

Mike Micone, Mayor of Butte 1969 to 1978, currently Executive Director of Western Environmental Trade Association in Helena, interviewed in his office by Teresa Jordan January 5, 1987. Notes taken at time of interview; not audited against tape.

Tape 1, Side 1

About the first major Federal dollars that came to Butte came in the early 60's through the Economic Development Administration. Butte was identified at that time as an area that qualified because of the deterioration of the community, income levels, and unemployment. This was the thrust in the early 60's that got Butte moving for other Federal dollars, that eventually got it designated in the Model Cities program. Mike is not sure if Butte would have qualified for Model Cities if it had not qualified for that earlier program.

The EDA program gave Butte an opportunity to think in terms of urban renewal. The program was mainly physical brick and mortar type projects; also, studies for opportunities available for Butte.

At that time, Butte relied heavily on the Anaconda Company and on mining. It was tough to envision the ACM leaving Butte. The price of copper was not what it should have been, but the company was making money. There was labor unrest, but except for that, things were pretty stable.

In 1955 or 1956, ACM changed direction from underground mining to open pit. Some leaders could see that the manpower would not be needed in the future to mine ore as it had been in the past. There was a fear -- and the fear proved true -- that a considerable number of people would be put out of work. But, ACM was making an investment in the community and in the work force, even as it was cutting down on the work force. People thought that they would be brought back to work.

Through the 1960's, ACM expanded the pit, purchased property, moved closer and closer to the city. There was unrest, the feeling that the pit would encompass the entire Butte Hill and the Central Business District. City leaders kept asking the Company what its time table was, but ACM never gave those answers. Probably, it couldn't. They did realize that, as they moved into the CBD, the overburden would run ratio of 15 to 1 or so, where it had been running 3 to 1. Also, there were the

costs of purchasing the properties of individuals, so it would be very costly for the Company to keep moving into the CBD.

Q: What are some of the legacies of that EDA money?

At first, Mike can't think of specific brick and mortar projects, though the EDA pumped money into business starts or expansions. It guaranteed loans and actually participated in projects. Mike's family business, first called Chicago Furniture and Mattress and later called Micone's, a furniture and mattress manufacturer -- got one of the loans. The loan was 4% through EDA and 7% through the Small Business Administration. They could purchase another building and expand the operations. Mike thinks also that EDA was possibly involved with Vo Tech.

The idea was to create employment in manufacturing to allow the economic base of the city to broaden. Mike can't say that it was overly successful. There was never the belief that the ACM would NOT be in Butte. Anaconda had started the city, in effect. Butte was its only secure property. It was starting up mines in Arizona, but they weren't proven. And South America had problems. No one ever believed the ACM would not be there.

Further, Butte was limited in the 60's like Montana is limited today. Isolated from markets where it can sell its goods. Most Butte manufacturing was localized. Chicago Mattress Co was very localized. They found it hard to expand even statewide. People needed to broaden their market on a regional basis. There was little interest in believing that Butte businesses could compete on the national market.

But Butte's experience with Federal programs in the '60's allowed it to go through into the 70's with Federal programs.

Q: How did you get into politics?

In 1968, Mike was getting bored. He thought of running for the city council. There were rumours that his alderman was not going to run again for alderman because he would run for mayor. Mike discussed it with him, asked him if he was going to run for alderman. The alderman decided he would run for his seat again. Mike said fine, and dropped the idea of running himself. But some people had heard he was interested in running, and they asked him to meet with them. They talked him into running for Mayor. He ran as an independent because

could be done by giving the police department a professional image. Butte had the image of wide open gambling, prostitution, etc. It was not as bad as was talked about through the state, but it was there. Don Ulrich believed that by presenting a good image -- of a clean, professional town -- the views would change.

Q: That election year also was characterized by a series in the paper on the "Shadow Vote," voters registered who were dead or not living at their supposed addresses, wasn't it?

Yes, that came from an investigation by a newspaper reporter. It was fortuitous that it came right then, though no one in the group supporting Mike had been involved with it. Mike believes that it's true that in Butte's history graveyard names were voted.

