to the legislature. So let's talk about some of the big changes that resulted after the constitution was adopted, maybe even a little bit about this controversy over the adoption of legislature and also going to sessions every year instead of every other year, which I had to laugh reading the newspaper today that there's now a legislative committee studying whether they should go back to every year, 45-day sessions which they tried once and then the voters said no dice.

BB: We could do an interview or two on the changes. Most of them, I think, were very positive. One of them was the clean and helpful environment provision, which meant that citizens of Montana were guaranteed a clean and healthful environment. Of course, that's been litigated a fair amount since then, but that's in our state constitution. The right to privacy is in our state constitution, which underlies the fact that we don't have a...essentially that Roe v. Wade...based on the logic of Roe v. Wade, the idea that it comes under a presumed right of privacy in the U.S. Constitution is an enumerated right to privacy in the state constitution. So I don't know whose idea was. I don't think anybody...maybe they were thinking about trying to make abortion constitutional, but anyway, that's how it's been interpreted. Then Indian Education for All was a part of the state constitution—the new constitution—that some education in the history and the traditions and the culture of tribal Montanans had to be taught in public schools somewhere along the line. Again there's been back and forth-ing about what that means and how much of that should be involved and that sort of thing.

All the votes that could result in the death or passage of a bill are votes of record, so if you can table or kill a bill in a committee that's a vote of record if it ended the life of that bill. We get to know who voted how in the committee. Same thing on second reading. So Rod Hansen doesn't have to be standing up there in the back of the House chamber with his old flash camera taking a picture of the voting board. Now, they're just automatically votes of record. Then of course, the public meetings. People have a have an opportunity to be in on all meetings. All committee hearings have to be posted some reasonable amount of time before the hearing takes place. Single-member legislative districts. When I first was elected, I ran in a field of five. In fact, the first two times I ran, ran in a field of five county-wide. Then that got reduced down to single-member districts. Those are, I think, kind of the main things that stand out in my mind. But you can see how important all of those things are to a functioning, real democracy.

CVV: I don't know whether we want to go through those and kind of talk about them, or we want to go onto issues like the coal tax trust fund. What makes most sense to you in terms of how we want to take on each of those?

BB: I think we don't. Because I've kind of explained the significance of each one really already.

CVV: Okay. Let's talk let's talk about the coal tax—

BB: Maybe just...I told you about the territorial integrity. Another thing, another big thing maybe we should least touch on in my first legislative session was the first abortion fight. Representative Dorothy Bradley from Bozeman, the only woman in the House of Representatives introduced a bill to essentially legalize abortion. Well, man alive!

CVV: What year was that?

BB: '71. It was her first session and my first session, and it was a big hullabaloo and only got five votes in the House. Everybody else voted against it. Something kind of funny. Now, I hope I

don't make a mistake by this, but I'm pretty sure. The number of her bill was something like 564, and there was a character—a Republican up on the Hi-line by the name of Lou Perry who had a bill that was 654—was just one digit different. His bill required that if you're going to have a big game license drawing, you had to do it in the Fish and Game district where the hunting was going to take place because he knew there were lots of people that wanted to get antelope permits and he wanted them to have to all drive up to Malta and stay all night in the motel, have a restaurant meal, and that sort of thing. It'd be good for his community, and he didn't want all the stuff to just take place in Helena. There were other guys in rural areas that kind of could see the wisdom of that too. So that was what Perry was up to. Well, somehow or other—and I'll probably give offense to somebody because the way this was told to me was that the lady alters societies or the Ladies Alter Society in the Catholic Church got wind of this horrible bill—this abortion [bill]—but they made a mistake in the number. So Perry's bill got the scarlet, you know, the black mark instead of the actual abortion bill. Everybody knew it was all about, but they didn't want to take a chance. So Lou lost his bill something like 80 to 20 or something [laughs], just because nobody wanted to get in trouble by mistake. I believe that happened. Anyway she was really courageous to do that. There's no quiet way about it. No way of understanding it otherwise. And she was close to the time when it actually happened because *Roe v. Wade* I think was in '73. So just a short time later. But boy, it was as hot as a firecracker when it happened.

Dorothy was a very distinguished legislator. I wouldn't probably forget to say this, but she had a hand in the abortion debate and then she had a big hand in what's going to come up again and the next time was actually after the new constitution had passed and we had annual legislative sessions. So in 1972, we were elected to an annual session.

I should probably mention this too. I know this is getting to be a kind of a long interview, but it's important. The legislature in '71 had an impasse over the sales tax, and the Republicans felt that you could better fund education...This is true. Some people would say, "All you guys were trying to do was help the big corporations by reducing property taxes, which would most benefit them since they have the most property." I honestly think that a bigger angle to that was that we were constantly bedeviled by school equalization and having enough money for schools, and most every other state had [a] sales tax. We were a tourist destination for a lot of states so if we had a modest sales tax that it would make sense for everybody and probably in the process of that help improve the business climate. That was our position, but the people have always hated the thought of a sales tax. To them one of the wonderful uniquenesses about Montana is that we don't have a sales tax.

Anyway, we were pushing, we Republicans were pushing for a sales tax, and the state was in a terrible financial predicament. The Democrats wanted to increase the income tax. To raise the amount of money that at two percent sales tax would raise would take about a 30 percent increase in the income tax. That was referred to as a surcharge, but it was just an additional 30, maybe even 35, percent of the income tax. Finally after we'd met for 106 of our constitutionally allotted 60 days, and it was in the middle of the summer, and we weren't getting any closer to

solving the problem, both sides agreed to put it on the ballot. The Republicans said, "Well, our position is two percent sales tax," and the Democrats said, "Our position is a 35 percent increase in the income tax." Well, the people voted it down by something like three to one—voted the sales tax down by something like three to one. A lot of us were just stupefied by that, but then there are a fair number of people who don't pay any or very much income tax either so that big increase in the income tax may not have alarmed them that much. But we thought the contrast between two percent and 35 percent would be great enough that maybe we could get some give on it, but it appears that we didn't.

But here's where that's so important. That was placed on a special ballot. The legislature ended in 1971, I guess. Yeah, it was in about June or July of 1971. Then we're going to vote on this before the next legislature went into session. Also, the legislature had agreed in the '69 session to have a constitutional convention, which would mean the rules and stuff would be established and the date set by the '71 session. Why have two special elections? Let's just have one election on the same date. So you get all these people mad and cranky about a sales tax and associating that with Republicans, and the Democrats look virtuous and rosy-cheeked and clear eyed and that sort of thing and they're against a sales tax. They ran—some of them ran as independents but they ran for Con-con delegates as Democrats and Republicans—

CVV: But you couldn't be holding public office while...so that was an important—

BB: That's right! That was an important thing. Sitting legislators couldn't be—previous legislators could be, but not people were in the legislature at that time. But the upshot was it the Democrats had [won] something like a two to one majority among constitutional convention delegates.

CVV: But wasn't it nonpartisan?

BB: No. No. There were maybe 15, 20 of them that were nonpartisan. George Harper was a good example from over in Helena, but the Democrats had a huge victory and it was attributable, I think most of us thought, to that it was on the ballot the same time as the sales tax. So many people think—and we've just discussed the constitution—that many of the progressive and liberal kinds of reforms that were in the constitution were there because the constitutional convention was primarily made up of political liberals. I think there's a lot of truth to that.

One of the things, if we didn't mention it, was annual legislative sessions. That only lasted once. That was the '73 and '74 sessions. The real heartache on that was that if bills were killed in '73, then they could be resurrected and reintroduced in '74. Especially the business interests thought 'Gosh, don't make us do that.' Once we kill it, and here's the same legislators—been no election that's intervened—then it should be dead. Well, there were other people who said, "No. In fact, all we need to do is just table it if we don't want to kill it. We'll hang it over the interim, we'll look at it a little bit more, and then bring it back again." That was used as an

argument against it. I think it's also the same instinct that caused Montanans to be opposed to a sales tax was that they kind of thought one legislative session every two years is enough. They joked about the fact that we'd be better off with...instead of having one legislative session every two years, we should have two [laughs], two every 100 years or something. I garbled that up. Anyway, it got completely turned around.

CVV: Do you think that annual legislative sessions as they had just for those two years would in the future prevented a lot of people from running for the legislature? You taught school most of the time—

BB: Possibly. This is a sketchy memory, but it runs in my mind it was 90 days each year.

CVV: I don't think so. I think it was 45. One year they took care of the budget and—

BB: No, it wasn't 45. It might have been two 60s, though, because we had 60s coming into that. I think that might have been the case. Since then, there have been proposals to make it two 50s or two 45s. I favor that.

CVV: But what about that for people wanting to run for the legislature? How difficult is that for the average person to take that time?

BB: Now, we've got a 90-day marathon, and I don't know which is most difficult. If you had two 45s, that might be easier for some people. I don't know for sure, but that's certainly a consideration. Any time it comes up, that's always an argument that's raised against it.

I want to tell you a little bit about that annual session period in the second of the annual sessions—the '74 session—Dorothy Bradley again introduced what became known as the coal moratorium bill. It gave rise to probably the most memorable debate on the floor of the House that any of us who served during that period of time could ever remember as legislators. Here's what had happened. There was a Northwest Power study as it was called that was taken...it was done when the Arab oil embargo was taking place during that period of time when there was a real crisis about energy. What it did was it focused in on the coal in the Fort Union coal deposit, and it said something like, "This area would be a national waste area." That term was in the Northwest Power report. That scared the bejeepers out of everybody in Montana, or a lot of people in Montana. So Dorothy Bradley introduced a bill to create a two-year moratorium on the development of the coal in the hope that we could come up with some ideas for how to control it—where the plants would be sited. I think the Northwest Power study had said something like there would be 11 power plants, and each one would create a city of 8,000 people or something in Eastern Montana. I don't know that it was meant to be alarmist, particularly, either. I think it was an honest study. Anyway, it scared a lot of people, but it didn't scare everybody because a lot of people over in Eastern Montana were dying for economic development. Their little towns weren't doing very well, and even then the western part of the state was doing better than the eastern part of the state, so they thought, 'Gosh, this

development could really help our part of the state. Could bring in payrolls and help things out.' Then there was the problem of the aquifer. The coal was considered an aquifer—the water couldn't get through the coal—so it was held near the surface, and this was vital to agriculture. If you got to poking too many holes in the aquifer, the water could end up in Brazil or something. That was a concern. Then train transportation—how are you going to transport it—and you're going to build big power lines.

[Break in audio]

BB: Let's see. We were talking about the coal moratorium.

CVV: Yes.

BB: Dorothy introduced the bill to give us time to prepare for this huge development in Eastern Montana that might create 11 cities with 8,000 people, and we'd have these generating facilities all over the place and we didn't know how much water they would use. One theory was that instead of trying to transport the electricity through the wire, or transport the coal in railroad cars, that we could transport the coal out of state in what they called slurry lines. Powder it—make it into powder—and then run it by water through a pipeline. There were some people that thought that was the best way to go economically, but there were other people who thought, 'my god, there's no end to the coal and maybe the country's needs are almost insatiable. Are we going to let all our water go out of the state with the coal dust?' Anyway, many of these considerations. She said, "We've got to stop and look before we leap into this thing."

