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Transcript for Episode 03: Big Change Coming: Governor Forrest Anderson's Unprecedented Preparation for Bringing Change

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[Begin Big Change Coming-Governor Forrest Anderson's Unprecedented Preparation for Bringing Change to Montana]

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[Music]

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

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

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

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

00:01:17

Evan Barrett: Welcome back to *In the Crucible of Change*. Today we're going to have a very special program about a very, very special individual, who was the fulcrum for most of the major change that occurred during this period and that's Governor Forrest Anderson. We think of this program as Big Changes are Coming, and they're coming in the person of Forrest Anderson, who was a one-term Governor. But in that one term with what happened

with the times that surrounded with him but with the actions that he took as Governor, he is seen as perhaps the most important Governor in the history of the State of Montana.

00:02:08

We have some special guests with us today who know Governor Anderson well, one personally and one historically. So I would want to mention that we have a well-known historian in Montana Brian Shovers, who was recently retired from the Montana Historical Society and is now delving full-time into history and he--he happens to be the author of a very magnificent article in *Montana, the Magazine of Western History*. And in this article it's a 20-page article about Forrest Anderson. So by the way, if you don't get *Montana, the Magazine of Western History*, you ought to. And the best way to do that is to be a member of the Montana Historical Society; so good point of reference, but Brian wrote the wonderful history on the Governor.

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And joining him is Newell Anderson. Newell is one of three children of Forrest Anderson. He's the youngest and the only son. And Newell brings the personal insights into what Forrest Anderson's makeup was, what was in his background, his history and his natural inclinations that made him the effective leader that he was. And so I would want to start a little bit with you Newell but before I do let me mention that Newell is a graduate of Northern Montana College, spent his professional life in education, in economic development, in trade; he worked for Governor Judge and Governor Schwinden both with the Old West Regional Commission, ran for State Auditor unsuccessfully in a very close race in 1984 and then spent 20 years doing great work with the Department of Commerce.

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So he's got a wonderful background. But that's part of what is the strength of your father. Your father had an extraordinary background that brought him to the Governorship with more experience than anyone probably in the history of the State even came close to having as far as that's concerned. But we'll get to that experience in a minute--the personal reflections about what makes up Forrest Anderson and as his son you know all the family stories, you were a close observer. What was it in his makeup, in his upbringing that gave him the strengths that you think he brought to the Governorship?

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Newell Anderson: You know Evan I think it's important at the beginning that I clear--clearly state that I'm prejudiced. I mean being his son I have to believe he was the greatest dad and all of the things that he did were the greatest things. But that said, I think there's a couple of parts of his history, his personal history that I feel are indicative of what he was as Governor and what he was as--as a politician.

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He was the youngest of three sons. He was a family of five people or five children. He was born to immigrant parents who were both--his dad was Oscar Anderson from Sweden and his mother was Nora O'Keefe from Ireland. And you know I think there was--there was a very strong discipline of--of family and--and early development that existed in their household.

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His oldest brother Harold was--was the--the intellectual and the one presumed to be the most likely to succeed because he was so good in school and he excelled in everything that he did. His second oldest brother was Mickey who was a--an athletic type, very social, and very involved in athletics and different things in high school. And father was kind of the third son. He wasn't particularly intellectual. He was--he was bright but he wasn't the valedictorian and he was--he was physical but he wasn't on the football team and he wasn't on the basketball team. And around the dinner table, which is as immigrant parents I guess often did, one of the basic rules of the family was everybody had to be there for dinner. You just didn't do anything other than--than be there for dinner.

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One--one night he came home and they were sitting around the dinner table and--and his father looked up at him and he said son; he said I got a call from the Director of the YMCA today. And I think father was probably in his early teens. And his--father said well what did he have to say? And he said well; he said he gave me some bad news. He said there was--there was a thievery at the Y today and somebody stole somebody's letterman jacket. And it was found in your locker. And the--the Director of the YMCA which was a major social place for young people at the time in Helena said, you know obviously your son Forrest stole this guy's letterman jacket and that's wrong. And father was pretty amazed at the story, was pretty floored at the accusation, and was probably as he described the story and--and he didn't talk a lot about it, but as he described the story, was pretty amazed that his father would believe the Director of the YMCA and not even ask him for his side of the story. And being the kind of--the third son and the one who didn't get a lot of recognition in the accomplishments and awards of his development, kind of

felt left out, and being a bit of a hot-head personally, independent, he stood up and he picked up the dining room table. And he just turned it over and all of the stuff went right towards his dad. He turned around and laughed and he didn't come back for two weeks.

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He was out hunting and fishing in the mountains in Western Montana, the thing that he found a great deal of solace in, and it took him out into both nature and into the world of people and--and the world of the common man, the workers, the--the people that did the lumber and the cattle and those kinds of things. And I think that--that story though by itself doesn't maybe seem to mean much; it was the idea that--that you can be accused of doing something and be perfectly innocent and you have to be really careful of the accuser and the innocence and the story and the facts. And it--it kind of gave him an opportunity as a young person to say, you know I've got to stand up for myself. I can't presume that the system is going to be fair or that I'm always going to be right.

