

Gerry Thompson Sep. 2014 interview on Atiyeh

An interview of Gerry Thompson on the topic of Oregon Governor Victor Atiyeh, recorded on Sep. 16, 2014. Thompson was Atiyeh's Chief of Staff during most of his governorship. The interviewer, James Moore, was as professor of political science at Pacific University and was Atiyeh's biographer. This is one of several recorded interviews between Moore and Thompson.

The interview includes discussion of: Thompson's involvement in Atiyeh's campaigns, starting in 1974; her role as his Chief of Staff; Atiyeh's efforts to revitalize Oregon's economy, including forming the Oregon Economic Action Council and negotiations to repeal the Oregon's Unitary Tax; Atiyeh's relationships with legislators; his respect for diverse cultures; the challenges faced by his family during his governorship; Atiyeh's integrity, leadership, and the impact of his policies on Oregon's economic development; personal reflections and anecdotes about Atiyeh; Thompson's memories of the Atiyeh family, including Tom, Suzanne, Ed and Delores Atiyeh; Atiyeh's leadership style and personality, noting how he could get angry, without having a hot temper; incidents where Atiyeh's trust was betrayed, e.g. with Monte Montgomery; his dislike for his successor, Gov. Neil Goldschmidt; his reluctance to fundraise; and his preference for Pacific University to house his archives; his dedication to public service and the challenges he faced in maintaining trust and coordination among various agencies.

Note on the text: This transcript was made through AI in 2025, with some manual corrections. It has been provided in order to facilitate research, but the text does contain errors and inaccuracies. Users should check the transcript against the recording before quoting the speakers.

-----

[Recording begins mid-conversation.]

James Moore 00:02

So we're recording you in stereo. In archival quality.

Gerry Thompson 00:09

Wow, will that makes me better?

James Moore 00:10

I don't know. So all this eventually will go just straight to the archives.

Gerry Thompson 00:19

Before we get really started? Would you take this back? Would you please sure kept saying I would get it to them, and I didn't do a back piece on it. Probably should. This is the governor. You can see he was about out of office, yeah, and he used to always complain to the superintendent of state police and to the general Miller of the National Guard that they all had badges and all these fancy gizmos. He was commander in chief, and he had nothing. So this is what they did. This is falling apart. This is what they did at one of our cabinet meetings. Killing. Goodbye. Wonderful. Four stars.

James Moore 01:00

Four stars, exactly, exactly, three stars. Next to them.

Gerry Thompson 01:06

That's Superintendent Williams, uh huh. Probably should do a back piece on that, shouldn't I? So they've got names. This is general Miller,

James Moore 01:15

uh huh. He's got a name tag. So that's good.

Gerry Thompson 01:21

Yeah, that's great. Oh, that'd be fun for the archive. Oh, yeah, that's fantastic. That's just fantastic. He's having such a good time. Oh,

Gerry Thompson 01:29

he was having he was just laughing and laughing and laughing. These are wonderful

James Moore 01:34

three stars. That's

Gerry Thompson 01:38

fantastic. Maybe I should keep it and do a back piece on it, huh? Sure, you could

James Moore 01:43

do that. Or I can also take it and scan it so you can see the pictures. You know, whichever one you want to do. Why

Gerry Thompson 01:49

don't I just do a back piece? Okay? I didn't even think about okay, but they probably want the names, yeah, yeah, as many as you can get. Yeah, okay, I will do that. We'll be going through and saying, Okay, who was that in 1985 standing over there? Well, and I've gone through some of those that have been digitized, and I've got some names that I've gotten. One these days, I'll make a trip up there and sit down with them, tell them who some of those people are.

James Moore 02:12

Yeah, I when I interviewed Verne Duncan. He was just the week before, just coincidentally, he'd gotten all his Rajneeshee boxes out, and so he was happened to have been going through those. But as we were talking at the end, he said, Oh, come downstairs. And he had just been going through because of Vic's death, he'd been going through so he has pictures of Vic at his house. And because Vic was in the milk campaign where, you know, the gut milk thing. And so vern's daughters made fun of that, and Vic came over and they said Governor got milks as a picture of Vic and the daughters with their milk. And so he's just scanning. Verne was scanning things and just sending me all these,

Gerry Thompson 02:58

oh my gosh, all these pictures. It was great. Well, I've got my huge Tia box, but I'm not ready part with it yet. Yeah? Well, not the TIA the Raj Nishi box,

James Moore 03:07

yeah, yeah. No, there's, there's a lot. And there's been a lot written about the Roshni. She's but no one sat down and really written the Roshni well, and I'm

Gerry Thompson 03:18

probably the only one that has the whole story. Yeah, les Zeitz and I did collaborate. He did that six series, yeah, six piece or six what hour I want to say? And we collaborated a little bit on that. But yeah, that's as far as it went. Yeah, everybody says, Jerry, you gotta write it. You gotta write it. No, yeah, no, I'm not a writer, and I'm not going to do it, but I will someday turn everything. I made the Attorney General very, very nervous because I kept daily records. I had to almost one but by moment, because I had things happening at home, I had things happening everywhere, so I just kept a running yellow tablet. The Attorney General kept saying, Get rid of those. Get rid of those. Yeah, they could ask for one of the public records law and then were sunk. Yeah, I never did, yeah. But then, after it was all over with, I said, Now, what do I do? And he said, put them in your attic.