Q: Butte had the reputation, back then, as a town where police were on the take, where things happened in back rooms, almost a Chicago bureau type of politics. Now Butte has a pretty clean reputation, and from what I can see, that change started to take place right about this time. Is that correct?

Mike says that you still hear about Butte representatives getting things done through back room dealing, and Mike feels there is nothing wrong with making deals behind closed doors. Butte has the image of getting things done, and it is very successful at that. But there is a difference between making deals privately to get things done, and doing things illegally or under the table. Butte's delegation has always been very successful. Even up through the 70's when it was a minority, the Butte delegation always stuck together on important issues. Other delegations would split. And Butte/Anaconda were very successful in getting support from other delegations.

Yet, when ARCO closed down in 1980, there was very little sympathy for Butte. There had always been jealousy about Butte.

Tape 1, Side 2

Q: How do you characterize how things get done in Butte? Can you give me an example that would make me understand?

There has been strong leadership in the mayor's office. Mike would like to believe he was a strong leader, and there is strong leadership today. He thinks that the things that make you effective are strong leadership,

three people were already running as Democrats. His group realized that they couldn't split the vote four ways, and Mike would not run as a Republican, so he ran as an independent. Beat Tom Powers in the election. The first council meeting he attended was the one where he was sworn in as Mayor. He says his background in politics was not very long.

Q. What were the factors in your victory?

The police had been very much in the news, and maligned. There was high unemployment, many buildings boarded up, a steady deterioration of the community. The theme he was elected on was to clean up the Police Department. He says that maybe they were maligned more than they should have been. But his top priority was to take a look at and realign the Police Dept. There was speculation that he would get rid of every policeman and the chief of police, but that would have been impossible to do. That was the issue that received most comment. "That was the issue that not got me elected so much as got Powers defeated." Some elections you win as an individual; some you win because the other person is defeated by the issues. Mike suggests that his election was the latter. Plus, he promised that he would clean the city up.

Q. What was the group that was behind you, who were some of the individuals?

Father Finnegan was involved, Joe Roberts, Mel Singleton, who had been an Anaconda Co employee, Don Ulrich, John McNellis who was in banking, Dr Lee Misky (sp?), a dentist. When Mike started his campaign, the whole idea was to get a slate of officers to run on the independent ticket. Mike thought, originally, that Joe Roberts would run for mayor. But Roberts decided not to -- Mike thinks that he decided he couldn't afford it at that time -- and Mike ran. Out of the whole independent slate of candidates, Mike was the only one who was elected.

Q. Roberts and Ulrich were involved with a group called PACE at that time weren't they? Was it to clean up the city?

Yes they were. PACE was a movement to morally clean the city up. [This was the time that Fr Finnegan exposed vice and gambling; Butte madam Beverly Snodgrass had big expose in Great Falls paper] It was a sincere effort. Singleton was also involved. They believed that a lot

credibility, and courage. Butte has had that since 1969. Mike had credibility because he had never been in office before, he hadn't had a chance to lose it. And he thinks that he was courageous. From there, you work with the state and Federal delegations, and Butte had strong leaders in the state legislature. Butte candidates had not been successful in statewide races; there was still distrust for Butte. And Ray Wayrenen was the last speaker of the House from Butte. But Butte had strength in the legislature.

Around the state of Montana, politics is somewhat of a hobby. It is NOT a hobby in Butte. Butte turns out voters. For instance, in 1977, the man who Mike defeated for mayor got more votes than all the votes cast in Billings -- and that was for the man who Mike *defeated!* He figures that about 30% voted in Yellowstone County, where about 70% voted in Butte. Butte voters get out because of their history.

Q: Can you tell me a little about the Butte Forward movement in the early 1970's, and then the turn around, after that was defeated, to begin to rennovate the Uptown?

There were so many major fires -- the Penney's Fire, Medical Arts, Gamers, Prudential -- there must have been eight or more major fires in six years or so. That's enough to destroy a community. Even before the actual Butte Forward movement, they had gotten the idea to move the Uptown from the Model Cities program. Butte was one of 150 selected. That was a result of participation in funding through EDA. This is a story of how Butte gets things done. Mike says he has heard this story. Doesn't know if it is exactly true.