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Evan Barrett: I think maybe perhaps it might speak to the idea that his personal honor was important to him.

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Newell Anderson: Exactly; exactly.

00:09:31

Evan Barrett: Because he must have carried that sense of honor forward.

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Newell Anderson: He did; he did and--and I think that story kind of is indicative of his independence. One of the things that I think father was born with that was a little bit extraordinary and--and it's not something that you can measure but father always seemed to have a--a kind of a sixth sense of intuition. He had an extraordinary amount of intuition into things and places and people and circumstances that I never saw anywhere in my life, you know during being a child, being his son, clear up through his successful political career. And I think that--that

independence and that intuition kind of made a lot of--a large mark on how he evolved into the--the person that he ultimately was.

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Evan Barrett: It is interesting that while he didn't participate in the athletic stuff that much, he was what you would think of as a Montana outdoorsman.

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Newell Anderson: He was.

00:10:32

Evan Barrett: Which is a different sense of athleticism but it's being out there and fishing and hunting and he was so well-known for that. And that story of him going off for two weeks to fish and hunt to find solace is a very interesting thing because this is a State of sportsman.

00:10:52

Newell Anderson: Exactly.

00:10:54

Evan Barrett: A State of sportsman, yeah.

00:10:55

Newell Anderson: Well and it was the beginning of ultimately what was another interesting fact of his early youth. It took him 14 years to get through 12 years of school because in his life it was as important in--during hunting season in the fall to go hunting as it was to learn history and science. So he would just pick up and be gone for a month or two months in the fall and--and it took him a lot longer to get through high school than it did most kids. But the--the importance of the outdoors was extraordinary to him and--and he--I think he did a lot of thinking out

there. He did a lot of learning out there. And I think he was as good of a hunter and as good of a fisherman as--as anybody I ever knew. And once again I think in a--in a kind of an abstract way it showed his intuition.

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You could look at a landscape and say well where--where will the door be? And--and you'd say well they're most likely to be down in that valley. And he'd say no; I think they just went around that hill over there. And they'll be coming over there and if we just sit right over here they'll come right to us. And it made absolutely no sense in--to me or to other people that were hunting with him but we usually followed his intuition and sure enough you'd go over and sit in that side of the mountain and within a half hour the deer would come around the side just like he said they would.

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And--and you'd look at a fishing hole and you'd say is this a good fishing hole? And he'd say no; this isn't the right one. It looked perfect according to all of the--the readings that you'd have about where a good fishing hole would be. And he'd point to another place and he'd catch 10-times as many fish as you would even though you were looking at the most perfect fishing hole in the--in the river.

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Evan Barrett: You know he was a product of the--of the Great Depression. And when he finished his 14-year saga of getting his high school degree, he wasn't able to afford to go to the university here at home. Tell us what--what did he do?

00:12:58

Newell Anderson: Well he started at the University of Montana but it was as you say, during the Depression. Ultimately he couldn't afford to live in Missoula outside of his home. He couldn't afford the tuition and he couldn't afford to be there. And there were no jobs. There were no jobs in Missoula. He couldn't get a job in Helena. His dad had a--a clothing store here in town and his dad wasn't making enough money in the clothing store to hire his own son to be able to afford his education. So his--he and his dad got together and his dad being a--a clothier here in Helena put him in--you know fitted him for a really good suit. He ended up packing the suit and some of his belongings into a--a bag and he hitchhiked. He thumbed his way literally back to Washington, DC during the

Depression and got a job working days for the--for the Federal government in the Roosevelt Administration. He was an auditor in the Social Security Administration, which was in the very, very early days of--of its existence.

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And while he went to school during the day making enough money to live on he also made enough money to go to night school. And he ended up getting his college degree and his law degree in Washington, DC during that time.

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Evan Barrett: Now that was at a school that was called Columbia Law or something but it's really what is now George Washington University?

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Newell Anderson: It is; yes.

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Evan Barrett: So he--he ended up in a pretty prominent place getting a degree in law. And but he had to work his way through.

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Newell Anderson: Uh-hm.

00:14:38

Evan Barrett: Like probably everybody in those days.

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Newell Anderson: Exactly.

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Evan Barrett: And that colors you a bit in terms of your attitudes when you know the struggle. The struggle that you have is the struggle that almost everybody had. I think it may have colored his--his attitudes toward--that government can be a proactive force for the good of people; your thoughts on that?

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Newell Anderson: Yeah; I think that's exactly right. I think he came by his--his humanitarianism naturally in his own family but I think it--it strengthened quite a bit by working and living in Washington, DC during the depths of the Depression and working with some of the programs of the Roosevelt Administration that were helping people help themselves, so yeah exactly.

00:15:29

Evan Barrett: Now he came back, decided to come back; had--had he by the way met and married your mom yet or did he do that when he came back?

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Newell Anderson: He married her when he came back.

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Evan Barrett: When he came back.