The feeling in Eastern Montana among the pro-development people is 'let's not miss our chance. This is the biggest chance we've had in anybody's lifetime, and our economy's been stagnant over here for a long time. Now we've got a big chance and the Dakotas and Wyoming also have Fort Union coal and they're going to want to get in on it. We don't want them to beat us to this thing, and they maybe [will] have all the coal contracts by the end of the two years. We'll figure it out. We'll make it work. Let's just trust each other and go ahead with this. Sometimes you got to go ahead with something.'

It was at night, in a night session in the House of Representatives, probably 7:00 or so at night, and we had this big debate on Dorothy Bradley's bill—the coal moratorium as it was called—and there were several legislators that weighed in. I learned a new parliamentary procedural trick them. I hope they can make this clear to anybody listening to the tape. When you make a motion for a bill to pass on the second reading or the debate stage, you automatically have the right to close on your motion. So what happened in this case was when the bill came before the House of Representatives, a guy by the name of Wally Edlend, representative from up in the northeastern part of the state, was recognized instead of Dorothy Bradley. Wally made the motion that the bill be indefinitely postponed. He was her fellow Democrat. So there's a standard motion—you've heard it—when this committee does a rise and report after having

under consideration House bill whatever it was, that the same do pass. Well he said, "The same do not pass." Then I think he just sat down and yielded the floor Dorothy. So then Dorothy stood up and made a motion that it do pass. That meant then that her motion would be before Wally's and she'd get to close, and it would rob the "a-ginners" [those against the bill] of the opportunity to close on that bill. She'd get both the first word and the last word. It was a good strategy. I had never seen it done before, but it was perfectly within the rules.

The debate went back and forth and several people spoke, but the two big debaters in the house at that time were Republican lawyer from Miles City, who's probably certainly among the top ten legislators that I ever served with. Just as smooth as silver and brilliant and charming, and he'd been the Speaker of the House for the two sessions before this this happened. He was loved by everybody. He was a big and tall and an impressive and everybody wanted, when you're out to dinner, wanted Jim Lucas to be at your table and that sort of thing. The other guy was a kind of an eccentric lawyer from Great Falls by the name of John Hall, and John smoked a pipe. Sometimes when he'd get worked up, he'd blow backwards and sparks would shoot out of his pipe. During that legislative session, I think somebody gave him a little disc of some kind of other that he could plug up the top of his pipe where he could still drag through it but it wouldn't blow sparks out. John's clothes had holes burned in them and that sort of thing. He was a kind of a poor guy and a bachelor, and he eventually lost his law practice over in Great Falls. He was utterly brilliant, but he was a certifiable oddball. Anyway Jim Lucas stood up and basically gave the argument I just recited before about how we can't let Wyoming get ahead of us on this and then lose this opportunity that maybe never come again, and we're smart and resourceful people, we're not going to ruin our state in the process accomplishing this. We can do two things at the same time. Let's just do that. Then Hall stood up, and I remember Hall said—this is the most memorable thing I remember about it...Remember when this is going on you could hear a pin drop when Lucas spoke, and he kind of had that presence anyway. But Hall too, he had been the Democratic minority leader, and he was a real good hand on the floor. I remember him saying that the best way to understand this is that if we act in haste we will repent at leisure, and he said that in a kind of a profound way.

You could have, as I mentioned, you could hear a pin drop during those two speeches, and they were both probably close to ten minutes long. I don't know. It was really something, and I don't think anybody there can ever remember when we were more profoundly impressed by a debate on the floor as we were that night. When the vote was taken, guess what? Dorothy prevailed by one vote. That was a little bit unexpected. But that happened. So we checked things over. I don't think we tried to do anything that night. But the guy that they thought they could turn [on third reading] was an old representative from Bozeman, who, incidentally had been Dorothy Bradley's principal when she was in grade school named Wallace Forsgren. Mr. Forsgren was a principal.

CVV: How do you spell Forsgren, do you think?

BB: F-o-r-s-g-r-e-n. He looked like Mr. Rogers. He looked like a principal, you know, and he was thoughtful and kind and gray-haired and that sort of thing and now retired from being a principal. His sympathies were kind of with the environmentalists then. There were a fair number of Republicans who were—thought of themselves as environmentalists—and who were worried legitimately about acting in haste and repenting at leisure. The following day, Forsgren is beside himself. They are just beating his brains out, and from both sides, because he's the guy that could make the difference. Well Tom Towe entered the picture, and Tom said, "Here's the way to do this then. It isn't anything I'm wild about. I'd prefer to just have this passed." But he said, "What we can do is not move it onto third reading. It's scheduled for third reading, but we can pass it for the day or we can pass it to a date certain." What they worked out was to pass it until the day before the transmittal deadline.

That means you guys who say we can take care of this—we can work it out among ourselves—have got whatever it was, three weeks or something like that, to come up with a plant siting. Come up with a major facility siting act, as I think they called it. Come up with different ideas for how to help this land reclamation and so on. If Forsgren's satisfied at that time—and basically I think they probably meant if Dorothy Bradley's satisfied—then we can take it off, put it back on third reading calendar and kill it. But if it ain't satisfactory, then it might just have to pass, and Forsgren might just vote for it the way it is. So he was an enormously important person at that time, and I think he's totally lost in history. But anyway that's where Bardanouve had the facility siting act, I think, which he was a fairly major legislator—Francis Bardanouve. I don't remember all the sponsors, but there were four or five bills anyway and they all got passed. When that happened, then the bill got killed, and we felt we were as prepared as we could be under that short amount of time to confront the coal development.

So when you're having your cocktail this evening, drink one to Dorothy Bradley because she was really insightful and really an important legislator, at least in the early '70s. She certainly was.

CVV: We talked a little bit about Dorothy and you might want to talk a little more about her, but let's talk about some of the most memorable legislators that you served with.

BB: I've already mentioned Matt Himsl and Jean Turnage. They were the ones that had the most influence on me. J.D. Lynch was certainly memorable. He was a legislator from Butte both in the House and Senate. Very colorful. He could do Churchill impersonations and Lyndon Johnson impersonations and Richard Nixon impersonations. He was a not very idealistic. He was a Democrat, but his idea of keeping score was getting good things for Butte, bringing things home for Butte. Dorothy Bradley told me she had a conversation with J.D. one time, and she said, "What's your greatest accomplishment."

He said that the library that he got for Montana Tech was probably his greatest accomplishment because it wasn't in the governor's budget, and he did some masterful wheeling and dealing on the Senate Finance Committee and got that brought home to Butte

and it was several [hundred] thousand dollar project. She said her idea was what we just talked about—the coal moratorium that had laid the groundwork for an intelligent development of the coal to the extent it would ever be developed. She chuckled a little bit, and she said, “That kind of shows how it takes all kinds to be in the legislature,” because J.D. was effective but not particularly idealistic. Dorothy was pretty effective actually, but she was very idealistic and bringing home some pork to Bozeman wouldn't have been a big deal to her. She'd have enthusiastically supported it, but her focus was never on those kinds of things. J.D.'s focus was never on the other kinds of things.

CVV: Was the Butte delegation unlike any other in terms of voting as a block?

BB: Yes. They were, boy, they were loyal to Butte. If they could protect an interest of Butte or they could help Butte in any way, they'd do it. So lots of people in the legislature admired them for that, especially if it was close. If you had a narrow Republican majority or a narrow Democrat majority, those guys were the balance of power. They never voted against organized labor, but that was it.

CVV: But they voted for the Company, so sometimes would that be against organized labor?

BB: No, no, no. That was their agreement. The Company could never ask them to do anything that would get them in trouble with organized labor, and everybody understood that. Didn't mean they were automatically going to vote for the Company either, but they would be open to voting for the Company if they didn't get in trouble with organized labor. I think organized labor a time or two tried to figure out a way, especially on tax bills, to keep them from being able to get away with that by threatening them with trouble from the union if they went along with what the Company might have wanted to do on tax legislation. I can't be specific about that, but I understand that. So they were that way, and there were a couple more of those guys that were colorful and interesting. Red Menahan [William Menahan] was actually a pretty good friend of mine, and Joe Quilici was a very shrewd legislator, very calculating and wise legislator and a good bargainer for Butte.

CVV: Wasn't it Red who said something along the lines of the only exercise so-and-so gets is jumping to conclusions?

BB: [laughs] That sounds just like him. He had a great, clever sense of humor, and that sounds just like him. I know I'm going to forget a whole bunch of people here when we do this, but I kind of like to mention a few names. John Harp—I'm not going to do this in sequence it sounds like—but anyway, Harp was my colleague from up in the Flathead Valley. He was another one of the guys that he might have been a pretty good Butte politician actually. He was a bargainer. He was a guy that tried to work things out. He tended to be at the center of a lot of major issues and that sort of thing. He was on speaking terms with a lot of different people. He was a legislator to be reckoned with. I remember commenting one time that Harp was probably the closest thing we ever had in the Montana Legislature to L.B.J. [President Lyndon b. Johnson],

and I think that's probably pretty accurate. I don't know since I was there, but that would have been the case until I was there.

Fred Van Valkenburg had deep feelings. He was an intense kind of a guy. He told me once that when he became president of the Senate that he hoped to emulate Bill Mathers, more than anybody else who was president of the Senate, and Bill Mathers was this this statesman like, stately compromising kind of a guy. That just wasn't in Fred. Fred was an advocate and a fighter, and he couldn't just put aside his beliefs and try to make the fraternity house feel good about it. I think I've even brought that up to him since then. But Fred was colorful and he had powerful beliefs and he couldn't back away from them. He tended to be pretty tough too. He was a Democrat leader off and on for two or three sessions in the '80s, and he could be pretty tough on whoever the Republican floor leader was. Runs in my mind that Del Gage, Fred banged him over the head pretty good a few times.

The Republicans in our caucus thought 'well, who's the meanest old heard bull we've got?' and we came up with Bruce Crippen. Oh, Crippen was stimulated by that. 'I'll take care of Fred.' [laughs] We elected him minority leader. The fun part of that story was they'd go after each other, but they kind of respected each other and they turned out to be quite good friends.

CVV: Right. They did.

I'm inserting myself a little bit here, but it was very true that, I think, in those days legislators very much respected one another. Doesn't mean every legislator respected every other legislator, but they knew what their position was and they respected the other person's beliefs. And they could go out and have a drink afterwards. But I don't believe that happens anymore.

BB: It doesn't, I'm sure, but at the end of the session—I don't think this happens anymore either—there was always a little get together in the Senate president's office. We weren't supposed to have alcohol in the Capitol building, but nobody paid any attention that night. There'd usually be no case of champagne or something. The president would invite his special friends, but lots of people knew about it and would drop in. We'd just toast each other and laugh and joke at each other and insult each other and toast each other and that sort of thing. The same thing would happen sometimes at some local bistro or something at the end of an especially rigorous legislative day. But we ended the whole session that way so everybody went their separate ways on good terms. John Mercer, somewhat partisan but just gifted and talented legislator, heard about this and came over there. I think this was when I was president the Senate in 1995, and John was kind of blown away by that. Here we were drinking and toasting and slapping each other on the back of guys that John thought, 'those guys are certifiable villains. What's Bob Brown doing with his arm around him?' [laughs] I think that the House might have been more that way a few years before and the Senate's now way more partisan than the House ever was. Those things have happened in the last ten years or so.

You're right, that fraternal aspect was a good part of politics then, that we were all colleagues under the skin and we'd fight as hard as we could but when the session was over, one of the things you'd always hear is, 'you guys got away with that. How in the world did we let that happen? We'll get you bastards next time. You just wait.'