James Moore 04:13

Wait for time to pass. Uh huh. Wait for time to pass. Absolutely. So what I'd like to do today is just get started. Okay, so first question I'm asking everybody is, so how did you meet Vic ADIA?

Gerry Thompson 04:31

I met him actually through my husband. Uh huh, one evening, my husband came home from work and said that he'd gotten a call that Senator ADIA, or something like that, wanted to meet with him in the morning. Did I know Senator

ADIA? No, I had no idea who he was, and my husband's name was Al. He met with the governor in the Capitol Building coffee shop. Up that next morning, at which time, then Senator Attia wanted my husband to assist with his 1974 run for governor. So after my husband was a great person to never jump into anything without lots of thought. And after he studied up on Victor, he decided, yeah, he could

James Moore 05:24

do that was this before the primary, before the general

Gerry Thompson 05:26

was this before the primary, because the way he was first jumping in early on, so he jumped in and in the 74 campaign, he was county Marion County chair, okay? And of course, I assisted him, and that's when I first met him. And then in the 78 campaign, 78 after the 74 campaign, Victor, couldn't decide he wanted to run again. He really felt he was meant to be governor, but because of the loss, he wasn't too sure. And he he took, he picked some key people to sit down and talk to. You know what happened? What would you think if I ran again? What do you think I need to do? He met with Al again, and Al signed up for the 78 campaign. And that campaign, I I'm trying to remember what he did for him then. That may have been the time that he was statewide coordinator of all county chairs, okay? And I think he did that in the next campaign as well. That's how I met Victor Tia.

James Moore 06:39

So how closely Did you work with him, or did he know you, especially the 78 campaign

Gerry Thompson 06:47

just through campaign events. Okay,

James Moore 06:53

so why would he know you well enough to say you would be on the short lived

Gerry Thompson 06:58

for Chief of Staff? That's everybody's question. That's absolutely everybody's question. Mine too. Okay, mine too. Throughout the course of those campaigns, I can't remember what year it was that the legislature passed the Oregon ethics law and the Republican Senate minority leader was entitled to one appointment, called me up and asked if I would I was the second appointment to that committee came out of the blue sky. I adored him. I thought he was wonderful. Always. Was very proud to be involved with his campaigns. Never was embarrassed by anything he did, but was shocked. He had asked me to go on that because that my In fact, my husband said, Do you know what you just agreed to do? Well, I served on that ethics commission until I went to work for the governor. Was chair of the committee commission, and out of that grew, I don't know, he must have seen something. I don't know what it was, but he did. Yeah,

James Moore 08:11

it's fascinating. So, by the way, he also

Gerry Thompson 08:14

knew the president of the company I was working for, and I'm sure there had been some conversation. Yeah,

James Moore 08:19

no, there's that kind of stuff in the background, I'm sure. But do you just kind of look at these things? I just found out yesterday that someone I went to college with is now the Under Secretary for Education. Oh, wow, under Arnie Duncan, like the number two person, wow. Like, oh, no wonder I didn't hear from you this summer. Yeah, yeah, because I was out of town for most of the summer. There you go. Dad's moved to Washington. How did they pick to head that kind of thing? So to talk about when he asked you and 70 was 78 before, yeah, it had to have been right after the election. He asked you to be his executive assistant at that point? Well,

Gerry Thompson 09:04

that's an interesting story. The only thing that I heard from him was a call. I was working in Portland, and I got a call

from him during the transition that a member of his transition team would be in touch with me. They wanted to discuss something with me. Well, I was conducting an ethics commission committee meeting, and an individual from the transition team motioned to me to come outside. And I went outside, and he said, We need to meet with you just right away. And I can't leave. I'm chair, and we were in the middle of a natty issue. He said, Fine, call me as soon as you're through, which I did. And he said, I'll meet you then at the equitable tower in the restaurant. So we're sitting up there where you could look out and see all of the State Department buildings. And he said, I'm instructed to by the governor to offer you a job with him, really what? And he said, it's up to you. He said, look out there and see all the buildings and whatever one you want is yours. I said, No, I don't do things that way. And we discussed and talked and talked and talked and talked and I was not coming forward at all, not for any reason. I just simply didn't. I was very, very content and with what I was doing, and I was heavily involved in my company, and just wasn't ready to leave it. And he the fellow, remember, now, this is different times, and it was, you could tell he was very bothered that the governor would be considering me, maybe not because of lack of skill, but because I was female and not powerful in the state, yeah, and I remember these words so well, Jim. He looked at me and he said, Well, you're waiting for me to tell you the governor wants you to be his executive assistant, aren't you? He said, No, in fact, I'm not. He said, Well, that's probably would have been the offer, but we don't think that that's the job for a woman. And I said, Fine, I don't either. And then after that, I got a call from the governor, who was still, this time, he wanted to meet with me personally, and I did that was on the day, how well I remember on a fall day when remember the plane that crashed in Portland, oh, yeah, the big passenger jet right into the river. Yeah. That evening before that plane crashed, I was sitting with the governor, telling him, No, I wouldn't take the job. Driving home. The plane went down, and I was getting all the news reports. I walked in my home, my husband was watching it on TV, and he turned the TV off. I said, don't turn that off. I want to see no. He said, I want to know, what did you What did you decide? I said, I told him, No. He said, You never tell a governor. No, you've just done a big faux pas. You never tell a governor. No. I said, Well, I just did. The governor had said to me, I'll be back to you in two years. And he was that time I went