00:15:40

Newell Anderson: Uh-hm.

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Evan Barrett: And very quickly he decided he wanted to run for office.

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Newell Anderson: Exactly. He ran for the Legislature in I think 1940 was it.

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Evan Barrett: I think--

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Newell Anderson: Forty-three?

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Evan Barrett: Forty-two because he was in the forty-three session so in 1942, yeah.

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Newell Anderson: And he was a member of the House. He was successfully elected as a member of the House. He was a young good-looking guy with dark hair and as he went into the--what they called the House of Lords, the Junior House of Lords, the--the House of Representatives, he had as the rest of the Lewis and Clark County Delegation a bunch of white-haired senior men in his prime or in his company, which I think kind of epitomizes a lot of his existence in his youth. You--you know you tried to say things like you surround yourself with good people; well he--he found himself wanting to be surrounded by interesting people and wise people and experienced people, so no matter where he was whether he was hunting or in Washington working in the Roosevelt Administration or the Legislature he was always around older people and he always worked as hard as he could to try to--to find the best and the--and the brightest of the old people and--and worked you know--accumulate their wisdom and accumulate their insights. But, he--he served one terms as--as a member, as the junior member of the Junior House of Lords.

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Evan Barrett: And then--and then he put his law into more--more into practice as a County Attorney and--and the election in 1944, huh?

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Newell Anderson: Yeah; he was elected County Attorney in '44, really short interesting story about Helena at the time. Gambling was kind of on the edge but I don't think it was illegal. And he used to get a phone call from the Mayor of Helena on a Saturday morning. And the Mayor would say Mr. County Attorney, Sally Jones' husband came in off the rails last night and went down to the corner bar and he spent his entire paycheck. And Sally can't afford to buy milk and--and food for the kids. I want you to go down to the corner bar and I want you to tell the proprietor of the corner bar that you want you know \$220 of the \$235 that he lost last night at the bar; I want you to give it back to him and--and I want you to take that to Sally and make sure that she has enough money to buy shoes and clothes and--and food for the kids. It was a different time; it was clearly a different time. But it was a--it was an intriguing time and an interesting time.

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Evan Barrett: Now he--he had an amazing record of wins politically. But apparently when he ran for reelection as County Attorney he suffered the consequences of not having been able to serve during World War II.

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Newell Anderson: Uh-hm.

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Evan Barrett: And somebody came home who was a Veteran and took him out so to speak.

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Newell Anderson: Exactly. He--he actually predicted that it would be hard to get reelected as County Attorney even though he had served a term because a Veteran came home. And he wasn't proud of the fact that he wasn't a Veteran but he was medically disabled from what the used to call a stone man's disease during--or right before the War where it was a partial paralysis. It was a rheumatoid kind of thing. And he spent six weeks at the Mayo Clinic being treated on a syndrome that I guess some people ultimately kind of froze to a stone. I mean they were literally permanently paralyzed. He was lucky enough to have the treatment necessary to get through that and--and completely recover and never have it return. But that's kind of a long complicated story and--

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Evan Barrett: But you know in one sense that loss, one--political people I always presume learn more from losing than from winning. [*Laughs*] And--and it actually created an opportunity two years after that. He wasn't a sitting County Attorney two years after that when there was an open seat on the Supreme Court and it kind of took him to-- he went after that and it took him to a newer level. And although that was the only other race that he lost he won the Primary enough to get into the General. It was four on the ballot and you can get--vote for two is the way it was and he made it past the Primary but got beat in the--in the General. But he wetted his appetite on the Supreme Court thing in 1950. So in '52 he ran again for a single seat and he ran away with it. He ran away with it and that set him off on a string of 10 consecutive statewide elections that he won. He had a pretty amazing record.

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The Supreme Court thing and I want you to give some reflections on that from what you might have heard from him about the Supreme Court and then I want to ask Brian a little bit about it, too because he managed to pick up some insights on that Supreme Court thing, too, as well. But how did he fit in the Supreme Court because all of the sudden here he was, still a pretty young guy. With my recollection--is they were a bunch of old guys in that Supreme Court at that time.

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Newell Anderson: Uh-hm; very much so.

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Evan Barrett: Hugh Adair was the Chief and he'd been around since the '30s and you know how did--all of the sudden here is this young guy on the Supreme Court. What did he think about that?

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Newell Anderson: Well an interesting story about his campaigning, and I think one of the things that was really important about that race in his career was he learned a lot about campaigning. I mean he was out there. He and Johnny Morgan were the only two on the campaign. There were--there were no TV ads. There was--you know it

was--I'm guessing it probably was a \$2,000 or \$3,000 campaign statewide. It was much, much different than we even--

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Evan Barrett: They used to travel the State in car caravans to get to all the small towns.