'People are never going to go for that.'

'Oh we'll see. We're pretty comfortable with it. You guys are so easy anyway it's like taking candy from a baby.' That kind of a conversation would take place, but it was obviously good natured. There was real competition and there was a real difference. Democrats tended to be New Dealers still—many of them Farmers Union and that sort of thing. The Republicans some of them were Barry Goldwater people and pretty conservative. There were even a few John Birchers, but they weren't driving the bus on either side. The guys that were driving the bus were Gordon McCumber on the Democrat side and Bill Groff on the Democrat side and Jean Turnage on the Republican side. Bill Mathers on the Republican side. They were legitimate liberals and conservatives, but they respected that you've got to leave the other guys a place to stand or this will turn into a vendetta instead of competition, and we got to deal with them again next time, so let's always remember that.

CVV: Let's talk a little bit more about Jean Turnage because I know he really was your primary mentor. What was he like as a person, as a legislator?

BB: The way that started really was I knew of him, and he was—whether he was in leadership position or not—he was the real Republican leader in the state Senate, and his influence went across the aisle. He's a very small in stature—very short man. I think he was maybe 5 feet 4 inches tall, and he was a member of the Flathead Tribe—an enrolled member of the Flathead Indian Tribe. He'd graduated, I think, number two in his law school class. He was really a smart guy, really a smart guy, and kind of deceptive because he was low key, but in floor debate, he had this wonderful sense of timing and he had a great sense of humor. His main rival was maybe the single, most significant legislator in all the time I served, and that was Tom Towe.

CVV: Yeah, I want to talk about him next.

BB: Nobody loved Tom Towe, or not very many people did, but god, he was smart and he was courageous and he could come up with an amendment to everything. Jean almost always got the best of him on the floor because Jean had twice as many friends as Tom. But Jean didn't necessarily lose the debates to him either. Jean had characters that he'd talk about. When one of Towe's bills would come up, he'd say, "Let's see how this is actually going to work on the street." That's kind of the way he'd start it out, and then he'd lead into it. I remember one time, I'm not sure if this was even a Towe bill, but he always had...there was always the victim—somebody that was the unintended consequence of this ill thought-out piece of legislation—and her name was Nanny Belle Nickleberry. Poor old widow. The crook, the guy that would take advantage of it was her, was Herkimer Zelakowski. Boy, what a con man he was.

CVV: [laughs] I don't know how we'd spell that.

BB: [laughs] But he would do things like that in the committee to Tom and on the floor, and Tom would just not know how to handle something like that. I'm not sure Tom always lost the debate, but he usually lost the vote anyway.

What Jean was famous for doing was being kind and helpful. So there were some old Democrat legislators Paul Boylan, Carol Graham, Dave Manning. What's his name? Dave James. They didn't believe they understood anything unless Jean explained to them, so he would patiently sit on the floor for an hour and guys would kind of be hanging around to go over and talk to him. They'd say, "Well, the Legislative Council just drew this bill up for me, Jean, but I'm not quite sure I understand it." Jean would patiently go through it and explain to them. I had more than one of them tell me he'd say, "Now, I'm not going to vote for this. I don't think this is a very good idea. But here's one thing, if you're going to introduce it, I'd leave this out or I'd do this; otherwise, it might not even pass the test in the courts." He was 1,000 percent straight. I mean, I don't think anybody ever suspected that Jean was taking advantage of the fact that they didn't really fully understand. Just imagine the good will—the reservoir of goodwill—he's got in there. Of course, Towe is up until 3:00 in the morning on No Doze—pills to keep him awake—and he's doing everything he can to understand the details of the bill that nobody would understand or care about anyway.

He'd go through all of this stuff in mind-numbing detail. Then Jean would stand up and kind of dismiss it and three or four good-natured minutes, kind of show how it doesn't really make that much sense and that sort of thing, and he'd prevail 30-20 even when Democrats had the majority. That was fairly common.

CVV: So Towe was probably one of those legislators that you thought maybe initially you would be, who read every bill. Yeah. Even if he didn't read every bill, he was a student—

BB: Oh, he had an amendment to every bill.

CVV: I think that's the other thing—

BB: We resented that.

CVV: Well, he always talked.

BB: He always talked. He talked too much, and you'd have a bill that probably didn't need to be fixed up that much. But that was Tom's whole life, and he'd read over the bill the night before and think, 'well, we can improve it a little bit if we did this.' So he's got an amendment up at the rostrum to do some little tiddly-D thing that embarrasses the guy. He doesn't understand it really, and he's carrying his own bill. Tom didn't really need to do that. We'd probably vote for

the amendment, but we thought, 'come on, Tom. If it's even serious a little bit, you can go over and talk to the committee in the House about it.' That's the way a lot of things are taken care of. But I got to tell you, he's remained a lifelong friend of mine, and there are few people I respect any more than Tom Towe. He is a powerful intellect, and he was the intellectual leader in the legislature in spite of Turnage and some other mighty smart people in there. For a long time, he was the instigator of new ideas and big farsighted ideas. He didn't get them all passed, but he got some of them passed. The coal tax trust fund is probably...hardly anything that's happened in Montana history that's any greater than that. That was Towe's deal, and he was always an important part of every legislative session. Somebody that was always an important, engaged significant legislator and for a long period of time.

BB: How about Francis Bardanouve. He served only in the House.

BB: I didn't know him that well. I served for four years with him in the House, He was always chairman the Appropriations Committee, and people that served on the Appropriations Committee practically considered him a saint. I just never had much to do with the guy. Turnage, on the other hand, I was on the same committees with him. Joe Mazurek, who later became attorney general and ran for governor, Joe was on the Taxation Committee, the Education Committee, and the Judiciary Committee, and so was I. No coincidence that Turnage was too, and Turnage engineered those committees for Mazurek and I. So we saw more of each other than we would have seen of anybody else. We were in the same committees all day every day. Turnage had an influence with me that way too.

I don't know if I learned this from Turnage or not, but I know I openly thought about this as a legislator that what you have to do since you need to have a majority to prevail is always make it as easy as possible for people to agree with me. Turnage did that too. He didn't ever give me that advice, but he did that. If he needed to back off, if he needed to say something funny, if he needed to...you know, he could be forceful too.

One time...he hated joint caucuses. Hated caucuses, in general. Thought we did poor thinking as a group. In his leadership jobs, he'd have a little *tête-à-tête* in his office, and I was involved in some of those. I'm sure I wasn't involved in all of them, but there would just be three or four of us. We'd just think among ourselves. Nobody trying to impress anybody, but just what would make the most sense and what's the most defensible thing, and do we really want to do this, and should we do it this way. He'd sit there in his chair and puff on his pipe. He selected who would be there. That was his leadership style.

Then we'd have a caucus. I remember one time there was a guy named Larry Twite, J. Larry Twite, from way over in the eastern part of the state. We didn't think he was a very good thinker, and he was always put your dukes up kind of the guy. He's always real tough in the caucus. He didn't always say that much on the floor when there were people. But on our side, when he was just in our, caucus he kind of stick out his chest and talk about, 'we're going to take them,' and so on and so forth. Don't remember the bill at all, but we thought he'd be

against us on whatever it was that we thought we needed to do. I think Del Gage was chairing the Committee of the Whole and we knew that, so he said, "Del, after Twite comes up, you call on Brown right away." He said, "Bobby, you better have something to think, something to say. He's easy enough to respond to, but you're gonna have to do it in a hurry, so pay attention to what he has to say." That would be an example of we kind of tried to choreograph the caucuses. But when they all came over from the House [for a joint caucus], and they had us greatly outnumbered, they'd come in and overwhelm us. Then there'd be several guys that would stand up and stick their chest out and bloviate and be tough guys and that sort of thing. Most of us in the Senate didn't like that, but Turnage really hated it.

One day, I remember we were...one of the committee meetings¹ down on the first floor, one of the committee rooms before the Capitol building was remodeled, and it was a kind of a big uncomfortable room with a linoleum floor, I suppose, and chairs. It was all noisy, and we were crammed in there, every seat was filled. There were many members standing along the back of the room, and most everybody was uncomfortable. They kept on going in and out of the back door. When they'd do that, "clunk," you know, the door would make a sound. Then three or four more guys would go out, and then it would be ten seconds later that some more guys would come in. Turnage sat there and took that for, I don't know, [laughs] I don't think it was very long. He reached over...This was when you could smoke in the Capitol building. He picked up an ashtray. "Bang!" He hit that ashtray on the table in front of him. Everybody just startled and looked at him. He had very dark eyes, almost black eyes, and they were like laser beams. He fixed those eyes all the way around the room, and people thought, 'god, Jean Turnage!' Jean said in a really commanding voice, "You either come in, or you stay out. Nobody else is going to go through that goddamn door, do you understand?" So they all, the little House-lings, backed off and said, "Well, okay." Boy, you could hear a pin drop in there after that happened. [laughs] So he could be that way too. But he was a he was an amazing leader.

The way I became acquainted with him, best of all, was two ways. When I was on the Taxation Committee, and you learn a lot there, in addition to the other two committees. Then he arranged for me to be on the Revenue Oversight Committee which was an interim committee, met in the interim between legislative sessions. So I'd drive down to Polson and pick him up. That's where his district, that's where he lived, and we'd drive over to Helena by way of Missoula, or I'd ride over with him. So I had a lot of windshield time with Turnage. Just like when I was a young guy, I had a lot of time with Matt Himsl, I had a lot of time with Turnage too. It was a big deal. Really helped me in my life.

CVV: How were Matt and Jean alike or different?

BB: Matt was a little bit suspicious of lawyers. One time I remember Turnage said some things on the floor, and while we were walking out of the Capitol building, and Matt said, "Those damn lawyers, they kind of think in a certain way." Whatever it was that Turnage had said that day made him think that. Kind of like sometimes maybe they're a little too pragmatic or

¹ Interviewee's note: It wasn't a committee meeting, it was a joint caucus meeting.

something like that. They were by no means opponents or enemies by any stretch. There was enormous amount of respect between them, but Turnage would have a glass of wine. Matt himself was a total teetotaler. I don't think they probably sat down at the same table and socialized a great deal. But there was enormous respect between them, I'm sure of that.

CVV: Yeah, yeah. Matt's brother Al Himsl was the wire editor at the newspaper when I worked there, and boy, he hardly ever looked up from his work. He just worked, and he brought...every day he would bring in a little paper bag. I bet he used the same one for months on end where he'd have his sandwich for dinner. He'd never even take time off for dinner. He would open up his sandwich, he'd look down, he still be eating his sandwich, and then he just go back to work. He just... [laughs]

BB: Chuck Johnson, the reporter—journalist and reporter that covered the legislature for so many sessions—knew them both. He knew Matt Himsl as a legislator, and then he knew Al Himsl from the *Missoulian*. He said you could probably see a physical resemblance. He said he thought they looked somewhat alike that you could figure that they were brothers, but he said there didn't seem to be a whole lot of similarity beyond that. They were close. They were close. Matt and his brother Aloysius as he called him. Matt's name was Mathias. His nickname of course was Matt and Al's was Aloysius, and their parents were from Czechoslovakia.

CVV: Any other legislators that you want to mention before we move on?

BB: Oh golly, there have to just be tons of them.