James Moore 12:41

the person that you talked with first, the governor taught, and other people have also talked and he talked about it. The governor talked about it in his oral history. He talked about people in the transition and also, but also, especially during the first year of his time in office, but they were always around there, what Denny kinds of makes fun of, as as the deciders, the people who are behind the scenes. You know, I don't know who thought they were, the Jerry Frank kind of people. So was this person? Would you put that person in that camp? So not A, not at Atiyeh person, but a, we've got a governor now, and we need to move them in the right direction. Kind of person, okay, that makes

Unknown Speaker 13:28

perfect sense. Very definitely. Okay.

James Moore 13:30

So talk about two years later.

Gerry Thompson 13:34

Two years later, I got a telephone call. I wanted me to meet with him, and I knew very well what was coming. I prepared myself. We had a nice, long discussion. It was after hours in his office, and my biggest fear Jim was Well, I had always been on the peripheral of politics from when I was in junior high school. In fact, I was a girl state or a girls nation, all those things, but certainly not a career I wanted to follow. But I'd had two years to think about it. When the governor called me in again, I said, you know, Governor, we got to sit and talk about this. I like politics, but not I'm not absorbed by it. I've never worked in the legislature, and you need somebody that knows how to champion your causes and get them through. You need somebody that has a powerful voice in the state and and he finally stopped me. I mean, I went on with all kinds of and he finally stopped me, and he said, You can do all of that. What I want is somebody who can be my alter ego, who I can trust when I'm out of state, or, for that matter, traveling in the state, that I know will carry out my agenda and not have a personal agenda, and you're the one for that. That's when I said yes, and we move forward. Move forward.

James Moore 15:01

It's good, because in talking to him, looking at your predecessor, you know he was unhappy with him within like, two or three months, very much so. But he never said it specifically. But people like Denny have said it. It takes him a long

time to work through to the right decision and doing it so that, you know, Lee Johnson was one of the biggest cheerleaders in the 82 campaign, so, you know, so it all kind of worked. But it sounds like when he talked to you, he was very articulate about exactly what he didn't want and didn't want. Oh

Gerry Thompson 15:38

yeah, we talked about what he'd gotten and how it wasn't working, and what he really wanted. And I understood perfectly. I mean, he is the governor, yeah, and I don't care whether it was his chief of staff, slash executive assistant, or any other member of the staff, we're there to serve Him and carry out his agenda, not something of our own. And that was one of my major parts of my job, was to keep some of our key assistants on task. Yeah, you know, they get carried away with their own ideas and own concepts, and no, we're here to do what the governor it's not us who are governing, It's he who is governing, right? And the governor and I had a very good working and I never, ever told him the comment that had been made to me, because I didn't, I knew it would upset him, but I also knew that if he knew that I had been told that they didn't think I was appropriate for executive assistant, he would not have been very happy about that in the beginning. Yeah,

James Moore 16:43

but all things work out. All things work out exactly. So talking about your working relationship, kind of go through what would happen in a day, kind of when he's in town. And then, you know, he's very clear. You know, when you talk about, I need somebody to be my all three go when I'm not here. So, you know, he's wandering off in the Middle East, or, you know, going to yet another roundup or something. So, you know, he always, you know, boy, the state is in good hands while I'm gone, kind of thing. So, so talk to me about a day when he's in

Gerry Thompson 17:17

Well, can I give you the first week? Sure, perfect, because it is kind of fun. One of the governor selling, I mean, he being the typical salesman, oh yeah. He had every reason why I should be working for him, right? And one of those reasons was no more commuting to Portland. I've been commuting from South Salem to downtown Portland every day. I did it for 30 years. No more commuting to Portland, Jerry. Just think about that five minute drive to work and you're in. Okay. Sounds good? Well, the first week I was in Portland for the five days, well, there you go. He also got ill with the flu, and I can't remember, but it was during the first week. Don't remember which day he calls and leaves and talks to me and says, Jerry, we need to call a special session. The previous session, they had passed a bill, and I can't remember the issues completely, and neither could Denny, but something in the bill was worded wrongly, and it was going to cause big time trouble, and they had to call everybody back in to correct that it could not be done administratively. So Jerry call a special session. Okay? I hang up the phone and I'm thinking, how do you call a special session? So I got a hold of Bob Oliver, our legal assistant, and I said, Bob, governor just called one special session. What do we do? He said, Well, we issue a proclamation. I said, do you do that? Yep. He said, I'll write the proclamation. We'll get it out. Great. That's perfect. No problem. Next thing that occurred was that he was to have dedicated the brand new state revenue building, and of course, he wasn't going to be there. So guess who has to go over and do it? Never dedicated anything in my life.