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Newell Anderson: Exactly; exactly. But he came across a lady once out in Eastern Montana, one of the stories of-- of his political learning and he went up to this lady and he said hi I'm Forrest Anderson and I'm running for the Supreme Court. I'd appreciate your vote. And she looked at him and she said oh you're way, way too young to be a Supreme Court Judge, which is not an unusual thing for somebody to say I would guess at the time. But he looked at her and he was quick-witted enough to say oh no, no; don't misunderstand me. He said I'm just running for an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. I'm not running for the Chief Justice. I'm not old enough to be the Chief Justice but I'm just running for an Associate. She said okay; you got my vote. *[Laughs]*

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Evan Barrett: *[Laughs]*

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Newell Anderson: So he--he did; he was successful in '52 to be elected and--and you know I think once again he was considered the junior member of the House of Lords because the Supreme Court is the House of Lords. It's a much different Judiciary at the time; same laws, same kinds of circumstances intellectually but there was one Secretary and she worked for the Chief and there were four Justices or Associate Justices and if you--there were no Law Clerks. You wrote all your own briefs. And when you wanted your brief typed and you were assigned a case and you were to write this--the majority opinion you had to ask the Chief if you could borrow his Secretary to type it up. And so the--the world and mechanics of the Supreme Court, the mechanics of government all together, were significantly different.

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But he found himself in--in that circumstance for four of the six years of that term, kind of being on the outside. He wrote a significant number of dissenting opinions because as you say the Senior Judges on the Court were of a different persuasion and of a different mindset.

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Evan Barrett: I think by the way one case could be made that they strongly reflected like most of Montana government at the time the--the interests of the Anaconda Company.

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Newell Anderson: Very much so; yes.

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Evan Barrett: And so he was obviously a--not comfortable with that.

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Newell Anderson: Yes.

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Evan Barrett: Didn't wear the copper collar well and filed a lot of dissenting opinions. One of them was on the Legislative Council wasn't it, Brian?

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Brian Shovers: Yeah; he was the dissenting vote. The Legislature had passed a Bill to establish the Legislative Council which was created to help Legislators learn about what they were doing. And it was a significant piece of legislation and later we'll talk about how it affected the Executive Reorganization and all. But--so he was the one--it was declared unconstitutional and he was the one dissenting vote. And when he became Attorney General that decision kind of followed him and eventually during that--during his term as Attorney General, the Legislative Council was approved and really led the way to some major changes in the way government operated in the 1960s.

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Evan Barrett: Well and again, the modernization of either the Executive Branch which he later delved into in historic proportions and the modernization of the Legislature, the strengthening of the mechanics of State government were not in the interest of the power structure of the State which stood very well by having a weak government.

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Brian Shovers: Right.

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Evan Barrett: So when they were reflecting on this I think his dissent was a sign of something to come which was the people taking over--the very subject of this entire series of films. And that was probably emblematic of that--that dissent among the other dissents that he had. But he kind of chafed under it, so he was--only took--he was elected to a six-year term but he only served four of it, because there was an opening for Attorney General when Arnold Olsen who was sitting Attorney General decided to run for Governor in 1956 against J. Hugo Aronson. Then your father decided to run for Attorney General.

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Newell Anderson: Uh-hm.

00:26:38

Evan Barrett: And as I look at that in 1956 he had primary opposition against Pat Gilfeather. But he thumped him. He thumped him. He had been--I think it paid off the fact that he had been on the statewide ballot a few times and knew how to campaign because he won way better than two to one in the Primary. And then he--he won--looks like he got about almost 60-percent of the vote in the General. So he did really well in 1956. And that was a year by the way when the Presidential race was on and--and Ike was up for reelection and he won overwhelmingly and Aronson

won reelection so he was going against the tide so to speak. And I think it showed the strength he had been developing at the ballot box.

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Newell Anderson: Uh-hm; exactly.

00:27:36

Evan Barrett: Yeah. Hmm and--and suddenly he's Attorney General and--and served for 12 years.

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Brian Shovers: Three terms, right.

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Evan Barrett: Three terms; three terms and--and overwhelmingly elected. I mean from that point forward he was not opposed in the Primary for Attorney General and it looks to me like he was again getting maybe 65--or 60--65-percent of the vote each time for Attorney General and making his mark. But we've been told by some folks that he was kind of biding his time, trying to sort it out and figure out what to do, when to run for Governor, and Gordon Bennett told a wonderful story in his interview about--about the prison over there and when he thought it was the very time when your dad looked at it and said you know I think I can become Governor when Aronson turned over the problems in the prison and said you take care of it. And he took care of it in a very brave and forthright way and kind of looked at it and said I guess I can be Governor and just waited for the right time it looked like. What--what are your recollections about that, about the timing of--12 years is a long time to be Attorney General?

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Newell Anderson: I think about the Attorney General job, father used to say frequently and--and not terribly publicly but frequently in conversation with his friends and family that the job that he operationally got the most satisfaction out of in his entire career was Attorney General because he could actually help more people and get more things done himself than he could in any of the other capacities that he had previously served. And I think in

reflection after he was Governor he would have felt the same way, too. I think he enjoyed the Governorship but I--I really think that the--the capacity to interpret the law and to--to enforce the law and to--to kind of manage the law from the Attorney Generalship gave him some--some real intrigue in being able to help people do things and help things happen in a very quiet way.