Mike Mansfield was majority leader of the United States Senate. Mike Micone was told the story that Butte was not on the first selection of US cities. Mansfield made the decision that there would be no Model Cities if Butte was not selected. Montana had two cities out of 150 of those selected, Butte and Helena. The program guaranteed \$1.5 million a year for each of five years. At that time, Micone thinks that Butte's entire city budget was not more than \$1.5 million a year. The Model Cities program was structured to include strong citizen participation, to meet low income needs. But pretty much, the cities could do what they wanted with the funds. Also, they could use those funds as local grant monies for other Federal dollars. Most other Fed grants gave 90% if the local came up with 10%, so those dollars could multiply quickly. Over the five year period when they got \$8 1/2 M from Model Cities, Mike thinks the city got more than \$22 M total. It was a clean program in

Butte. There were problems nationally, but it was run smoothly in Butte. And Butte knew how to spend the money and that was important. Mike went to a national meeting, found out that Butte was right on target, where many programs weren't -- they'd spent two, three years, and hadn't gotten anything done. In Mansfield's eyes, Butte looked pretty good.

Then Planned Variation came along. Model Cities was an experimental program under HUD; Planned Variation was a further experiment. It selected 20 cities out of the original 150 and doubled the grant. So Butte got 3.2 M for three years. It was a coup on our part. Butte had a good program. There was never *ever* a hint of fraud or buying contractors or other problems other programs had had. Butte was accused by the press, but there was no substance. One reporter at the *Standard* once told Mike he had had a dream where he could see a list of names of who was being paid off. Miek said, what are the names. He said, I couldn't see it clearly enough to read them. Mike said, come back to me when you have names and we'll talk about it then. There were no payoffs. Audits always have audit exceptions: Butte's program never had a serious audit exception. Jim Murphy was the director for five years; Don Peoples was after Murphy, as the program was winding down. Tom Cash was involved, and Mike thinks, Judie Tillman. The Model Cities left a further legacy in that it trained people to write grants, get money, develop programs.

Q: What were some of the concrete legacies of Model Cities?

The Local Development Corporation, Butte Family Planning, the Senior Citizens program, Roselee Manor [Senior Citizens home], the Public Safety Building, Silver Bow nursing home at Silver Bow General Hospital. Silver Bow homes had been built prior to Model Cities. The Industrial Park was through Model Cities, the Port of Butte. Some projects have taken time to really get going. Port of Butte was a big disappointment for awhile.

Q: Can you tell me a little about the Port of Butte?

There was an effort at the time to move goods from Seattle inland to distribute. Seattle was looking for a point. Jim Hodge is now a businessman in Helena, but he pretty much put it together. Mike's feeling is that Seattle sort of sold us a bill of goods. It was going through labor problems and strikes at the time we built the Port of Butte. There was a long strike in Seattle. Seattle promised Butte that

they would move 1% of their goods through Butte, and that would provide 200 jobs in Butte. But shortly after the building was complete and the customs set up, the strike ended in Seattle, and the goods did not come through Butte in the quantity promised. Butte NEVER got the support that had been promised. Dick Monahan (sp?), the present director, has gotten it off the ground and now it's working, but Mike thinks that Butte was used as a pawn in Seattle's labor problems.

Those are some of the things people remember. They say, what did Model Cities leave Butte. You look at the legacy in Helena -- a downtown mall, and buildings. In Butte, it wasn't heavy brick and mortar projects. But there are programs that have survived. The Mall is not doing that well in Helena. In Butte, constructed Butte Community Center; also participated in humane society. The Civic Center may have been some Model Cities money, but Mike thinks it came under the Public Works Act -- that may not be the exact name -- around 1975. Millions or even billions of dollars were put into that for cities that met the criteria, and the criteria included previous federal money, which Butte had. It was a 1 or 2 year program, and Butte got about \$6M. Civic Center was part of it. That was around 1977.