James Moore 19:05

You're looking around for the champagne bottle. Yeah, I didn't

Gerry Thompson 19:07

know it's gonna be champagne or what it's gonna be. I went over and dedicated the revenue building and got that done. And out of that came another interesting story. But that was my first week on the job, just One surprise after another. I mean, I was in the boiling water from the minute I entered that office. So

James Moore 19:27

had you had a sense that when he said, I need you to be my alter ego and run things? Had you had a sense that was going to be exactly like that,

Gerry Thompson 19:35

not exactly like that, I knew it was going to be every day was going to be something, yeah. I mean, it is a bo Hillary job, I'm telling you, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, I was attached to the governor with what I called my umbilical

cords. Yeah, in those days, the cell phone, yeah, was a battery box that sat on the middle of my the floor of my car. Which, by the way, was an unmarked state police car that I drove in with zillions of buttons. That was so the Governor and I were always in touch, and I always had to check in and out with the State Police so they all knew where I was every minute of the day. I had a beeper at home. I had an emergency telephone that was only linked to the governor and the state capitol. There was a fourth one. I don't remember what the fourth one was, but we were literally, literally linked to each other. Yeah, 24 hours a day. Yeah, I knew that it was going to be a pressure job. And you're asking about, you know, on a day when he was in town, a day when he was in town was was busy. It was busy. But I have to tell you, the days didn't differ that much. Okay, I sat in on virtually any but any meeting he had. He wanted me to be in his office with him, no matter who he was talking to, unless it was something very personal, and then he'd always key me. So I sat through all of those meetings which took me away from my desk time and, of course, our cabinet meetings, all of those were just kind of routine items. Of course, the agency heads were channeling through me, not because they were instructed to do that, but it just seemed to them that's the way they should go in order to get to the governor anything of priority when he was out of town. Then I was really busy. Then I was really busy. I mean, not to say that I wasn't busy before, but busy in a different way. It was dealing with problems, and every day I ended every day with a briefing memo to him. It was just something I did of my own accord. I firmly believed. I never wanted my Governor anywhere and be caught off guard, and I never wanted him to think that I had made a decision without his knowledge, and I did have to make decisions. I mean, when he was gone, government couldn't stop, and he, as you well know, he did a lot of big time travel, but at the end of every day, he got a briefing memo that told him of basically what had occurred that day and any decisions that had been made, and anything that he needed to be alerted to, and anything that might be out there in the horizon, lurking and apt to appear, right? And I wish I'd saved all of them, but I didn't, yeah, I think he did save some of them, particularly during the Rajneeshee time, yeah, but that's the way he and I operated, probably entirely different than a chief of staff does now,

James Moore 22:46

yeah, but it's so much of it is. It's the flavor of whoever the office holder is, and the Chief of Staff Exactly. It's what works for them. One thing, when I was talking about Chief of Staff, kinds of things, might have been with the governor himself. We're talking about, you know, Lee Johnson, and then you and how comfortable you felt with you, and it's in the back of my mind, because he was then talking about his role with the Reagan administration, with the Columbia boards and that sort of thing, and talking with Andrew card and things like that. But what it must have been like in the Reagan White House, when Howard Baker, the former Senate Leader, comes in to be the chief of staff. And, you know, apparently it worked, but

Gerry Thompson 23:30

you just wonder, wow, oh, I know. Oh, how. What on earth was big ego sitting there? How would that work? Yeah, and that's the one thing I was always very I knew, I can't say I knew I viewed my role as behind a door type person, make things happen for him, make sure it's always understood, carry out his agenda. But I was not the front person, and never would allow myself to be unless I was forced into it, and sometimes he'd force me into it, but yeah, only then, yeah, only then I I cherished our relationship, and I have to we had my view. I don't know where his head was, but I viewed it as an excellent working relationship. I really did. Yeah, there was one time he'd been gone on a trade mission. I don't know how many weeks he'd been gone, Jim, but he'd been gone a long time, and he's gotten back and he was going through everything on his desk. I always say quit that message. Um, and I was working. We both worked late every night, and they were the only the two of us in his office. And I don't know if you knew the configuration of the office or not, but his office, the hallway came down this way from the public office through these doors into the private area, and his office was here. Door in between us was a little office, which was basically his scheduler, and then my office, and then we had doors that went all the way through, and I'm sitting at my desk, working away and and pretty soon he came in and he said, You know, I've got a feeling that there's been decisions made without my input or without my involvement. I don't exactly remember how you said it, and I was shocked. I said, you talking about me governor. You see, I just feel like you've been, you've been running government without me and a camera. But the insinuation was, you're stepping out too far. Yeah. Oh, Jim, I was crushed, because that's the one thing that I always guarded against, and I didn't say anything. He went back in his office, and it wasn't 15 minutes later, he came back in and he said, I was just really unfair to you. I said, No, Governor, if you feel that way, I need to know I wasn't in the mood to discuss it with you, because not only did you catch me off guard, but you crushed me. I've worked very hard not to do that to you, because I know how you feel about it. He said, I know you have and he said, You know, I think I'm just being super sensitive because I've been out of the office so much. And he said, life is going on without me. I said, But Governor, that's what you hired