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Evan Barrett: One of his hallmarks it seems in my observation was his ability to attract and find extraordinarily capable and talented and good people. And that evidenced itself right in the Attorney General's office. When you look at the people that he had hired as Assistant Attorneys General, there was a phenomenon crop of people he had there that stood out in the legal profession in Montana for decades after that, some remarkable people. My mentor Duke Crowley was one of them. But there were--Gordon Bennett was another one. But there was a whole cadre of people that he--he called upon to come and join him in--in what his mission was and they were really capable people and it spoke to his ability to judge people I think quite a bit. Did--do you have reflections on--?

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Newell Anderson: Yeah and I think that was a great secret to his success was who he surrounded himself with. And--and it goes back to the--my earlier comment about his intuition. He--he had a great insight into people. He could--he could with a fairly short experience with a person know that person very well and know that person's capacities and--and strengths and limitations. I always maintained and this may be kind of unfair to say but I always maintained he was one of the greatest personal managers I ever saw in my life and I always--always kind of wished I could have gotten to that point in my career. But it was not possible nor did I have the talent to do it, but his--his secret to a good day was coming out and having breakfast, sitting at the--at the dining room table or living--kitchen table, eating his corn flakes and reading two or three different newspapers and then making four or five phone calls to key people on key issues and then spending the rest of the day going fishing.

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I mean he--he had--he had the insight to know who could do what, how well, and he knew the circumstances of the issues as they evolved quickly enough that he could--he could solve the day or the week's

problem in an hour and a half on the telephone by making assignments and spent the rest of the time out on the Missouri River fishing.

00:32:19

Evan Barrett: Which was probably great for his mental health, too.

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Newell Anderson: Exactly.

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Evan Barrett: Yeah; yeah, now in 1968, we--we look upon the period of the *crucible of change* as being 1965 to 1980. But the first dramatic and important statewide election for Governor which is the predominant important office for dealing with the people of Montana was in 1968. Tim Babcock was the incumbent and was running for reelection. He had been reelected in '64. And there had been a donnybrook of a fight in the Legislature over the sales tax. And Jim Felt the Speaker of the House had advanced the big sales tax agenda and it had been stopped by Gene Mahoney, the Head of the Senate, Democratic Head of the Senate. And so when it came time to run for Governor, there were--although there were six people on the Democratic Primary ballot the two big ones, two big names were Mahoney and Forrest Anderson. And they duked it out. And he won by a fairly narrow amount. Tell us about your visit the night of the--the election, the Primary Election.

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Newell Anderson: We--we were having a--or he was having a campaign party at the house which is typical of people running for elections. And it was early in the returns; of course back in '68 even as current as that is, returns were slow to come. They weren't nearly as automated and--and as easy to get as they are now. But he sometime early in the evening came over to me and I was in college at the time; came over to me at the house and he said let's go for a walk. And we walked out the back door of the house and out into the alley and started walking down the alley. And we probably walked two blocks through alleys and he never said a word. And I could tell he had something pretty serious on his mind.

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And pretty soon he turned to me and he said you know son; he said I might lose this one. He said this is the toughest election I've ever had in my entire career. And I just might lose this one. And I'm--I mean what do you say? I think you'll be fine and--and give him the encouragement but it--I think he knew that the--the size of the Primary field and the split of the different parts of the Party, Senator Mahoney having Labor and--and the Organized Democratic Party, Senator Leroy Anderson having the Farmers Union and Mike Kuchera having a good--

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Evan Barrett: All the polka dancers.

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Newell Anderson: --a good number of people in Billings who--his TV ads. You know they--I think he realized that it was a tough race and--and you know unfortunately the other part of that party, we went back to the house and it was pretty quiet for the longest time, was the assassination of Senator Robert Kennedy. That just kind of shut down the whole election party process and everybody went home. But it was late at night or early in the morning until we finally got to the point where we could say you know I think we're going to win this--this Primary.

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Evan Barrett: It was about a 3,500 vote win, very tight against Mahoney but I--I bring that up because of--it speaks to that issue of what he did, how he managed people. And this was about the time I was starting to get my wings or my fingers a little bit wet in the politics of Montana. And--and what he did was take a whole bunch of really, really good people and he didn't practice the politics of exclusion. He didn't say you were for Mahoney; I don't want you near me. He sorted out who were the good ones and he went and had conversations with them? And he reached out and he said I want you to be part of my team. And he practiced the politics of inclusion and that speaks to that people-awareness and intuition and management of people that--that some of the people that were critically important over the next decade even beyond his term were people he had brought in that way. It spoke I think so well to his sense of vision about moving things.