Q: Can you tell me a little about the Metro Sewer fight?

The mayor and the council had the final say, but there was a lot of citizen participation -- neighborhood review boards, the Model Cities board, etc. There was lots of public involvement, more than we wanted really. The atmosphere in Butte during the 70's -- Butte had been living in the past. People had been apathetic. They let things happen to them. But that started to change. There was a new awareness. People didn't just let things happen, they made them happen. That new awareness began which shapes Butte today. Mike is not saying he laid the basis for that, but the attitude began to change. The High Altitude Speed Skating Rink is an example, and that is strictly a local project. Mike doesn't think there are any state or Federal funds involved. The Grain Terminal -- the state helped with that, but it is a great thing. The Business Incubator, which Don Peoples spearheaded. Butte had lots of money in the 70's, but when it had to tighten its belt, it did it. The attitude in Butte is great today.

Q: Can you tell me a little about Butte Forward.

You need to start with some background. We started getting ambitious. We had all these Federal grants, and we thought we could do anything with Federal Grants. We believed at the time that major things had to be done to turn the city around. It couldn't go anywhere if it stood in the way of the Anaconda Company. There was a move afoot to move the Air Terminal. We needed to look at consolidation. In 1973, 1974, we had an ambitious agenda. We took out after those three issues. There was a study to move the airport -- Model Cities funded the study to see if it was viable. If we moved the airport, we'd have land that we owned which we could sell to move the Central Business District. We looked at the possibility of moving the city. EDA was the key administration. We came up with a figure of \$50 million to take care of the infrastructure -- really, it was a full blown urban renewal program. We were laughed out of the Regional office. So we went to see Mike Mansfield. He was always very cautious, but he did what he could. EDA didn't want to get nailed. It made a commitment that we needed a study, done by an uninvolved body, and gave us \$250,000 to study it; said, if you can prove the need and the financial feasibility, they would do it. But they wanted an independent body review. Mansfield said, OK, I'll appoint the commission. He appointed Craig Smith, the regional administrator of the EDA, Jim Rowe, who was originally from Butte, and three other people, all who had ties with Butte. It took one or two meetings for Craig Smith to know he'd been had. American Cities did the study, the committee reviewed it, concluded that Butte could get this job done. So we looked for Federal money, and also for a site to build it on. Things started falling apart about that time on the Federal level. Nixon was out, we had a new president, etc. But we had to go ahead. The problem was that we could never come up with a site. It became a circus. One day Jim Murphy proposed building at the Municipal Golf Course, at Stodden Park. All Hell broke loose; people were up in arms. That sounded the death blow. It was no longer feasible. It had become too political and people were too irate.

You look at it now with hindsight, should the city have moved? Who knows. But now, Butte can isolate the pit from the rest of the town, which it has pretty much done with the berm, and go about its business. Mike still doesn't believe that the Uptown is viable. There is investment there -- maybe if they had spent more efforts making the Uptown viable all along, it would be different today. But at the time, the idea was to try to get ACM going, get out of their road. Mike is glad today that that movement went down. He had very mixed

emotions at the time at the thought of seeing the Uptown razed; everyone who worked on Butte Forward had mixed emotions. At the time, they thought it was necessary.

Mike grew up on the West Side -- 523 W Galena. His folks bought the house in 1935 and he lived there all but four years of his life until he got married and left home.

Mike says that people tell him that he and Charlie Hauswirth were the two best mayors. Mike says it is because they had the most money to work with. He had Model Cities funds and Hauswirth had WPA money. The WPA put all kinds of money into Butte. There was a photograph in the old City Hall -- one taken in 1935 showed the city equipment, a couple trucks. A year later, the amount of equipment had multiplied ten times. And it was because of Federal money. This was a physical thing that made their tenures significant, completely outside their individual effort.

Q: That's true and yet the leader has to know how to take advantage of that Federal Money; you still have to be a good mayor.