me for. And I said, if I overstepped my bounds, I need to know that. Yeah. He said, No, you haven't overstepped your bounds. I just overstepped mine, and I apologize. And he walked over and put his arms around me and hugged me, and he said, we allowed to do this. That's the kind of man he was. Really is terrific guy, yeah,

James Moore 26:56

an amazing boss. So let's talk about some of the specific big issues you had, a little recession problem. Talk about how so the way I understand his governorship, basically his first year was kind of him being governor, and then from there until the end, seven years later, it was basically governor and recession fighter at the same time. And then in 82 you know, as things are deepest, you know you're calling special sessions in an election fall, not even an election year, you're calling in the fall right about now, you know. So there's, it's, it's always, how do we balance things? How do we deal with the legislature, you know, and throw in fun things like unitary taxes and things like that. But it's, it's, it's just a constant drum beat. So I assume that when you started, that was already a big deal. No, it wasn't okay, because there was a first one, and then when you look at it, there were three recessions during that three year period, and so there was dip out, so he was to come in, and it was an

Gerry Thompson 28:17

out. Well, it wasn't, it wasn't as impactful. Let's do it that way. When he first went into office, there were a lot of what was going on dealt with natural resources and those type thing. I mean, there was the energy issue, there was the LCDC issue, there was the spotted owl issue. You can go on and on and on. And I kind of came in on the tail end of that, okay. Now, the energy issue had subsided. There was that was no longer. He handled that very well, and that went by the wayside. Was okay. We knew we had natural resource issues that timber industry was beginning to fail. Had not yet, but was beginning to fail. Salmon Fishing was failing. That was kind of the first two years I was in. There was the cleanup of that. One of the things, things that the LCDC, you know, every county had to present their plans, and that was dragging down. It wasn't getting done. And he was frustrated by that. When to get that. He felt like, if we were going to move forward and bring new industry to Oregon, that process had to be completed. There was too much uncertainty. So there was a lot of effort put forth on that, trying to encourage all of the local government entities to get their planning done and get it in and get it approved. That's what, in my mind, sticks out those first two years as probably the most. Prevalent though, we were beginning to really begin to feel the punch. We knew it was coming and it was going to happen. And then that took us, then to the next It was almost as if all that was forgotten. It wasn't, but it almost the whole focus shifted to economic development. We've got to change the economic base of this state. It just has to happen. And up to that point, prior to the governor's election, economic development was a joke. Oh, yeah. I mean, they all talked about it, and they had a department dedicated to it, but frankly, department was a mess. Yeah, they weren't accomplishing anything, and everybody's putting all their money on tourism, yeah, and we knew that isn't going to change the economic tourism is fine. Yes, we'll take anybody's money, but we're not Las Vegas. It's not lasting. Yeah, it's not lasting at all, and it doesn't do anything to support what needed to be supported. Education was suffering. Everything was suffering, and it just progressively got worse and worse and worse. It got really bad, really bad. Yeah, but that was the and I and I'm going to give you this. This is and I just quick, I got boxes out there, Jim and I'll go through them. I just have been so busy I haven't done any Yeah. And I thought, may I be ready for you. But I wasn't sorry. That happens. Well, the governor got in the way. You know, your timing wasn't the best. Exactly. This is, I thought you might like this. This is

Unknown Speaker 31:45

the debates. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, it's fantastic. And

Gerry Thompson 31:48

this is my it's not the entire working book, but I would help formulate things for the debates, right? And for the moment, this is the best I can offer you. Yeah, that's fantastic, but I thought that would give you some background. Great. And so is this

James Moore 32:05

for me to look at and give back or straight to the archive? Take

Gerry Thompson 32:09

it fantastic. Now, there may be things in there that someday I wish I kept, but I'll know where to find the archive. Yeah,

but I don't know if you plan on interviewing chat or not.

James Moore 32:18

Yes, fascinating, because, by the way, I was, you know, getting all sorts of connections in

Unknown Speaker 32:24

there. Yeah, glad you were there.