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Newell Anderson: Exactly; yeah and I think kind of leading up to the--the choice of running for Governor, I know Judge Bennett talked about the prison riot and you know looking at the Governor and saying maybe I could do that. Quite frankly I don't think his family, the children or my mother, really thought that he ever wanted to be Governor. There was an element of kissing babies and schmoozing that just wasn't particularly his style; that we felt was probably a big impediment for him to ever choose that kind of a thing, and a satisfaction of where he was but before he actually went into the race, he called the family together at the house one day--my two older sisters and myself and my mother, and he said you know I've been giving it a lot of thought. And he says I--he says I'm seriously considering running for Governor. And he said I'm going to tell you why. He said I--I'm old enough and I'm mature enough and I'm wise enough to be Governor and he felt very strongly that--that you know he had to feel solid in the idea of actually practicing the--the function of being Governor effectively or he wasn't interested in getting into it.

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He said secondly, he said you know the other part of it is and this is no condemnation of anybody else, but it always meant quite frankly a lot to--to the family--he said I think you people, you folks, the kids in particular are old enough and wise enough for me actually to run and to win. And he said you know you probably don't quite understand what that means right now but he said from my perspective as a father I--I wanted to wait; I knew that I had to wait until my family was grown before I got into the buzz saw of kind of that second tier of politics. It's much different to be the Governor than it is to be the Attorney General in public scrutiny and in public conversation and those kinds of things. And he said the third thing and probably one of the more important things is he said I know what I want to do as Governor. And he said I have like three things in my--in my mind that I know the State of Montana could greatly benefit from and he said I think I have the wisdom and the experience to be able to manage their successful accumulation into the government.

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And he said I--you know with the combination of those three things, he says I think I'm ready and he says I think the times are ready for me to run for Governor. And I--I'm not sure if before that he had thought he had wanted to be or whatever, but he never talked about it. But at that--that night it really kind of confirmed.

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Evan Barrett: Well you know he ended up winning overwhelmingly against an incumbent Governor. And that was a sign of changing times in a lot of ways but also his strength. Again he--all the 10 straight wins was pretty powerful. And let's talk about that substance but and talk to you Brian a bit about this and we're going to focus in on--on four major things if we can--Executive Reorganization, the sales tax, the Board of Investments, investment of public monies, and the Constitutional Convention. There's so much else to talk about but we're going to try to focus in on that, but let me first say that--that Brian is from--from Wisconsin. He ended up with a degree at Berkeley; ended up in Montana through a strange journey to get to Montana and we won't go into that. But nonetheless he went to MSU and got a Master's in History, went back to Madison, Wisconsin and got his Master's in--in Library Science, was at Temple for two years, and then starting in 1993 went to the Montana Historical Society where he was the principal Historical Librarian and after 21 years recently retired. He had a phenomenal grasp of history and he did a wonderful job of encapsulating in this magazine article, 20-pages, the essence of the Governorship of Forrest Anderson.

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And let's talk--which one do you want to hit first, Reorg, sales tax, Board of Investments, Con-Con; what--?

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Brian Shovers: Well to begin with I guess what I'd like to say is that in politics timing is everything. And Forrest Anderson had timing on his side. If you look at where Montana was at in 1968, they had 16 years of Republican rule of the Governor's Office and during that time period Montana ranked 47th in the nation out of 50 States in terms of economic development and growth. The per capita income was below the national average. And between 1940 and 1968 Montana--half of the farms in Montana had disappeared or been consolidated. If you look at what's going on in Butte, the shift from underground mining to open pit mining, the Berkeley Pit is 1955, cut the employment in Butte for miners in half. Butte had just experienced the--one of the worst strikes in the town's history in 1967--'68 and there were just a huge number of unemployed and unhappy people in Butte. So times were ripe for a change. And Anderson actually took a page out of the Republican playbook in that campaign, so he campaigned for--against the sales tax which as it turned out a large majority of Montanans were against, the 3-percent sales tax. They actually accepted a 30-percent surcharge as--

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Evan Barrett: And that was in '71.

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Brian Shovers: --in lieu of it.

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Evan Barrett: In lieu of that yeah. But think about it; yeah, you're right. He did go right at it and he had that--what is perhaps the most memorable and effective campaign slogan in simple words that he ran on--

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Brian Shovers: So it was *Pay More What For*.

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Evan Barrett: *Pay More What For*.

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Brian Shovers: And in addition to that the--there was just lots of turmoil in the country. You know you had the War in Vietnam going on. You had huge civil rights--

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Evan Barrett: In cities and Civil Rights; yeah, sure.

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Brian Shovers: --lots of urban unrest. Montana seemed pretty far away from that but people were still aware of it and there were a lot of changes about to happen in terms of environmental law. In 1959 the Anaconda Company

sold all the major newspapers that they owned in Montana to Lee Enterprises, an Iowa outfit. And Anaconda's power was definitely diminishing; you know you still had Montana Power but things--things were ripe for change.

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Evan Barrett: Well things were being shaken up all around the country but he specifically came in and say with Executive Reorganization very skillfully done, shook up Montana government and made sense out of it.

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Brian Shovers: I mean Montana government up until that point was operating under terms formulated in 1889. I mean this was almost a century before and you know this was a modern--modern society but these--these rules that had been laid down in the Constitution in 1889 were really prohibiting the efficiency of government. During those 16 years under Republican Governors they had created 32 new departments in State government. I mean they couldn't pay for what they had.