CVV: I'm sure. For the record, we should say you started in the House in '71, and how many years did you serve in the House.

BB: I was there through the 1995 session. My term expired '96 I was there for 26 years.

CVV: Then you moved on to the Senate in what years.

BB: Well, no, I was in the House four years—three sessions because they were annual sessions for two [in '73 and '74]. I was in the House from '71 to '74, and then in the Senate from '74 to '96.

CVV: That actually brings up the question about term limits, and you talked about Manning serving 54 years, et cetera. Do you think the legislature has been hamstrung significantly by term limits, or has that brought in new blood that maybe has—

BB: We've learned to live with it, I think, and we could probably go on. I don't have any high hopes that what's going on now, as we talked about before...There's actually a very conservative Republican legislator by the name of Ryan Ohmanson, who's a member of the Senate and he's proposed annual sessions. Now we have a 90-day, every other year session and

I think Ohmanson proposes a 45-day, each-year session. Then the details of that could be worked out. Some states have a budgetary session and then they have a regular session, and so they wouldn't necessarily have to be 45-days long either. You could kind of figure out how to make that work best.

CVV: But term limits for legislators is what I'm talking about. How has that affected the operation of the legislature?

BB: Oh, terrible! Is that the question you asked? I guess I wasn't paying attention. Well, I think it's terrible, and there was a legislator from Butte by the name of Bob Pavlovich. He said, "I think I was probably the poster child for legislative term limitations." [laughs] Bob was a tavern keeper from Butte, and he had a pretty much of an unlimited expense account. So he and the lobbyist for the tavern keepers could wine and dine legislators indefinitely, and Pavlovich had a lot of influence in part because of that and in part because he was the chairman of the Business and Labor Committee. Much legislation could be steered through that committee. Bob was charming and he could get legislators to vote his way, but he was also a broker. Without probably saying, if you vote for this I'll vote for that. It was pretty much understood that if we help you with this, we're going to kind of expect that when we need help you're going to help us with that you know. During that period in the early 1990s, term limits became a national kind of a thing, and many, many states went to term limitations. Usually, the examples they used were members of Congress. Most legislatures didn't have very many 20-year legislators. But if you wanted to get rid of people who worked hard and were trying to be productive like Francis Bardanouve and Matt Himsl and, frankly, Mike Halligan and Bob Brown and Fred Van Valkenburg—people that were trying to...you wouldn't keep coming back and doing that if you didn't have some commitment to it.

When they imposed term limitations in many states, I'm sure, including Montana, what you're doing is you're getting some of the very best and most dedicated legislators you're getting rid of them, but you've got as many new ones coming in as you ever had. So if you've got some guy who thinks this is an opportunity go out and drink a little liquor and chase around on his wife and that sort of thing and be out of town, well, he isn't going to last very long. He's either going to be voted out by the people, or he's going to get bored with it. But you've got a higher percentage of people like that in the legislature, and you've got a lower percentage of the real hardworking, dedicated legislators when you have term limitations.

CVV: There wouldn't be a Jean Turnage or a Matt Himsl or Bob Brown or—

BB: No. No, no. Those guys would never have—

CVV: It matters.

BB: Oh, definitely, greatly, extremely matters. I've thought about how we might be able to soften it a little bit, because again I think it's unlikely that people will vote for annual legislative

sessions, and I think it's unlikely that people will vote to take away term limitations. Yet the legislature is the people's branch of government. You only elect the governor and the whole executive branch. But he or she has many bureaucrats—many people that have enormous influence over the interim when the legislature's not in session, and frequently they have to make decisions. So they do the best they can. But Montana's evolved into a state with quite a powerful governor and a state with a kind of a weak legislature. That's basically how these things have worked out. The people wouldn't do themselves a favor, I'm afraid, by correcting that. I think they think they've empowered themselves more by having term limitations and every other year sessions.

CVV: That leads me to...Let's talk a little bit about the governors under whom you've served starting backwards with Forrest Anderson.

BB: [laughs] I've got some stories I don't know if I'm—

CVV: The silver fox.

BB: —able to tell you here. He was the father of a guy I knew. I was student body president of Montana State when Newell Anderson, Governor Anderson's son was student body president up at Northern, and he's a really good guy. All of us liked Newell real well, and we had the Student Body President's Association. Joe Mazurek was student body president at Missoula. Marc Racicot at the Carroll College. Bruce Blaylock, Chet's son, at Eastern, and J.D. Lynch had been the previous year, I think, in Western. We knew each other pretty well, and there was a real good camaraderie. [laughs] I guess I'll tell you. We were especially concerned about...well, one time I guess we were here in Helena to do something. I think it was on a Saturday afternoon, and Newell invited us over to his house. Governor Anderson was sitting there in a chair, might have been Sunday but it seems unlikely, but I think he was watching a ballgame. He had a smoking jacket on, and he was distinguished even when he looked like that. He was just like Newell's dad. You wouldn't think he was anybody. He was cordial with us and shook hands with us and that sort of thing, so I had a pretty favorable impression of him.

Then later on, Mazurek and I were down here, and we had something before the Board of Regents. I think it had to do with student fees, but it also may have had to do with the voting age. We went in and had an appointment to talk to Governor Anderson. You never saw a more curmudgeonly old guy, and boy, he had a mouth. I'm telling you. He was pretty salty with his language. We spent a little bit of time with him, but we told him what we were concerned about. I think that voting age what we talked to him about. But I think too, there was something because it was a Board of Regents meeting that had to do with the student government's influence over student fees and whether the Board of Regents could always say, 'well, the kids are going to pay 20 dollars in student fees, and they're not going to...it's all going to go to the football team' or something. Anyway, we wanted to get away from that. We had a pretty good session with him. Then we went back out and sat down in the governor's conference room, but he was still in his office and people would come in the door and sit down in the conference

room. There were seats around the sides of it and so on—a very ornate old room. Then it was just breathtaking. Out of nowhere, Anderson appeared in the middle of the room, and he walked toward the seat at the head of the table. But he didn't come through the door. I was just thunderstruck. I thought, 'is this magic or something?' Furthermore, it was a person with a totally different persona than the guy we talked about in his office. He was just elegant. He had perfect white hair. He wasn't a very tall man but he was perfectly proportioned, and he had this confidence stride that was just graceful. He sat down at the head of the table, and he ran the meeting beautifully, totally in command of all the issues and just didn't miss a thing and that sort of thing. It was really well done. What had happened was there was in the paneling in the wall between his office and the governor's conference room, there was a door and there was a doorknob that wasn't really in plain view, kind of blended in with the wood. If you knew it was there, you could see. And it was very silent. I'm sure Forrest probably practiced this because he just came out of and nowhere and it was the most dramatic entry. I remember that about him.

He was always kind to me because I you know I was Newell's friend. So I had very little to do with him, but I visited with him several times. He always was friendly and kind and communicative with me.

CVV: Executive reorganization was his big thing.

BB: Oh, and it was a huge thing. Huge thing. Tim Babcock told me one time that he said, "I didn't think being governor was that demanding of the job really." Well I think it's probably as demanding as you want it to be. Tim was satisfied to just kind of let things float, but we had agencies that were on the budget that some people didn't even know they'd ever met. It was sometimes just about impossible to make the bureaucracy function so Forrest came up with the idea called "20 is plenty." There'd be 20 main agencies of state government. All of them would be appointed by the governor and all of them answerable to the governor. Then they'd have to know what was going on in their sphere, and if they thought they had a bunch of stuff that didn't belong or wasn't doing anything, they'd recommend we eliminate it. It was an extremely good idea, but all the old influences, of course, thought 'is this going to wound us? We've got the board of something or other, and maybe we'll have to use that sometime, who know.' That sort of thing.

But Forrest was shrewd and smart and clever and tough as a boot. Of course, he was the guy that held the line on the sales tax. His budget was in tatters and he could have definitely used the money, but he also thought...His slogan when he ran for office when the sales tax had been up before, it was, "Pay more, what for?" Tim Babcock was associated with the sales tax. So Forrest beat him with that and Forrest wasn't going to double back on that when he was governor.

CVV: I think that was one of the most effective political slogans ever.

BB: It probably was, probably was of all time. And he was the silver fox, there's no two ways about it. Yeah, but he was a tough old customer, I'll tell you that. Then Tom Judge came along after him. Some people would say well he was the governor during most of Montana's second progressive era. That was basically the '70s, the time of the new constitution and executive reorganization and coal moratorium or the coal...all the coal restrictions and Equal Rights Amendment, all that stuff. But I think another school of thought is that he fit the time. His philosophy was generally progressive, but he more or less rode the crest. And people like Tom Towe and Dorothy Bradley, in particular, were the ones that were kind of the leaders, and Tom just kind of kept out of their way and let it happen and enabled it and supported it. He wasn't really the leader of it. I think he became kind of distracted with the office of governor. Ted Schwinden was his lieutenant governor, and Ted was a real competitive, hard-nosed, hands-on guy. He was tough as a boot like Forrest Anderson was, but in a kind of a different way. You wouldn't, if you knew them, describe them as greatly alike, but Ted was as tough as Forrest was.

Ted told me, he said, "I basically was doing all the work, I thought, as lieutenant governor because Tom was just so detached and out of it and he went away to the Philippines," or something. I think he went out a country for a while. Anyway, Ted thought, 'I'm going to make a move. I'm going to run against him.' Of course, then Tom Judge felt really betrayed and probably understandably, and it created terrible trouble in the Judge administration. Some of them went with Schwinden. Most of them stayed with Tom Judge. Created some bad personal enemies and that sort of thing. So it was kind of unfortunate, but I kind of thought right from the beginning that Schwinden would probably win that. It just was my hunch, and I wasn't surprised when he did.

This, I don't know, is very important or not, but Mount St. Helens erupted not very long before the primary election—

CVV: May 19, 1980.

BB: Is that right? Yeah. So that wasn't too long before the June primary. You know that date? [laughs] Okay. Well, that happened, so Tom basically shut the state down because he was afraid people would breathe the ashes. This shutdown might even have occurred in Miles City. I'm not sure about that. Anyway, it was all over the West, and he bought this idea that if you breathed in the particulates from the volcano that it would be like glass crystals in your lungs and it'd kill you.

CVV: They didn't know if those days.

BB: They didn't know for sure. So I remember Charlie Abell, my good friend and I, thought 'that's a pile of poop. We're not going to buy into that.' We went out in the middle of Whitefish Lake where the crystals wouldn't be out anyway and we could breathe normally, had a terrific day of fishing the day after the volcano. But lots of people in the state felt it was an

overreaction, and it came shortly before the primary. I don't, as I say, how big a factor that was, but it might have been a factor in his losing the primary.

Again, I always liked him, but it was kind of like he wasn't, I didn't think, ever a real substantive kind of a guy. He was kind of...What do I want to say?

CVV: Judge we're talking about, wasn't substantive?

BB: Yeah, Tom Judge was kind of a...well he wasn't really shallow. I mean, he wasn't that, but he was kind of gooey. He was kind of...I don't know if anybody would understand what I mean by that.

CVV: He was a pretty boy.

BB: Yes, he was handsome, and he kind of knew that. He was just not anybody that I ever particularly looked up to.

CVV: He was in advertising.