James Moore 32:27

And Ted, when I saw him, was a little reticent. And I really want to talk to Ted, partly because of this, but partly because he and the governor in the last few years have developed just a heck of a bomb. Oh, wonderful. It's just like, wow, I need to, we need to talk about this. So he's a little reticent with me. And then I heard from Denny, and Denny was saying, okay, he sent me this whole big thing about memorial service. Oh, Ted was in great form. I told him that I could show where he almost won the 1982 election because I made a mistake. And he said, I'd love to have a beer. So different reactions there. Whereas with, with Bob Packwood, I had a great, positive interaction with Bob back with and Elaine Franklin was funnier than hell. She was yes, because I said to I said to Bob, you know, the governor Tia asked me to write this. He said, put in any dirt, if you can find anything. This needs to be a complete picture of the time and him exactly and everything. And I turned around and Wayne Franklin said, Oh, maybe Bob will ask you to write about his Bob didn't hear that, and she knew that, but it's like, oh, scandal, good.

Gerry Thompson 33:37

Yes, yes. Well, Ted was wonderful. You know, we had to work with him. Work with him in the legislature, and I loved Ted as a person, yeah, Ted was a wonderful, warm person, personality. At the memorial service, we got whisked away. I didn't even get to enjoy the reception at all. We were down in the press room for a radio interview with OPB. OPB was thrilled that Ted did it, because Ted would never allow himself to be interviewed for anything. And there was Ted and he was just a few sick I mean, it was just what a great man and how they become great friends and and Victor never held any animosity towards Ted. He had to get the job done. He had to get elected, yeah, but he had to get the job done, but he never held any animosity. Yeah. And

James Moore 34:27

I don't think there was a sense until the last couple of weeks that, wow, we might actually win this thing huge. And so there's, I know, I'm not, I haven't talked to Ted, but I know on the Democratic side, talking to people, there was a sense of kind of piling on. But it's like, you know, elections do what elections do.

Gerry Thompson 34:44

Well, the only thing that they felt was piling on is when we, when they accused us of calling him dangerous, yeah? And they thought that was piling on, yeah? That probably came closest to dirty campaign tactics. There was right in an Oregon way, yeah? But the truth is, I mean, Denny would always excuse that and say, No, we didn't do it. Was that little old lady, and she didn't say he was dangerous, that his ideas were dangerous. But frankly, that did turn the corner. Oh yeah, did turn the corner. Absolutely this. I'm sorry I got you off subject. No problem. This is his last inauguration, and again, it was my working book putting together. I thought maybe you might it just kind of shows the process. Yeah, you may not even care, but no, those is great, but that's there. That's great, which then takes me to the economic development. And I'm going to be right straight out. Honest with you, I was very concerned about economic development. The staff and the governor had been concentrating so hard on all the natural resource issues they were trying to Band Aid what was failing and not having enough time to move forward and move toward the future, and the governor, I want Late, Late one night again, we're sitting there talking, and I said, Governor, you know, I'm very concerned that while we are captured by a hall of catastrophes that are going on, we're not moving forward. We're not pushing out. And that's when he shared with me that he he really, really wanted to bring new industry. And he had in his head what industry he wanted to bring. And he just was trying. He said, like all things in politics, timing is of the essence. And he felt the timing was almost there, but not quite yet. The McCall hangover from come visit, but don't stay, which literally was, I don't know if you've gone in and watched his some of his stuff on the Historical Society. I mean, he really did that, that he publicized that everywhere he went, yep, but for God's sakes, don't stay he'd say, well, people laugh about it now, but it was serious. Oh, yeah. And that was our reputation when we go to Governor meetings across the nation, that's what we would get thrown in our face, and they were laughing at us. Other states were going out

trying to find new industries and and they would throw, don't go to Oregon. They don't want you there. Yeah. So he and I sat and kind of brainstormed Late, Late one night, just the two of us, when we thought timing would be right, and how well it would be received, and how do we make it, make it attractive and make the citizens of Oregon comfortable with it. And in other words, how do you bring them along right after they've been proud of this? Come visit, but don't stay right? So that's when I started scratching my head, and I went out on my mission that he assigned me, and put together a rump group, and we developed what we call the Economic Action Council. I think it was, and there's actually a proclamation,

Unknown Speaker 38:18

let's see that the top one.

Gerry Thompson 38:23

This is the No, the other one, the other one, I think it's in that one, Oregon economic development, no, this is the, I don't want to take up all your No, no, you're doing great. Give you that one right back. Where did I see it? We put out a dress. It must be in this one. Nope, there's actually, it's in one of these notebooks. Because I saw it. It was actually a directive for the Oregon Economic Action Council, and we put together a group, we began to brown brainstorm, and that proclamation, it's in one of these books, Jim, but these are some of the paraphrasing the points in that Action Council. And we went to work. And, I mean, did we ever go to work? We had economic action committees in every county. We traveled the state. We took economic, economic action tasks to all of education community colleges. I mean, even I was traveling the state carrying out the governor's agenda, because he wanted to get this going. And once that was going, he started his trade mission activity. And. Yes, he suffered a lot of very severe criticism. I mean, they just came at him from all blocks and tried to prove him wrong. And that was the other thing about him, you know, he knew, in his mind it was right. We didn't do polling, we didn't do any of that stuff. He just knew it had to be done. And he was in his last term, and he figured he could expand whatever strength he had in the state to get it on the right road. That Action Council is the one that kicked it in and changed the whole personality economic development agency. Off we went and had great successes. I want to tell you, it was incredible what we did. There's no way you can convince people how incredible it was, because it's just too far out there. But it was unbelievable.