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Evan Barrett: Almost 200 entities in the Executive Branch.

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Brian Shovers: Hundred and sixty-one Boards, Commissions, and--and Agencies and his whole pledge was *20's Plenty*. That was another advertising thing that he used.

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Evan Barrett: Well that resonated, too. That was another 70-percent vote.

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Brian Shovers: And so Executive Reorganization was happening at this time in about 15 to 20 other States around the country. It wasn't just Montana. You look at Colorado, Oregon, New York, Wisconsin; I mean it was happening all over the country. And so his whole thing was that this government, you know it's a modern--we're living in a

modern-day world but with a 19th century government. So it's incredibly inefficient. There's this maze of agencies that the citizen has to wade through to try to--try to find out what's going on. There was no responsibility set for who--who was responsible for you know these various decisions. And the League of Women Voters really deserves credit for leading the educational campaign. In 1962 they published a booklet which outlined the problems in Montana State government and Anderson was aware of that and actually you know was aided tremendously by the work of the League of Women Voters who had representatives all over the State. And they were sort of a non-political organization. They were just interested in good government.

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Evan Barrett: Well and if you think about--if you think about his upbringing in the Depression and his going to work in the Roosevelt Administration and the New Deal and his innate understanding that government can do good for people, when you have an ineffective government how do you help people with it? So he went in with an agenda which is to make this government workable. That was in full disclosure was when I went to work for State government was to assist in the development of the Reorganization Plan that he very skillfully directed being put together as Chairman of the Commission. And he played out the politics of that in a--it would take too long to describe because we've done it on some other programs, but he set it up so that it all got done and it was then enforced by the Constitution of Montana, 20 departments. Forget about those 160--180, whatever it was; you know he--by gosh there's going to be 20 and it's--the people said there would be 20 and they put it in the Constitution. And it was a marvelous stroke of political genius in my mind just to get it done that way.

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Brian Shovers: And the key to it I think was hiring Duke Crowley, William Duke Crowley was a Butte boy but taught at the Law School in Missoula and had worked with him in the Attorney General's Office. So he hired Duke to administer the Commission, to be Director of the Commission, and a guy by the name of George [Bozelman] was hired to be his Assistant. And he hired young college graduates like yourself and Sheena Wilson and Diana Dowling and there was a whole crew of people and they actually created I think 22 different reports and--over 1,800 pages of text relating to what the problems were in these various agencies and how they could be streamlined and made more efficient.

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And it--there was really not that much opposition to Executive Reorg and in fact when this Referendum, Constitutional Amendment was put on the ballot saying that by 1973 there will be no more than 20 departments, it passed overwhelmingly.

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Evan Barrett: Seventy-percent of the vote.

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Brian Shovers: Yeah; right.

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Evan Barrett: Seventy-percent of the vote, but there was a persuasion in that, but--. And so he really got that done and Alec Hansen in his discussions with us in an earlier program made the point that Governor Anderson said I may not benefit from this reorganization but all future Governors are going to benefit from what we've just done here today. Now we need to rock and roll here a little bit but do we want to hit on the sales tax--but the investment, the investment thing maybe huh?

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Brian Shovers: So as I understand it, it was Forrest and his--his Executive Director of Reorg Duke Crowley who came up with an idea for the Montana State Board of Investments. At the time all of the State revenues were distributed in banks around the State, local banks, and they were--the State was getting one-percent interest. These local banks were turning around and loaning the money at seven or eight-percent. I mean the State of Montana was getting nothing for these revenues. And so they created the State Board of Investments that would invest the money, you know basically in the stock market and within a year they had accrued over--over \$1 million and that money could be used to--for loans to local governments, for government projects and such and local development, economic development. And today that fund is worth over \$13 billion.

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Evan Barrett: Thirteen billion dollars is being invested by this Board and making money far and above--the rate of return is far and above what most average people get. And historically that has you know kind of set the tone. So Montana right now is seen as one of the most fiscally responsible States in the nation and a centerpiece of their ability to be looked at, our ability to be looked at that way is this Board of Investments and saying wait a minute. We're not going to be taken for chumps here. We're going to take our money and make it earn for the citizens and--and that kind of slipped in quietly in the reorganization process. They kind of slid it in there and didn't make a big deal about it. And the banks I think discovered it at the last minute but it was too late to stop it. And besides, who likes banks? I mean that was--when you're doing battle with the banks it--it's a different ballgame.

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How about the--the Con-Con, the Governor's role in the Con-Con because that was a subtle thing?

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Brian Shovers: Okay and at this time again, there were I don't know 16 other States that were looking at revising their Constitutions and Montana turned out to be one of the successful ones and in large part to the way the--the whole situation was put together. In the language of--there was a Referendum that went on the ballot to establish a Constitutional Convention and this was prompted by some work done by Ellis Waldron. He was a Political Scientist at the University of Montana and--

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Evan Barrett: Author of our bible here.