Mike says that he was involved with the Montana League of Cities, and he toured around the state. He was amazed at the number of cities that did not believe in Federal Money. Mike's reply to that was great. The less money you take, the more that's left for Butte. People had the idea if they didn't take that money, it wouldn't be used, but that's not the way the Feds work. The money is appropriated, and if you don't apply for it, someone else will get it. Mike learned that at the end of each fiscal year, you could pick off money; the Feds would even call up, say, we gotta get rid of this before the end of the year if you can get an application in here within a week. Mike got lots of social program that way -- money for well child clinic, etc. He had people who specialized in writing grants. They had the basic boilerplate that would go into every grant; in a couple days they could put a grant together for a specific purpose. Applications went before the Council every single meeting. That was a time when things were moving fast. He is amazed that they never fouled up, but they never had an audit exception where money had to be refunded. The programs were well run.

Mike left the city without regret. Well, he says, you always have things you want to get done, but overall, he left without regrets.

Q: Can you talk about city-county consolidation?

The city and county had defeated consolidation before. There was a fear that people would lose their jobs with consolidation, and a fear among the citizens that they would lose the right to elect people. The only law on the books was for a manager form of government. People don't worry about not having elected officials in state and Federal government -- on the Fed level, all you elect is your president and your Senators and representatives. In the State you elect only a few more. But the closer it gets on the local level, the more people want to elect -- county clerk, treasurer, etc.

Two things made it possible to consolidate. The state constitution in 1972 forced every local government to review their structure in 1976 and then review it again every 10 years. That gave a platform to string off into consolidation. Don Ulrich, Dr. Thometz, and Margaret Leary were among the members elected to the city study commission. A city commission was elected, also county, also Walkerville. We got them to have joint meetings and make joint recommendations. Walkerville met with the others, but made separate recommendations.

Then we started to work. Typically, set up a cost analysis. Mike attended as many meetings as he could; he only missed a very few. He lobbied on the virtues of consolidation. They finally came up with a structure -- consolidate, but elect the mayor, sheriff, treasurer, county clerk, coroner, etc. Mike says it was just crazy to elect all these people. He changed direction at that point and fought it as unworkable. You can't elect all these people and expect it to work. But in the end he got behind it, figuring we could change it later. Mike was the only elected official that 100% supported it. He pushed hard. After the recommendations were made, worked for it like any other campaign. Pulled together the same people who had helped him get elected in '69, ran the campaign as if electing someone to office, only this time they were electing consolidation. It won overwhelmingly. Afterwards, he wished they had set it up without so many elected; he thinks it would have passed, because there was so much more support for it than they had expected. And he thinks it has worked. Butte had the 2nd highest tax rate in the state when you combined city and county; second only to Anaconda in 1977. Butte today is 7th or 8th, which is about right for its relative size. Without consolidation, Mike thinks it would be bankrupt. In the period of 10 years, it has proven that it works.

The charter guaranteed that no one would be laid off. There were something like 40 police and 40 sheriffs officers. Public works had 11 in the county, the city 6. Now the county is operating with 5 or 6 total. But the decrease has been through attrition -- through retirement, firing, death, etc. Everyone in the city and county jobs was guaranteed a job. It sold the charter, but there were too many people. Now, he thinks it might have gone too far the other way. There are too few.

Also, the highest tax rate was in 1977. They lumped the budgets together. It has taken time for things to work.

Mike had to go through the rough edges, lots of personality conflicts.

The charter was clear that the boss was the chief executive, and that he had the final say.

Prime example: the county government was notorious in the way it functioned, almost a pork barrel affair. Elective offices would appoint their supporters. To get them raises, they would be appointed as deputies. Under state law, deputies get a $\frac{2}{3}$ of the salary of the director.