BB: Yeah. He was an advertising man. That had been his career. Then, of course, he was followed by Ted Schwiden, and whenever I think of whoever the governor is, I think for all my life Ted Schwiden was the governor. Ted Schwiden knew everything. When you'd go in to visit with him, other governors that I visited with would have somebody in the office that knew something about what we were going to talk about, that could kind of help him so he didn't waste anybody's time. I don't think that ever happened with Schwiden, and I wasn't in there very often. But Schwiden in the interim would have a sport shirt, like a short-sleeved shirt, hiking boots, jeans. Didn't look at all like a governor. He was very much an ordinary guy, but boy, did he have a good mind and a good mind for detail. Even if I went in to talk to him about something...I remember one time was the highway department and something that was going on there. He didn't have to call anybody up or anything. I don't remember that I told him beforehand, and he'd have a decision. He'd say, "I think I'm going to do this." Everybody that knew him respected it.

One real quick story. Larry Grindy was the Republican majority leader in the House for most of the '90s, and Larry was a brand new legislator when Schwiden was governor. So Larry had a bill that he thought was really a good idea, and he went down and talked to the governor about it. This is Grindy who told me this story. He told a lot of us this story. He said, "I laid it out, and I explained the bill and I explained the rationale for it," and he said, "'So, Governor, I hope you can support me with this because, I think honestly, I think logic and common sense would lead you directly to support this concept, this bill.'" Larry said Schwiden sat back in his chair for a couple of seconds and gazed over at Grindy, the brand new legislator, and he said, "Representative Grindy, logic and common sense don't have a goddamn thing to do with this. This is politics." [laughs] Anyway, Grindy had plaques printed up "Representative Grindy, logic

and common sense don't have a goddamn thing to do with this. This is politics. —Ted Schwinden, Helena, Montana” —whatever it was, “January 14, 1985.” I've got one. I don't know where it is, but oh yeah, he probably gave out about a dozen of them. [laughs]

CVV: Followed by Stan Stephens?

BB: Yeah. Just this about Ted Schwinden. He was governor at a tough time. Everything came up roses during Tom Judge's administration—the coal and the economy. There was some serious inflation, but that didn't make a problem for state government. State tax collections were up in part because of the inflation. Then when Schwinden became governor, the economy tended to settle out and pretty much go south. That's when the Anaconda Company went broke and gave up the ghost, and many, many, many jobs connected with that and the economy just kind of settled out. We really had difficulty balancing the budget. Well, Schwinden was a partisan Democrat, but he wasn't a particularly liberal Democrat. So Schwinden thought, ‘if I go along with tax increases then I'm just going to be another tax and spend liberal Democrat. So I think I've got a better public image if I appear to be a guy that's pretty snug with a buck.’ So his budget didn't call for tax increases, but what he did do was zero out some of these sacred trusts that Tom Towe had created in his coal legislation. There was the big coal trust that Tom had created. I guess we haven't talked about that yet. Then there were a number of smaller sub-trusts like the victims of crime trust and the public parks trust and there was something that had to do with libraries, I think, and so on. They each had a few million bucks in them.

There wasn't any constitutional protection for them. They were just in the statutes. So Ted proposed that we zero out those trusts, and he thought you can do that if you want to. I don't like doing it either. We can do it or you can raise the taxes, and you're going to have trouble get me to sign a tax increase, but good luck. So the legislature did that. He wouldn't have done that if he hadn't been forced into it. People say, “Well, Schwinden was a good leader, and he had the confidence of the people. How come he didn't do anything?” There's an old saying, “If you ain't got no mon [money], you can't have no fun.” He didn't have any money to do anything. I think that was the long and short of it. He told me that too because I did one of these interviews with him². Anyway, I think of the guys that I've known as governor—and haven't known any of them real well—but he was the one, I think the single one, I probably would respect the most.

CVV: Now, Stan Stephens.

BB: Stan was my fraternity brother and blood brother. I mean, not literally. I don't think Stan ever had the opportunity to go to college. He came over from England, and his father died. His father was an official of some kind on the Canadian Pacific Railroad. He died when Stan was just a little tyke, and so Stan's mother hadn't been trained in any kind of a way to support herself or the two or three, four children that she had. They had a terrible struggle, a terrible struggle. Stan, I don't know how far he went into school. I know he didn't graduate from high school, and

² See oral history interview OH 396-046.

he might not have even graduated from grade school but he had a real musical talent. He was outstanding as a trumpeter, and he was just this cute little kid, was 12 years old, that could play the trumpet really impressively. So he lived in Calgary at the time, and it runs in my mind that he was with the Calgary orchestra of some kind or other. They took him in kind of as a novelty, but he managed to help support the family by doing that. Another thing about Stan was that he was pretty fluent in Spanish.

CVV: I didn't know that.

BB: Well, I asked him about it one time, and I said, "How did you learn how to speak Spanish?"

He said, "Oh, along the way."

I said, "How is along the way in Calgary and Havre [Montana]?"

He said, "When I was a kid, we didn't have much money, and the crews would come up from Texas"—the combine crews, the harvest crews. They'd cut the grain all the way up from Texas all the way up into Alberta. Then they'd usually winter there maybe, I don't know, they'd repeat it. They'd go back down to Texas and come back up again. He said, "I didn't have any particular prospects and I wasn't making any money, but I got an opportunity to hop along with the crew when they went back to Texas." He said, "I did that a couple of different seasons. Many of those workers, those combine crew workers, were Mexican and they spoke Spanish, so if I wanted to make myself understood on the crew, I had to learn some Spanish." He said, "I got the point where I was pretty conversational," and he still could talk Spanish if you wanted to. He was a remarkable, remarkable individual, and I think he had a disappointing time as governor. I think he had...I think he thought about it that way himself, and many of us who knew him thought about that too.

He didn't run for re-election [to the state Senate] in the mid-'80s, I think might have been 1986. I got a telephone call from him said, "Bob, this is Stan Stephens. I'm going to be meeting with a small group of people that you'll know at the Montana Club on Tuesday night at 6:00. We'll be in one of the upper rooms. Can you be there?"

I said, "You bet. I can. You bet." Because he really was a good majority leader and minority leader in the legislature. He was really fair. He and I both represented railroad districts, so we both tended to take care of railroad unions. Whereas he had a little more credibility with the mainline Republicans, and I was considered a little bit more of a maverick. Sometimes it was important for me to be able to show that he'd voted the same way on the caboose bill that I had. So I thought a lot of him, really thought a lot of him. Anyway, I got there on that night, and there was Jean Turnage, Allen Colstead, and Jack Galt and so on. I don't remember who all was there, but maybe six of us or seven of us. He said, "Gentlemen, I'm going to run for governor in 1988, and I need your support. All of you, your serious support." We were all for Stan, you know. That was the beginning of that, and I was for him. Cal Winslow was a younger guy,

considered little more progressive, and he was opposed to Stephens in the primary. My friend John Harp and others said, "Bob, what are you doing supporting Stephens?"

I said, "Because he's my friend and he's competent and good, and I want him to be governor."

"Well, gee, Cal Winslow's the guy that you should be supporting."

I said, "I like Cal real well. I don't have any problem at all with Cal, but I'm supporting Stephens." Then when Jim Waltermeyer, the third candidate in the primary, was killed in a plane crash, then it got down to between Stephens and Winslow. Some people will say to this day that Waltermeyer was the most likely of the three to win the primary. I have no idea honestly. I truly don't know. Anyway, Stephens won, and he was a real strong candidate. He took his trumpet with him when he'd go to meetings, and he'd have this little ditty that he'd play on the trumpet, "da-da da-da ta-dah!" Something like that. But it kind of fit his personality, and he was upbeat in his deliveries. He had been a radio owner and radio commentator, and he gave these beautiful little commentaries on the radio that were delightful and deep and wise. People just looked forward to them. He did the same thing in the state Senate. He was never really a leader in understanding legislation. He didn't go into a lot of the details. I don't think he enjoyed that, but once he got the idea in mind, he could capsule it just beautifully. He'd always stand up, you know, we all stood up when we spoke on the floor. He'd step around behind his chair, and then he'd square his shoulders and he'd look right straight up at the front of the Senate chamber. Without looking at anybody, making eye contact with anybody, he'd give these beautiful little commentaries. Probably not more than three minutes long. Not a word out of place. I suppose if you asked him a question, I don't remember anybody did in particular. Then he'd just sit back down again. But boy, he was good, and everybody liked him and that sort of thing.

When he was elected governor—and he beat former Governor Tom Judge who was trying to make a comeback—people, I think, just thought, 'Tom, we've been there and done that.' I think honestly too frankly, that Schwinden could have been re-elected. I think Stephens kind of reminded people of Schwinden if you know what I mean. They looked alike for one thing. Then Stan became governor, and he seemed overwhelmed from the beginning. I'm not sure he expected to win actually.

CVV: He left for a month on vacation.

BB: He did. His brother lived down in the Caribbean. So Stan thought, 'what I need is some r-and-r.' So he went down in the Caribbean for about a month when it was a vitally important time, but he didn't think he needed to be back until Christmas shortly before the session. Again, just not really understanding. I think he did go to some kind of a national Republican Governors Association place that they had for new governors. I think that's about all he did during that period of time. I remember I went in and talked to him when he got back, and he was in an office off the rotunda of the Capitol building where the secretary of state used to be. Just one

of those offices right off the rotunda right in the middle of the Capitol building, and that was his transition office. It was pretty bare of everything and I went in and sat down to him—he and I, remember, had kind of a special relationship to because we're both railroad communities and he knew I was blood loyal to him. We had a conversation, I said, "Look Hal Harper's the Speaker of the House. Hal is not a real hard-nosed guy. Hal's somebody you can talk to. Hal kind of prides himself as being reasonable, and that's a strength you have too. Why don't you invite Hal in, just the two of you, behind closed doors and talk about what's important to you. Hal may say, 'We'd really like to do this and this, and we really wouldn't like to do this.' You might be able to say, 'Well, I think only this is the problem there, but I think we can go with you on the other two.' Then you could give your priorities to him, and you might say, 'Let's go back and talk to some people in our own side and meet again on Tuesday.' But I think if you had that conversation with Hal maybe things would actually go pretty well in the next session because he's the kind of a guy you could have that kind of a conversation with."

Stan said to me, "No, Bobby, I think I'm going to work with the Butte boys." He said, "The Butte delegation has always been kind of helpful to us and different things." Of course, the Butte delegation could be helpful the Democrats or the Republicans. They were the swing voters. [laughs] I know people will probably listen to this and be mad at me about this, but they were considered somewhat the Shylocks of the legislative process. You couldn't help, but like them and I do to this day. I've been to the funerals of several of them, and I've shed a tear myself but they looked out for Butte. If that was that helped Republicans, they'd do that. Stan somehow thought, 'they're more helpful to us than the rest of the Democrats are.' I imagine that was true, but golly, I think I think if you can work something out with the leader of the mainstream Democrats before this whole thing starts then you won't need to be dependent on the Butte Democrats or any other delegation that's kind of unpredictable. Anyway, I think that's pretty much what he did.

Then he made some seriously bad Cabinet appointments.

CVV: I remember for certain that he appointed someone who claimed degrees that he didn't have.

BB: Yeah, that was Ray Shackleford.

CVV: Then he appointed someone else who was a bigamist.

BB: That might have been Shackleford too, I think.

CVV: There were two Cabinet appointees that had terrible...It was terrible.