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Brian Shovers: --and studied the past politics in Montana. And a woman by the name of Marjorie Brown who was actually a PhD student at Missoula at the time in history and her topic--her dissertation topic was the 1889 Constitution. And that Constitution was basically put forward by William A. Clark, the Copper King from Butte and so there were all kinds of--

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Evan Barrett: Special deals.

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Brian Shovers: --special deals for mining interests in Montana. And you know a great fear of two powerful of an Executive, a great fear of the Legislature even, a really antiquated justice system and so both Ellis and Marjorie recommended, you know they said we need a Constitution for the 20th century. You know we've--and as Forrest said in one of his State of the State messages the first year, you know we've landed a person on the moon, you know we've tapped the atom, and we're operating our government with a system that was devised in the 19th century. And we really need to revise this.

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And so they--there was the call for the Constitutional Convention that was widely popular. I think it passed by 70-percent, again of the public, and but they--they put some limitations. They said nobody who is currently occupying a public office could serve as a Delegate. There were to be 100 Delegates. And in the end they elected I think 58 Democrats and 36 Republicans and I think there were 6 Independents. But the brilliant thing that they did upon that election was said that everybody is going to be seated alphabetically rather than by Political Party. So that was a great coup. And the person put in charge, the President of the Convention was Leo Graybill who was a Yale University educated lawyer from Great Falls but a very powerful Democratic politico. I mean he had run for the Eastern Congressional Seat a couple times unsuccessfully but he was selected to--to lead the group and he, you know basically put aside partisan politics during that time that they met. And they removed some of the most contentious issues from--from discussion.

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Evan Barrett: Well and in reality Governor Anderson seemed to sense the need for it not to look political and so he--though I understand was pulling a lot of strings and talking to a lot of people behind the scenes about things, he didn't get out in front.

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Brian Shovers: No; no.

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Evan Barrett: However he was a strong supporter of the New Constitution evidenced by when they had the vote and there was a technicality about whether that was a plurality or a majority that won and he--he with the stroke of a pen signed the document deliberately to stop legal action against the Constitution and said it has passed. And it changed the whole legal tenor of the challenges and we ended up with the New Constitution in--in a large measure because of his fairly savvy legal moves that he did which--both the legal and political moves as I recall it--

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Brian Shovers: Right and he was advised on that by Duke Crowley again; you know he was--he was significant.

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Evan Barrett: Yeah; he always said that Duke was kind of like his lawyer [*Laughs*]. Those guys were terrific together, you know all the back in the Attorney General's Office and then with the reorganization and this Constitutional thing. So--so he was savvy enough, Governor Anderson was savvy enough to not be overt and make it a political document. And it barely passed even that way. But he made sure it passed.

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Brian Shovers: It passed by only 2,500 votes statewide. The 12 urban counties all approved it; the 44 or rural counties all voted against the new Constitution and it was opposed by the Montana Farm Bureau Federation and the Montana Taxpayers Association and of course the--

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Evan Barrett: Anaconda Company and Power Company.

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Brian Shovers: Montana Power; right.

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Evan Barrett: And the powers that be that liked the way things were didn't like that Constitution being changed the way it did but he saw it for what it was worth. So we don't have time to get into the sales tax. We're going to run out of time here but it's very interesting to see that what he brought to the table from his early life and his personal attributes in four years had a dramatic impact in terms of the tax structure of Montana, the Constitution of Montana, the--the Executive Branch Reorganization, the strengthening of the--of the Legislative Branch, the investment of the public's money, the Public Trust, trying to make government effectively working for people; it's a pretty amazing record of accomplishment for someone to do in four years. And maybe it gets back to what we talked about and we've got to wrap it up pretty quickly here is he went in knowing what he wanted to get done. And he focused in on it to get it done.

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Newell Anderson: Yeah; exactly and a lot of people ask do you think your dad would have liked to have been a two-term Governor? And I said you know it's--it's hard to say because it didn't happen; his health obviously was a major factor in his deciding not to be--run for reelection but in--in practice I think you'd have to say that he accomplished what he set out to accomplish when he decided to run for Governor in the first term. And I don't think he left the--the Governor's Office with any regret saying if I'd stayed longer I could have done more. I think he probably could have done more but in that one term I think he accomplished a great deal and was very satisfied with that.

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Evan Barrett: And he was the fulcrum again of which all this change occurred from him and a 20-year period of Democratic Governors, a key portion of which was in this *crucible of change* period; it would not be what it is. The progressive change in Montana would not be what it is if it wasn't for Forrest Anderson. And I think that's without a doubt, so when we say he's either one of if not the most effective and important Governors of the State of Montana I think that resonates well with his story. And so we're running out of time, but I want to thank you Brian

for your wonderful insights and I want to thank you Newell for your personal insights and political insights as well;
thank you.

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Newell Anderson: Thank you.

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Brian Shovers: It was fun.

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**[End Big Change Coming-Governor Forrest Anderson's Unprecedented Preparation for Bringing Change to
Montana]**