Tape 2, Side 2

Chief deputy got, say, 90%; other deputies got, say, 80%. Lots of elected officials had several deputies, and because of the law, there was no way to negotiate salaries. It was killing Butte-Silver Bow. Mike looked into the laws. The laws were not specific, but said you were authorized a deputy. It was vague. His determination was to allow them to have deputies, but only one. It was different in a couple offices, but mostly, they could have one. Office holders felt threatened. They felt that they would no longer have the authority to hire the people who worked under them, that the chief exec. would. That was not at all what Mike had in mind -- he has always believed his directors should choose their own people; he only wanted this change so they would have some flexibility on salaries; directors would still hire their own. But they didn't take time to find out what he had in mind, they just felt threatened. Deputies were making enormous salaries at that time. He ran the proposal through. It was a battle, but he won in the council of Commissioners. The office holders got a petition on the ballot in, Mike thinks, 1978. Mike had to go back to the old methods, put together a campaign for the cause. And he won it. That told

officeholders that the people didn't really believe in what they had been doing. They did believe in consolidation.

Mike has to think that the best thing for the new government was for him to leave. He had been involved in so many battles with consolidation itself and then getting the rough edges off it the first couple years. He was at odds with most of the elected officials. But he knew that the government would succeed if it were given a chance. The County Attorney, Gary Winston, was very supportive. The County Sheriff was very supportive, even though he was the first problem consolidation had when he ordered uniforms without putting it out to bid. The Council made him sweat, but he was still supportive of the government. But others fought it, even though there was no way they could ever go back to the way things had been. They just didn't think; they liked things the way they had always been. The majority of the public, though, *didn't* like it, and supported consolidation.

But with fighting the initial battles, and taking the rough edges off, Mike thought it was time for him to leave. There were still problems, but there was not the negative attitudes there had once been.

Also, Mike was burned out. He had spent 10 years in the battles. He realized that you don't do government justice when you are burned out. He could see that while he was there, there would be a continual fight. He stepped out of the picture, and helped Don Peoples get elected.

Mike thinks that Butte is one of the luckiest communities around -- it has had 20 years of competent, honest, credible leadership. Mike and Don Peoples were very similar in philosophies, and that is important when going down the long term path. Mike was mayor longer than anyone else in Butte.

Q: Can you tell me a little about working with Don?

Don worked for Mike for eight years in a number of capacities. Lots of things Mike implemented were Don's ideas. Mike took care of the political end, Don took care of the technical end. Now, Mike suspects, Don is taking care of both ends.

Q. Can you define your political philosophy for Butte?

To call it frugal would be being charitable. We believed that we had to live within our means. It didn't matter what our budgets were, we

would live within them. We would continually review our revenues. If it was not coming in, we'd cut back. We lived within our cash flow. Political philosophy? That's hard. Conservative, efficient, give people the services they were paying for, make a political atmosphere not only to raise the economic well being of the city, but to raise the posture of it as well. We had a positive attitude -- tried to convey the sense that things were going well even though at times they weren't.

And Butte is tough. Mike likes to tell his friends in Helena when things look rough -- if you had to go through the adversity that Butte has, you could't take it. Butte's been through it. Helena has the government. Billings is growing. Butte people are tough -- and anyone who moves there soon gets caught up in that.

Mike sincerely believes that the political fabric is changing in Butte. He believes that we will see a Republican elected to a major office there soon. He looks for changes and thinks that its great. It's good to have a two party system.

Q: What can you tell me about Don Peoples? He has been so important for Butte, and I'd like to understand how he operates, how he gets things done.

Mike says he doesn't want to blow Don's balloon up too much. If anyone was EVER qualified for that job, it was Don Peoples. For a number of years, he was recreation director, responsible for Parks and Recreational programs. Also, he did a stint at Butte Central working with youth and people. He came back to the city in information and evaluation in Model Cities -- to evaluate programs, develop applications. Spent about four years at that, was Public Works director for Mike. That was a new area for Don, but Mike never had any doubts he could do the job. Then Jim Murphy left Model Cities; Don was made director. Also about that time they started the Community Development Program -- he directed that. So he had a good background -- he had worked closely with Mike and Mike had involved him in labor negotiations. Don became one of his chief advisors because he could get a different slant on the issues. For instance, in Public Works, he would think in terms of what kind of service they wanted, what level of service, and how much it would cost, and then made decisions based on that. If it came to the point where they realized they couldn't fund it on the level they wanted, he would figure out new funding, or do away with it. Usually, he would look for alternate funding. E.g, a program for street repair or sidewalk construction. To

carry a certain number on the payroll, you are required to hire them 12 months a year. So he would look at ways to take people in skating rink maintenance in the winter, put them on sidewalks in the summer.