BB: There was Shackleford, there was Mike Letson, and there was another one. Oh, Hoaglum, and Hoaglum was making harassing telephone calls.

CVV: That's right. I mean, he made terrible yes appointments so I think that the public perception of him went down terribly—

BB: Incompetent.

CVV: —and it allowed the Democrats to make hay too because it suggested that he was not prepared. He wasn't appointing good people—

BB: He wasn't—

CVV: And as you know, he and Fred [Van Valkenburg] went toe to toe.

BB: Oh yeah. Well, people felt bad about that because they thought 'Van Valkenburg knows Stephens is a good guy. How come Van Valkenburg is going after him like he is? But Stan just invited, and Stan kind of poked his thumb in the Democrats' eyes generally, and Fred was the Democrat leader. Didn't always take a whole lot to provoke Fred, but the thing about Stan was if Stan had been almost anybody else that wouldn't have happened. You know he appointed the budget director who had lied about his college degree who was married to two women at the same time and that sort of thing. But when I talked to him about that too, I remain on regular speaking terms with him, and I felt sorry for him. I said, "How did that happen, Stan?"

He said, "I wanted to make a clean break. I didn't want to promote or reappoint these bureaucrats that have been around here for a long time. Have had 20 years of Democrats in office." He said, "I'm a private enterprise man. I made my own money my own way in private business, and I thought we could bring Republican, private-interest business principles to run state government." He said, "I got my third, and sometimes my fourth, choice because you couldn't get some capable young fellow who was a businessman in Billings to come over here and work in state government. On the national level if you said, 'Well, I'll appoint you secretary of commerce or secretary of the interior or something,' that's a big enough deal that a guy might drop his lucrative business and do it. But here in Montana, you make him a member of the governor's cabinet, you put him in charge of 50 bureaucrats, you don't give him any real authority or responsibility, you pay him a fifth of what he's earning now, you expect he's going to do that?" So he tried to get those kinds of people, and that's from where Hoaglum and Letson and Shackleford, that's where they came from. They were people with a private background.

I just told him, I said, "Sometimes you got to do this thing with people who know how to do it."

CVV: It's kind of like the term limits. Sometimes the best person is the person who's had the experience and understand the system.

BB: Yeah, yeah. What was her name? She was Schwinden's administrative assistant? Theresa, Terri Alcott. Cohea.

CVV: C-o-h-e-a.

BB: Man! There was no more competent, professional person than her, and I said, "Keep Terry Cohea on. You don't have to keep her very long, but say, why don't we say, 'Terry, I'd like to stick with me with you stick with me for six months, and if we're still on speaking terms then let's go a little longer.'"

"No, Bob, I'm going to make a complete break." So he got Steve Yeakel who had been his campaign manager. No dumbbell about Steve, but he had absolutely no experience or any understanding of the bureaucracy or any idea of how to do anything. Neither did Stan.

It was just a star-crossed administration. Took him at least two years to get it straightened out. Then when they did, I think his second two years were better. I think he kind of got the ship righted more or less by then. He had a good legislature, actually. Republicans won in '92. They carried the House anyway, and that was based on something we should probably mention called the Seven and Seven plan.

CVV: The seven-percent solution.

BB: The seven-percent solution. That's what I was trying to remember. The seven-percent solution. What happened there was the state looked like it was in bad shape fiscally. It had been through Schwinden's administration, and it was still struggling with Stephens. The Democrats had introduced several bills to raise taxes. The Republicans criticized them because they were selecting tobacco or cigarettes or the oil industry or something or other. Jerry Driscoll, also another creative thinker and interesting character, introduced this across the board, seven-percent tax, which if it passed everybody's in it equally. They've all got a little got skin in the game. We're not making any favorites or leaving anybody out, and it would raise the bottom money that most Democrats thought we needed to raise. So Mercer cleverly came up with this. He thought, 'well, we don't want a big long impasse and stay here for a long time, but let's all vote against it.' He went down and talked to Stephens about it, he said, "Stan, this is going to hurt, but let it become law without your signature. So there's not a single Republican fingerprint on it. The whole thing happened from Democrats, and then we'll run against them on that." Will it runs in my mind, and I actually talked to Mercer last night about this interview, and I said John, "I think Rob Natleson, the University of Montana professor, had gotten enough signatures to keep the seven-percent solution from going into effect."

He said he thought that was right, but he said he didn't remember that for sure himself. So I still don't know that for sure, but I know Natleson did that with something and I'm quite sure that that's what it was. So it didn't even go into effect, but the economy had rebounded enough by then that we were able to keep the store open without that revenue. Maybe not real easily, but we were able to keep it open. So Stephens cooperated with that. As I say, I felt sorry for him. He's been mad at me too, especially because I write newspaper columns. [laughs] Very often he

doesn't agree with them, and he'll tell me so. He's kind of...I've got sort of a father-son relationship with him. I respect him greatly. We were in the trenches together. I felt to some extent he got bad press, and some extent he deserved a bum rap but to some extent he asked for it. He didn't run for re-election. He had a health episode and he wasn't able to run for re-election.

His lieutenant governor was Denny Rehberg, and I was in on a little private meeting that included Denny and Marc [Racicot] and Bruce Crippen and John Mercer. We talked over what was going to happen because it didn't appear as though Stephens was going to be able to run for governor again. Actually, Denny Rehberg was the guy who called for the meeting, and it took place in a little wooden bunkhouse on a property that he rented out here on the edge of Helena. He was lieutenant governor at the time. So he lived near here when he was lieutenant governor. The four of us sat there. It was at the wintertime, I remember, and he had a big stove with a big fire in it. As it turned out, I don't think the rest of us knew this, but when Marc was first elected attorney general, he came before the subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee that Rehberg was the chair of and Rehberg was the new chair of the committee. Rehberg could have a little bit of an attitude, and I think Rehberg thought, 'well, I don't want anybody to think I'm going to make play favorites of this guy just because he's a Republican.' So Denny kind of put Marc through the ropes, and I think Marc thought it was kind of unreasonable and unnecessary. Denny said anyway right at the beginning of the conversation, he said, "I'm not sure I'm ready for this." You imagine Denny Rehberg saying that? He said, "I'm not sure I'm ready for this. I think you could win the election for governor." He said, "I'm willing to stand aside if you'll keep me on as lieutenant governor. If you can do that..." That's when they kind of had their little back and forth.

"Well yeah, but maybe you might have thought about this when you were dragging me through the budget process." [laughs] It was semi-good natured but not entirely. Anyway, they talked about it, and Marc said, "I, truthfully, had not even thought about that. I thought about running for attorney general, and I love the job."

I spoke up, and I said, "You may always love that job and that's wonderful, but you're limited to two terms. If you ever wanted to be governor any time in the rest of your life, you will never have an opportunity any better than this. This is the best opportunity you'll ever have, and that's what you have to decide."

He said, "Well, this will come as a total surprise, my wife and I have not talked about this. I mean this is wasn't even what we were going to do." But Stephens was just out of the picture. We knew he wasn't going to be able to run again. We went our separate ways, and we were going to come back again the next morning. Their wives were with them, and we didn't stick around very long. But their wives, I'm not sure they'd met before, and they talked it over and so Racicot said, "I think I'm going to do it."

Denny said, "Don't leave me twisting in the wind, Marc." I remember he said, "Don't wait for a week and make me look indecisive and stupid," and that sort of thing. This was on a weekend, so they decided that they'd hold a press conference at the old governor's mansion. Tim Babcock had the old governor's mansion, and remember Tim Babcock had that personal friendship with the Racicot family, with Bill Racicot, Marc's dad—a good friend of Tim Babcock. So Tim made the old governor's mansion available, and a whole bunch of the Republicans from all over the state came there including Stan Stephens. Stan looked so tired, and he didn't stand up. He seemed weak and feeling kind of depressed and not really even realizing quite what had happened. But his doctor told him, "You run for another term as governor, and you might as well make your will out because this isn't...you can't do this anymore." Whatever happened to him I think doctor thought was directly stress related. Racicot did the most beautiful, eloquent job and recognized both Babcock and Stephens in such a nice and wonderful way. Other people and I thought, 'that's especially impressive,' because he was standing down in the middle of this big old house with small rooms and one big central staircase and people were crammed upstairs and downstairs in the kitchen. He could probably only see maybe a third of the people. Maybe not even that from the central part of the house he was in. Yet he remembered names he couldn't see, and he said really nice things about everybody. We just thought, 'boy, he's the he's the golden one.' He was pretty smooth.

Of course, Bradley was a close friend of mine too because we filed on the same day for the legislature. We'd known each other at Bozeman. She was the instigator of Montana's first Earth Day when I was student body president. So I had the help of the whole student government, put them behind her to make a successful Earth Day. We've remained friends this day. I don't remember. I guess she had a contested primary, didn't she, against Greeley?

CVV: I think that's right, against Mike Greeley.

BB: I think that might be right. Anyway, I know that she was a cinch to get into the general election for sure then, but she favored a sales tax and so did Racicot. So that wasn't such a big issue. But then when Marc got elected we worked out a compromise sales tax proposal after he was governor, and my friend Bruce Crippen was the main architect of that. It was pretty complicated, but we took medicine and groceries out of it because the Democrats' argument against it was that it was regressive. We claimed, if you give rebates back based on income tax exemptions and you don't tax medicine and groceries, you can make it awful darn near as progressive as an income tax. They knew they had a good issue of course. Dorothy was behind it, you know. She stepped up to the plate. We'd worked it through the legislature so...She had more money in hers and Racicot had more tax relief in his, but Eric Fever told me one time that the public education would be something like 70 million dollars further ahead if Racicot's bill had passed.

CVV: Eric was the lobbyist for the—

BB: The MEA-MFT. Then it was the MEA. They supported it, and they felt even though we've probably preferred Dorothy Bradley's bill that there was new money for education in Racicot's bill. But it got slaughtered worse than the one back in '72 did when the Constitutional Convention went in. Racicot went around the state. I gave 12 speeches myself in support of it. I was up in Whitefish, I was walking down the sidewalk, I wasn't giving speeches or anything. This old boy I've known practically my whole life, Vern Moen—Vern was a railroader—so I got to talking with him. I think he might have been mowing his lawn. He said, "You for that sales tax?"

I said, "Yeah."

"Oh, I'm sure as hell not for that."

I said, "Listen, Vern, you're an old geek. You've bought everything you're going to buy. Your house is paid for. You're not going to buy another car. How old are you?"

"Seventy five," or something like that.

"You're not going to buy another lawnmower, probably, or anything like that so other people are going to pay the sales tax but you're going to get a break on your property tax you pay on your house."

"I don't care, Bob." He said, "I wouldn't vote for it if I got to keep all the money myself."
[laughs]

That's kind of how people were you. They just—

CVV: Still are.

BB: I think that's probably true.

Then of course I knew Judy Martz a little bit, but I was out of politics by then so. I left, I didn't run again in 1996. So I was there for the first half of Racicot's eight years. I know Racicot was somewhat unpopular with Republicans even when I was there. He was considered a little too moderate. Racicot also wasn't a real self-starter, and I'd say that second only probably to Tom Towe, the most important legislator that I ever served with was John Mercer because Towe and Mercer and Dorothy Bradley, to some extent, were innovators and they were visionaries. They could come up with new ideas.