And I say we, of course, the governor was the front man, and he was doing the hard work, but once he got him halfway there, he'd hand them off to me. And in fact, NEC, we finished the negotiation right down here at Eva Hills Country Club, and NEC is the one that prompted us to repeal the unitary tax. I can remember driving down the freeway. We'd been meeting with them at a Japanese restaurant in Portland, and we got in the car, we're driving home, and on the way down, I said, Governor, what do you think we're going to have to repeal that unitary tax? He said, Well, it's sure in our way. I said, are you willing to repeal it? And he said, I don't know, Jerry, we got to think about it. I don't know how much I can I don't know how well it would be received when we're in the straights that we're in. Next morning, he walked in the office. He said, Okay, Jerry, let's get ready. Get the legislature ready, let's take the steps to repeal it. We're going to repeal the unitary tax. And he called Morita at Sony, and he called the folks at NEC, and said, I'm going to call special session, and we're going to repeal the unitary tax. And I feel like I'll deliver it to you, and if I deliver it to you, come to our state? Yes, we will. So that gave him a little more leg up with the legislators. Yeah, in fact, without his knowledge, I that's I kept driving home. Do you want to be responsible for NEC and Sony saying they're not coming to this state simply because, but we got it repealed, and because of Victor's credibility, integrity and a man of word, they trusted him. They hung in with us. They were ready to go to another state, and it took us a while to get that process done, but they waited for us. You know, that's the incredible side of that man, yeah, and that were, that's what he was doing on those trade missions. You know, they the media and the opposing party would always say, Okay, would you come back with this time? And he tried to explain to them, that's not the way you do it, yeah, you have to build the trust. You have to build the reasons to come and you have to prove to them, well, you spend all this money and you go over there and you don't come back with anything. They just, oh, they were unmerciful. They really were, but that's what he did, and they were long lasting relationships right to the day of his death. Yeah, absolutely. We had the Taiwanese calling. We had the Japanese calling. We had the Chinese calling. I mean, those were all those long lasting, we really trust that man relationship. Yeah.

James Moore 43:52

Need more of those. Yeah, one thing that I'm going to look at pretty carefully is, so what has happened to those trips since then? Because you get the sense now they are go over only when there's something to sign trips, you know, we

started immediately with gold, with gold in their very first trip, you know, with them and, yep, oh, do this way. It's like, okay, whatever. I'm here just to introduce you, because that's how you do things.

Gerry Thompson 44:16

But don't know they're to get that ego in the way. Yeah, no. We all know that Victor had an ego. We all have ego. Oh, yeah, but that ego didn't get in his way. No, right? He was truly interested in people, and he he really believed in building those relationships. Yeah, it's incredible. It was incredible to watch him work. And it was such an honor to be, maybe say the leg man. I don't know, I don't know how you'd describe what I was doing, but it was just incredible. And I would know that in his mind, he had these things rolling, and he really did. He he really Jim. I don't know how to explain some of this stuff, but he just really didn't share a lot. Yeah.

James Moore 44:59

Going to ask you that, did you get a sense there was a kitchen cabinet? You know? No, it was friend Jim, or was it just, you know, angst? And then he'd sleep on it, and he'd come to a decision, and off we go.

Gerry Thompson 45:13

No kitchen cabinet. Yeah, I don't know if anybody has told you the story, and I'm not even sure I should tell it, but I'm going to, I'm going to because I'm still angry about it. Very proud they've gotten the man elected. This would have been his 78 campaign, and to celebrate the election, he had all of his key campaign people took big dinner in celebration at nandils and Beaverton. Now, see there's another mark of the man, you know, exactly, humble,

James Moore 45:49

big deal, yeah, from the car dealership and next to the hotel. Yeah, yeah, exactly.