Don had to make, as Chief Exec, more difficult decisions that Mike had to make. For instance, he had to decide whether to sell or close Silver Bow General Hospital. He went through a half dozen different analysis -- how to modify it, pare it down, close it completely, etc. He gave himself many options and concluded that it would be best to sell it -- and then he had to find someone to buy it. It didn't do any good just to close it because you would have to maintain the building. It was a real tough decision; it turned out to be a good one.

Q: What are his drawbacks?

He has never been an outgoing person. He is reserved, not very forceful, not involved in social gatherings, though he is more involved now that he used to be. He's been able to maintain and build on credibility. He is better liked now than he has ever been before. He can be abrupt. Mike saw him on television recently, during hearings about turning St. Mary's Church into a center for the homeless.

Tape 3, Side 1

A woman was voicing concerns, and the impression Don gave was of being very impatient, even though she had deep concerns. He will probably never shirk that aspect of his personality. But he does have the ability to pull people together to get things done.

He is the focal point of things, whether or not he got them started in the first place. The skating rink wasn't his original idea, but he has become the focal point. The incubator was his idea, and he has spearheaded it. The Mining Committee -- he got MRI in business there. He becomes the focal point. That's the nature of his involvement. This may happen more than it should even, but if you want to accomplish something, you have to ally yourself with more groups that you probably should.

In his first four years in the job, Don was spending too much time at work and on details, involving himself too much. Mike doesn't see how you can be effective and be involved on all the minute details. It burns you out. Don has different ways to relax. He will run 10 miles. But he doesn't completely get away from it all. He needs to learn to relax.

Q: Don seems to be able to get people to work for him. The concept of local government where everyone is snoozing is not what you see in Butte. Instead, people who work closely for him put in a lot of overtime.

Working with Jim Murphy or Don Peoples, you worked overtime or you didn't work. Mike tried to build that sort of trust. If they wanted time off, they got it. If they wanted a day off to go fishing, it wasn't taken as a vacation day. The problem wasn't that they took time off but that they didn't. Sometimes you'd have to kick them out of the office. With others, you can't do it that way. Some people you can. Don can build that sort of trust with people.

Don has given heart and soul to that city. Mike doesn't know what he wants. He hopes that it is not to be mayor all his life. The job can get boring when it's easy.

Mike had about a year and a half when it was boring, routine. And then Butte Forward and consolidation came along. But when things are going well, it can be boring. For about a year and a half, Mike sometimes felt that he didn't even need to be there, things were going so smoothly, and that's no fun, no challenge. But even when things were going smoothly, Don would be working 10 and 12 hours a day.

Q: You helped Don get elected. Do you see him grooming anyone for when he wants to move on?

Mike doesn't see anyone coming to prominence. From the viewpoint of continuation, it's important that someone is.

Q. You were sort of Don's political mentor. Was that a conscious decision on your part?

Mike and Don never talked about Don's future plans and goals. Don had talked some about getting out of government. When Mike decided to leave, they did talk about it. Mike asked him if he was interested, and Don thought about it and said yes. But Mike hadn't made the decision in, say, 1974, that he would train Don.

Q: Are you aware of any opposition to Don?

Mike doesn't see any. Oh, there is always opposition, but it's more from people who just want to be elected to the job than groups who want Don out. He doesn't think that anyone will go after the job until Don decides to leave. Mike is not attuned to any opposition, though he makes the point that he's not in close contact with Butte like he used to be. Everyone Mike talks to says, if Don wants the job, he's there for life. But in politics, life is four years at a time. That's an improvement -- it used to be two years at a time.

The only person Mike sees in Butte who is interested in the job is Butorovich. Mike assumes he would rather be mayor than sheriff. He doesn't have the background that Don People does. But then Mike had no political background when he was elected mayor.