I remember in '91, Mercer told me, "We're sick of being in the minority and we're going to do something about it." He came up with the so-called action plan, and there wasn't anything very controversial in it. But he and Larry Grindy and others had kind of kept track of things they'd heard. I remember one of the parts of it was the "truth in sentencing" provision. I don't even remember for sure what that was, but we can kind of tell just from those words. I should

remember some other things, but I don't, but they were things that most Republicans could agree on. It was a unifying thing among Republicans. Although Republicans probably didn't need to be unified too much then. Mercer was really a superb leader, and that the Democrats will have some difficulty being against because you'd have to say, 'well, gee your common sense tells you that's not a bad idea.' They didn't really have anything like that. So the Republicans went from something like 39 or 40 votes in the House up to 58, I think. Maybe it was 54. I think it might have 39 to 54. They captured the majority in the House of Representatives. Now, I don't know this for sure, and I asked Mercer about it and he equivocated about it. But I remember that we thought at the time that Newt Gingrich was notified by Denny Rehberg or somebody or other that they ought to do that on the national level. That worked out well for the Montana legislators, and that's where the Contract for America came from.

CVV: Beginning of the end. [laughs] We won't talk about that.

BB: Mercer wouldn't admit to that and he may not honestly know, but we commonly thought that. We thought...because it was a really good idea. That's kind of what the Contract on America was. There were kinds of things that people of a conservative bent would generally like pretty well.

CVV: The Democrats would like to call it a Contract on America, but the Republicans want to call it "for America."

BB: But wouldn't seem like that now, I don't think. Now it would seem pretty moderate. But anyway that was the way it was. Then I was at the end of my term in 1996 and could run again. That was before term limitations would have applied to me. They went into effect in '92. So I could have run for another four years. But frankly, I knew Bruce Crippen wanted to be president the Senate. I knew Tom Beck wanted to be president the Senate. I knew Gary Acklestead wanted to be president of the Senate. They were all friends of mine. I thought, 'if I stand aside for one of those guys when Gary was the next in line,' Gary Acklestead. So there I am sitting down on the Senate floor and Gary's up wheeling and dealing doing something in the president's office, and people come over to me and say, "Bob, you realize what Gary's doing? Would you have done that?"

I thought 'I don't want to put myself in that position.' So I thought the best thing for me is to quit now. I mean I'm kind of quitting as a winner. You can't really go any further in the legislative process. I'm not sure what important difference I can make at this point. I mean I've been there for 26 years. I thought maybe it's time now for me to stand aside and go off into the sunset. So I did.

CVV: Let's talk about two pieces of legislation, and then I want to just talk about the Republican Party in general. We didn't really talk very much about the coal tax trust fund.

BB: Oh, and we should have.

CVV: I think that's important. Should we talk a little bit about that?

BB: I'm not sure I've got this entirely right. I don't know that I remember the percentages, but what Towe proposed was a constitutional trust that would be approved by the people so it would be in the constitution and the legislature couldn't change it. I think the only way the legislature could change that according the constitution was by a three-fourths majority. Boy, that's tough to get. Just virtually impossible to get. Towe shrewdly set aside a major chunk of the coal tax to go into the coal tax trust fund. Then in addition, to that he had these smaller trusts that weren't a part of the constitution that we've already talked about. What they did was help him with support, because anybody that's a part of this whole trust process wants the whole thing to pass. So he got some allies just by doing that. That was a good move on his part.

They had a new concept for taxing the coal. Before then coal in Montana, to the extent it was produced, was taxed on a BTU basis. Towe's idea was to base it, because it was simpler, on whatever the going price of the coal was when it was sold right at the mouth of the strip mine. The coal gets out of the ground gets loaded onto the train, and what it's worth then as it gets emptied into the coal car is what would be taxed. The tax was set at a high rate, at 30 percent of the market value of the coal at the mouth of the strip mine right when it went into the train. Of course, convulsions went up about that. They said, "You guys couldn't put the coal companies out of business by...or keep coal from being mined in Montana by Dorothy Bradley's moratorium bill, so now you're going to just tax it out of business."

Towe said, "There's this incredible demand for coal"—and there was then, Montana coal being developed according to the specifications—"I don't think there's a problem." Of course, there was a lack of credibility about that. But anyway, it passed. Kind of a funny thing about that was there had been an interim committee that worked on this, but Towe was definitely the guiding light of the interim committee. But there was a legislator up for my part of the state, a woman Democrat by the name of Ora Halvorson, and Ora was on that same interim committee. So Ora introduced her own coal tax bill, and there wasn't any difference between getting rid of the BTUs. They both agreed on that, and they might even have agreed on the on the percentage. I think what finally happened was that or Ora's bill and Tom's bill were virtually identical, and they ended up in a conference committee at the same time. Most of us that knew anything about it thought 'Ora shouldn't really carry this. This is a big deal, but really it should be Towe, if he gets the blame for it gets the credit for it.' But it was settled on a coin flip, and I think Harrison Fagg recommended that. He was sitting on the committee, and he said, "We'll be here all night. Neither one of you going to back down. Let's just settle this on a coin flip." So they did, Towe won the coin flip. So that part of the history went to him on the basis of a coin flip.

CVV: Wow! I had never heard that story.

BB: Then the 30 percent tax was challenged. William P. Rogers who had been attorney general under Eisenhower and Secretary of State under Nixon was the lobbyist for the coal industry maybe, and they were afraid other states would do this on their resource taxes. So they filed suit. Naturally, they lost in Montana. Then it went back to Washington D.C., and Montana prevailed, I think six to three or something in the U.S. Supreme Court. One of the Supreme Court justices said in his concurring opinion that, "Look, I'm not comfortable with this, but I don't want to put the Supreme Court in a position of having to decide the reasonableness of every damn resource tax from now on. 'Maybe the Supreme Court could strike this down, or maybe this is not quite as high as...' So the states are going to have to figure this out themselves or Congress." He said, "Congress could probably enact some kind of legislation in a way that we could find constitutional that would get around this problem. But we aren't going to do it." It's you know it's held pretty well since then.

But jumping back up into Ted Schwinden's administration, remember we're just broke. The state is just broke in. Wyoming is mining way more coal than we are and making way more money than we are with a lower coal tax. One of the reasons for that is less, what they called, overburden on the top of Wyoming coal so it was cheaper to mine. Also, it was a little bit shorter to the markets in the Midwest from Wyoming than it was from Montana, They had those advantages, but they also clearly, right plain on the surface had the advantage of a coal tax that was roughly half of what ours was. So Schwinden said, "What we're going to do is we're going to have the window of opportunity, and we're going to give the coal companies this window of opportunity to see how much more coal development we'll get if we drop the tax down to 15 percent. If it doesn't make any difference, maybe we'll go back to 30 percent. If we lose money on it, maybe we'll do something different, but we're not doing very well as things stand. We could be more competitive with Montana coal if we do this." So the legislature voted for the window of opportunity. Then later on, I think the coal tax was actually dropped to about ten percent of the value of coal at the mouth of the strip mine.

I think the consensus is that probably it was the thing to do under the circumstances at the time, though it was a bitter pill for lots of us, including me. I didn't vote for the window.

CVV: The revenue from that goes into the trust fund, though, it doesn't go into the general fund, right?

BB: Let's see, how does that work? A percentage of the coal goes into the trust fund, I think, until it got to a certain point, and then then it was built up by most of the interest that was generated. I think we're past that point now because the coal trust has got more than a billion dollars in it now. We're not mining very much coal in Montana now. So we're getting way more income from the coal out of what's generated by the interest payments of the coal trust than we are by the coal we mine. So it was unquestionably a hugely good idea. We had nothing but a hole in the ground to show for the Berkeley Pit. Well, not completely but pretty much. Now, we've got this asset that's getting a little bigger all the time, and not all the interest goes out for other things. We've got the there are two infrastructure proposals that are part of it. One's

TCEP, I think, or something like that. That money can come out of the coal trust, but the rest of it stays in it.

CVV: I was thinking about the trust itself that takes a two-thirds vote to—

BB: Three-fourths.

CVV: Three-quarters, okay. But the revenue from that does go into it, at least it's spendable revenue, not something that can't be touched. Obviously, that's what helped with the window of opportunity and helped the state—

BB: Truthfully I don't remember the percentages exactly. What keeps coming up in my mind is 20 percent, but I'm not sure how to reconcile with that with anything. For a while, we couldn't touch any of it. Then we got to a certain point when this money would go for sewer projects and businesses and that sort of thing, but we've kind of split the interest in half on it. But the money from the coal continued to go into the trust fund. I think that's still the case, but it doesn't amount to much. It's a trickle now compared to what we get out of it.

CVV: Let's talk one last piece of legislation which was the deregulation of electrical energy. How did that come about? Why did it come about? What happened? I know the Republicans were the leading force behind that, but we know all the consequences from that we didn't foresee, and it led to the demise of Montana Power Company.

BB: It was a drastically horrible thing to happen, and I can't tell you as much about it as I'd like to because it was done in secret but it was after I had gone.

CVV: Oh, it was after you were gone?

BB: I think it was '97 actually when that passed. I was president the Senate in '95.

CVV: Well, let's see, because Racicot is a governor. I know that Fred Thomas was the main sponsor of it. There was always the belief that the Montana Power Company helped write that bill in secret, and it was pushed hard by the Republicans for business purposes seeming that the big companies would have lower rates.

BB: It was kind of like term limitations. It was that kind of brilliant idea *du jour* at the time. Railroads had been de-regulated, airlines had been deregulated, and telephones had been deregulated and that sort of thing. The feeling was that this was a better idea than having these monopolies be regulated, and Montana Power Company bought into it. But the story that I remember about it, and it's mostly what I was told is that everybody knew this was going on and it was cooking in the background. See, there's a later date to introduce tax bills in legislative session than general legislation. So we went past the midpoint of the legislative session when all the regular legislation had been introduced and transmitted to the other

chamber. It wasn't until quite late in the session, just about the last possible minute when this idea could be introduced to the legislature, that it came before the legislature. It was introduced by Fred Thomas. And I think my friend John Harp was importantly involved with it too. It had been cooked up in a series of meetings apparently over at the Colonial. Bob Gannon was involved for sure is a lawyer for the Montana Power Company, and I'm not sure which legislators and that sort of thing, but it was kept pretty much behind closed doors. Then it was introduced in the legislature, and of course the idea again, was this is the future, Montana shouldn't be left behind, and that sort of thing. Looking back now you wonder why anyone would have gone for it because we had the cheapest damn power in the country practically.

Anyway, a majority went for it, and a fair number of Democrats supported it too. In fact, I think a Democrat carried it in the House. But it was mostly Republicans I'll grant you that. Then Racicot, of course, signed it into law. One of the raps on Racicot, in spite of how he was a really popular governor at the time—he probably became less popular after that occurred, of course—Marc Marc went to work for Enron. Enron was a big energy company that was behind dereg in Montana and California and Texas and Arizona and so on.

CVV: And all their executives landed in jail.

BB: Yeah, that's right, Yeah that's right.

CVV: Prison, I guess.

BB: So there was a theory, 'well, maybe Marc was close to this deal all the time, and that's why they rewarded him when he left office.' He was broke and I think he was a thoroughly honest man as governor, but then he got into James Baker's law firm which also represented Enron. James Baker was the secretary of state in the first Bush administration and a very prominent Republican. He was the guy—Baker was—who was lawyer that represented Bush in the Bush v. Gore litigation—

CVV: Marc was in Florida looking at the recount, arguing for Bush.

BB: That's exactly. Montana Governor Marc Racicot was down in Florida because he had come to know Bush. That's another kind of a funny deal. I supported McCain in 2000, and so I talked to Marc about it, and he said, "Maybe you could change your mind on that. I'm not trying to lean on you or anything, but I'm sure for Governor Bush."

I thought, 'what the heck's it to me?' Marc might get a cabinet appointment. Marc might be in a real good position. I kind of prefer John McCain, but if it's going to help him, I can be for Bush, no problem. Of course, Bush named him Republican national chairman. I don't think that was really a plum particularly. But he ended up working for a law firm called Brace and Braswell, or Pace and Braswell, or something like that. It was the law firm of Enron in Washington D.C. So that raised some eyebrows about whether Marc had been compromised all along in this thing. I

sure as heck wouldn't want anybody listening to this tape to think I think so because I don't think so. But that damaged his reputation. No question about it.

CVV: Well one last thing, and then you might want to add some other things as well, but I know from knowing you and knowing from the op-ed pieces that you have written for many Montana newspapers that your feelings about the present day Republican Party have changed. Could you talk about that a little bit?

BB: Yeah, as I think I've already suggested at least, my dad was a really solid, really partisan Republican, but my mother was not brought up that way. So those two influences ran my life, my thinking, I guess, from the time I was a kid. Then the influences of the Republican leaders in the legislature who I knew best—Jean Turnage and Matt Himsl—were neither hard core doctrinaire ideologues either. I tended to be someone who might not always vote with the Republican caucus on things. I probably did 70 or 80 percent of the time. In many cases, everybody voted that way, but sometimes I didn't. I can't remember where I'm going with this.

CVV: How about the changes in the Republican Party.

BB: Yeah, yeah, okay. I felt I was comfortable and I was in the right tent for most of the time I was involved in politics, and I voted always for Republican presidents. All the way through. No problem whatever voting for McCain or Mitt Romney or anybody like that. But when Trump came along I thought 'I've always been uncomfortable with this Tea Party thing. I don't think they're good thinkers. I don't think they really have...the country's got to work together on some things.' I talked to one of them one time, and I said, "You can't think that compromise is always a dirty word. That's what the system has to have in order to function. You've got two houses. Even if they both are controlled by the same political party, there's going to have to be some compromise to work things out. You might have the president that's of a different persuasion than the Congress, so our system forces compromise. You just have to recognize that."

He said, "The way I look at it, things have passed, gone on long enough now that we've really got to do some things that the Democrats are fundamentally against. If we compromise with them, we're just half wrong." Well, that's what he thinks, and that's what he honestly thinks, I'm sure so that's how it is. But more and more our country has been divided. The Tea Party was a symptom of it. I'm not sure it was a direct cause. I think Rush Limbaugh the radio commentator has been haranguing for this kind of division and nationalism and wedge issues and that sort of thing for 20 or more years. I think he's had a lot of influence. I think there are a lot of Montana cowboys that are driving around in their pickup, and they turn on the radio and they listen to Rush. I think he's had a huge influence. I think that's contributed.

I haven't been comfortable with any of this stuff. I really haven't been comfortable with it. In fact, one of the last visits I had with Jack Galt, who was probably at least considered himself to be the most conservative guy in the state Senate when he first arrived there, and this Tea Party

stuff was beginning when he was on his deathbed. I went in and had a talk with him, he said, "Bobby, I think you and I are standing on the same spot. I think when you were kind of the liberal heretic in the Republican Party and I was the conservative old stalwart, but I think as things are going on now we see things pretty similarly." We talked a little bit about the Tea Party and that sort of thing.

I think that there's no question but what things have changed, and it was a heck a lot easier for somebody who was thoughtful in trying to solve problems and trying to be a part of the solutions instead of a part of the problem to be a Republican or a Democrat back in the '80s and probably '90s than it is now. You've got some of the Democrats, I think I can honestly say, probably in desperation who are angry enough that the only way they like Republicans is fried, and there are many Republicans that have sown this idea that ours is the one true faith and you're not going to compromise with them. All they want's more government, more taxes, and you got to draw the line someplace. So people like me would wonder, well, why in the heck did you guys pass the tax cut that's contributed terribly to the national debt more than anything else.

CVV: Which used to be the signature Republican issue.

BB: The signature Republican issue and anticommunism, national defense, that sort of thing. Trump is doing the opposite. You think well where are all the old-fashioned Republicans? Frankly most of them are dead, and the modern Republicans seem to think that Republican thinking kind of emerged from the earth with the Tea Party. Then Trump just kind of rode the crest of people disgusted by, 'Republicans or Democrats didn't make much difference. But the national debt keeps getting bigger, and the people are coming across the border. We've got problems in our country social issues and that sort of thing, and it's time we drew the line. If Trump doesn't work out well, then we'll replace him at the end of four years. But we're going to do something different even if it's wrong.' Somewhat in desperation, you had people in the big Rust Belt states that voted in Trump kind of in spite of themselves but just as much as anything to kind of whack the system over the head that seemed to fail them.

I heard this on television, this guy was being interviewed. He'd been a steelworker sometime in the past. He was probably in his 50s or something. He was going to vote for Trump, and he was a lifelong union member. So the interviewer asked him about, he said, "Do you really think that that Trump's going to bring back the steel industry? You really think that's possible?"

He said, "No, I know enough about it that I know it's not possible, but at least the guy comes here and he talks to us and he recognizes that we've got a grievance, that we've got real issues, that we can't find good jobs anymore. We're losing our self-respect, or we've already lost it. And the Democrats say, 'Oh, well this'll all work out. The modern economy will soon provide more jobs than the old economy has.'" He said, "What does that mean to a guy like me?"

I [the television interviewer] said, "Yeah, but still is Trump going to restore this?"

"No I guess he's probably not. I'm not sure it's even possible. At least he sympathizes with it. At least he comes here and speaks to the issues that we care about." Well, that can be powerful sometimes.

CVV: Are there other things that you want to talk about that we haven't gotten to?

BB: I could just say, kind of pointed in this direction, that I voted for the first Democrat in my life for president when it was Hillary Clinton, and she was anathema to many Republicans. But I thought 'she certainly wouldn't be my first choice,' but she seemed to me to be competent, intelligent, experienced, and not near the loose cannon that Trump would be. I thought, 'I could leave it blank like many of my self-righteous friends did.' They said, "Well, I can't vote for either one of them."

But I remember telling them, "Look who do you think's the biggest danger? Who do you think is the biggest danger? You've lived through Obama. He probably wouldn't have a philosophy greatly different than Clinton's, and we survived it. Now, can we survive Trump? When you realize how unstable he is and how unpredictable he is and how he brags he doesn't read. He says he makes up his own mind based on his own intuition, and he doesn't care that much about advisers. And what does he have to base his knowledge of the world and the economy and those things on. He wasn't even very successful in business."

"Oh well..."

I think I'm going to turn out to be right about that. I said I thought the only thing we could do if we wanted to save the country from Trump was to vote for the Democrat there. I think that now.

John Kasich, governor of Ohio just left office, has been my favorite, and I visited with him for a while last spring in his office in Columbus Ohio, I put the hard sell on him, and I my gut was that he was going to do it. He seemed like he was positioning himself to do it, to run for president again. He's a, I think, not so much a liberal Republican or even a moderate Republican, but a Republican who realizes the system's got to work and wants to make it functional and doesn't want to use a lot of division in the process of doing that. Realizes that a lead in the opposite direction of a functional system. I met with him again down in Colorado Springs, when was that? Last fall, I guess, and talked to him again about it. He was there and joked a little bit about how he had talked to John Hickenlooper, and the rumor was going around then that Kasich and Hickenlooper were going to get together. I think the problem with that was they couldn't decide which was going to be the top dog. Hickenlooper just got the jump on it and filed anyway, and then I don't think...Well, I don't know. I mean, maybe as it gets down to it Hickenlooper might approach Kasich and say, "I'm going to get the nomination. Will you go with me?"

CVV: Wouldn't that be interesting.

BB: That'd be interesting. I think people might go for it now too because I think people are in the mood for 'let's quit this crap and let's work together.'

CVV: I think they wanted something different with Trump, and obviously it's a disaster, I think, by almost all accounts. But perhaps something like Hickenlooper-Kasich would be so different that people would say 'this is maybe the difference we need.'

BB: And these are two guys that have been successful in their own states by working with the other side.

CVV: Because I think people see Congress itself as so dysfunctional that there has to be some different change and some compromise. I don't know. It's hard to imagine.

BB: I think you're dead right. I think you're dead right. I think if it ever worked any time in our lifetimes, a fusion ticket would work now. But I think there's a lot of pressure on Democrats from their party base so upset by Trump that they don't want any compromise at all. They want to beat him, and they want to replace him with somebody that they agree with for a change. Then you've got—we've already talked about them—the Republicans who say, "If we compromise with them, we're half wrong." People like me and a few other people I still know...The polls show that that 90 percent of the self-identified Republicans are loyal to Trump. Ninety percent! I think how could that happen? I mean he could be a burglar, and he'd get—

CVV: Like he said, "I can shoot somebody..."

BB: But it's happened right before our eyes, and so I'm thinking to myself 'how can I really be helpful anymore in terms of...' I think that's what a public servant should think of the most is how can you help the cause of humanity and how can you make the government work better and be better and that sort of thing. I don't think there's any chance at all that the Republicans are going to nominate anybody but Trump, and I'm not going to be able to vote for him again. You think 'well, should you just declare your independence, Brown?' But I think this too, at this point my life, I'm not running for any offices again and I do my newspaper column and that's about it, so it doesn't really make any difference what I call myself anymore. I could declare my independence. I'm not ready to declare myself a Democrat, but I'm in sympathy with them more than I am with the Republicans now. There's no question about it. That's troubling to me. You kind of think you'd like to go to your grave [laughs], and people would think of you, 'he was a wise and kindly old Republican and so on and we respected him and so on.' You don't want to go to your grave being a heretic and beyond that, a Benedict Arnold.

CVV: [laughs] The Democrats would say you just came to your senses.

BB: [laughs] Yeah, some of them have joked with me about that too. They have. But it's just been my entire life. I've got two wonderful children and a wonderful wife, and we always made an adequate income. We're able to do a little traveling now. So my life has been a good life, and I was able to be a high school history and government teacher. I enjoyed that. I enjoyed working with kids. I toyed with the idea of being a lawyer, and my friend Jean Turnage said he didn't think that was a good idea. I'm sure it wouldn't have been. I'm sure I wouldn't have been good at it because I like to read and I like to tell stories about things I've read. That's a history teacher.

CVV: Most lawyers don't like being lawyers.

BB: [laughs] And I've heard that too. Anyway, I wouldn't change very much as I look back over my life. As a teacher, you get the best months of the year off, and we had a small family and we lived in a part of the state where there were lakes and streams and forests and national park and that sort of thing so it was a pretty good life that way. You have disappointments along the way and I've had some, but frankly I've even kind of reconciled myself to the fact that what I might have considered a disappointment at the time perhaps shouldn't have been. My life is reasonably comfortable and I'm at peace with my conscience, and so if we can get rid of Trump I think I can die in peace. [laughs]

CVV: I think that's a great point to end on.

BB: Okay, well, thank you.

[End of Interview]