Mike makes the point that he is not saying that the community will not survive if it doesn't continue in the same direction as the last 20 years. Maybe a person shouldn't worry about it. 20 years is a long time, and it's good to change directions.

Q: Zoning was passed in 1969. Was that the first zoning in Butte?

Yes. The development of the ordinance started before Mike got into office. Butte had never adopted a comprehensive plan before. There was the view that if Butte was to develop properly, it needed a zoning ordinance. Developers and realtors opposed it, said you wouldn't be able to paint your house or put up a fence. You heard all the horror stories. It doesn't seem so big a fight now, but at the time, it was emotional, very tough. People would come before the council meeting and accuse us of communism, or of wanting world government.

John Finnegan was a character. He had been upset with the ACM some years before and stopped their operation with a shotgun. He stood at the main gate and wouldn't let anyone through, virtually shut the operation down for awhile. He was opposed to zoning, saw it as a conspiracy to change our way of life. He would talk on and on at council meetings; we'd finally get the floor to someone else and in a few minutes he'd have it again. One night the meeting discussing the ordinance had gone on until about midnight. John was going on and on. Mike interrupted, said, "John, tell me one progressive thing you've done for the City of Butte." John said, "I didn't vote for you." It virtually broke the meeting up. Everyone was laughing so hard. But zoning was very emotional, brought up a lot of fears. The city county

planning board took the lead. There were compromises -- not about whether there should be zoning or not, but designation of various areas.

There were problems after it passed. Somebody would want to do something and they'd forget to get a permit, or they would be refused. At first, every problem had to come before the Council. Finally, they got a Zoning Board.

After Butte Forward, there was a fear that we were losing our Central Business District, and that there would be strip development in Butte, a half block wide on either side of Harrison Avenue for ever. They tried to encourage development Uptown and to discourage it on Harrison Ave. They had no problems with Harrison Ave from Holmes Ave uptown, but didn't want strip development from Holmes Ave south. So they attempted to provide as little commercial development as possible out there. But they lost that battle.

In the past three or four years, historical district designated. If you have a structure in the district, you can't tear it down. Mike has always felt that that may be a mistake Don has made. If you want to have that sort of control, you have to be willing to buy the building. It may be unconstitutional. It's too difficult.

Q: We've been talking a lot about things that have shaped Butte, that have affected it's response to the problems of the last few years. I've had lots of specific questions, but am I missing the big picture? Are there events or circumstances that we haven't talked about that I should be looking at?

The biggest thing that is moving Butte, that is forcing it to look in other directions was the shutdown of ACM. No one believed that would happen. Even though the Company threw out hints all the time. Once it happened, the city HAD to change. So you plod along and try things. There are more failures than successes. But you are trying things. Why doesn't the city of Helena look beyond itself? Because it has the Federal and state government. If the Feds pulled out, or if Mountain Bell shut down, there would be a little grumbling, but nothing that would cause it to change direction.

Mike has been on Helena's Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee of Economic Development -- and they haven't gotten a damn thing done. It's been over three years, and they haven't accomplished anything. They are not under any pressure. The mayor can look and say, we need to

diversify. We attempted that in Butte. But before the Company pulled out, we could say, we have ACM. There is a realization in the community there that they can't rely on Montana Power like they once relied on ACM. And MPC keeps growing. It's a different company than ACM -- more progressive.

Tape 3, Side 2

If Anaconda had not shut down, Mike doesn't think Butte would be in as good a position as it is now -- with the incubator, the grain elevator, the skating rink.

It was not as important to get things going when ACM was there. When it wasn't, they had to do something. And Don was able to awaken people in the community and get them thinking differently. Like what Jim Murphy said early in Model Cities about bringing Butte kicking and screaming into the 20th Century -- really, it was ACM that dragged Butte kicking and screaming into the 20th Century. And it was about time, because the 20th Century is going to end in just a few years.

Q: things have happened in Butte because individuals have made them happen -- like the interstates, MHD. . .

We wouldn't have much we have if it hadn't been for our strength in Washington. MHD is really Mansfield's legacy to Butte.