Gerry Thompson 45:55

And I wasn't sure we were going to go, and we didn't bother to get a room reservation. And finally we decided we'd go. And Al kept saying to me, I've got to go. And I'd say, Yeah, fine. Well, we were still like getting our reservation. We got stuck down in the basement in some little makeshift room that had literally a lockable folding wall. Oh, very nice. Yeah. And we're in there just relaxing, getting ready to go up for the banquet, and we hear all this conversation next door. Well, the conversation next door were what Denny calls the deciders, who were not deciders, by the way, oh yeah, that's facetious when we say that they're plotting. Okay, we got him elected now, and you going to go do this, and you're going to go do that, and he when we'll convince him he has to do this. And, wow, we're in now. We're ready to go. And I'm sitting there doing a slow burn Now, mind you, I have nothing right, nothing to burn on this one. Yeah, but I'm getting angry. And I looked at my husband, I said, is that the way it works, they're going to own our governor that we work to get elected. And he was disgruntled, too. For years, we never told the governor, never, ever. But those were the very people that tried to own him that would have been typically called the kitchen cabinet. Nobody owned Bucha, nobody and and lot of those people were angry at the governor now they had an open door to him. Oh, yeah, and he politely listened to him, but they didn't know him, yeah,

James Moore 47:36

from talking to him about it, because I asked him not, not this, this direction, but I came at it another direction. But he talked about how it was a surprise to the business community that this Portland businessman was not in their pocket

Gerry Thompson 47:53

because he just wasn't the Portland Business Community.

James Moore 47:55

Oh yeah, no, there's a, there's a broader thing here. But he, he talked about some expectations that simply weren't met. When he began to make decisions and said, you know, we're gonna do this, and that there was an expectation there would be a kitchen cabinet. And he, like, met with some people once or twice and said, I don't think so. Or

Gerry Thompson 48:15

or to appease them, I'll say it differently, yeah, to appease him, yeah. We call, we call him in for a brag brown bag lunch. Now tell me that doesn't put you worried

James Moore 48:24

Exactly. And again, he knows his catering, yeah,

Gerry Thompson 48:29

and he would listen, yeah. Very politely. He would listen, yeah. But nobody, and I can say that yeah, as easy and as truthfully as anybody can. Nobody owned that man, and if they tried to, yeah, bye.

James Moore 48:47

One of the things that we don't have much in the archive, and he did not talk about in much detail, was, I mean, we got his legislative stuff, but he was the rug guy. And he had to have learned stuff in a TF brothers, you know, I can see, for instance, what he would learn there would make perfect sense on the trade missions. You know, this is how salesman was doing. Do it. You're just basically, Hi, I'm here. This is the quality of what we have when you're thinking about it, come to us, that makes perfect sense. Here's why it's good for you, here's why it's good for you. But the leadership kinds of things, you know, keeping things in himself. But then, you know, there's you and him as a team. You know, where does that come from? And that's going to be hard to get to

Gerry Thompson 49:39

well, so I was talking to somebody I had been with Dick for maybe a year, and and Jim, I'm going to tell you, I'll probably say it 1000 times until you tell me to quit saying it. We couldn't have had a better working relationship and when we understood each other completely. Except, you know. Tax isn't a good isn't a good example, but I'm going to use it. It's not a good example, because it's not the way it worked. But for example, sitting in a meeting, we knew the unitary tax was our biggest speed bump. Had to do something about it. Fine. Typically, I don't know if he assumed that I was thinking like he was, maybe he thought I was too much of his alter ego. Or he just, it was like he went from point A to point Z, yeah, and z will be delivered and in the and I'm trying to find everything in between, yeah, and working hard at it, yeah. And, of course, he's busy, he's on the run, he's going, he's traveling. That man was, Oh, wow. I don't know how he he ran us all into the ground. I have to tell you honestly, he did run us into the ground. And he kept right on going, Yeah, but I was talking to somebody about that, and I said, you know, I just am having trouble somebody I really trusted. And they said, Well, I got a book you need to read how to understand the Arab mind. And I wish I still had it. I gave it to somebody. And you know, it is a different culture. Now, remember that when we prepared him for his Mid East trip, we went back to Washington, DC, and he was briefed by the State Department, by CIA, by everybody. That's when they were taking people hostages. He got audience with four of the Arab leaders, long audiences. I mean, one was supposed to be 15 minutes, and we got worried that he wasn't coming out of there. We didn't know what had happened. He firmly believed that he understood those people, and he firmly believed that he could help Washington, DC. He really did. Oh, yeah. And you know what? I think he could have helped them because they obviously liked Vic or they would not have spent all that time with him, way beyond anything that had been scheduled. He understand, understood the Arab culture. I mean, he was first generation here in this country, and had been there as a youngster. He was very hurt when he got back. And I'm calling all over Washington, DC to schedule time for the governor be debriefed. No interest, yeah, no interest, yeah. But see, their minds and their culture really are different, and I now believe it is an inbred thing. Once I read that book, I was fine going, Yeah,

James Moore 52:34

because he doesn't talk about that that much. He, you know, he talks about the fact that he knew like, six words of Arabic, yeah? And when he checked him out, there basically most of them dirty words, yeah, yeah, yeah. But he doesn't talk about that that much. You know, there's pride in going back to his father's village and those kinds of things. But there's, you know, that that's a that's a really good lead to follow. It's a really good lead to follow. One of the thing that I started doing because, you know, names, Atiyeh names pop up in just the weirdest places. So I started a genealogy of the Atiyeh family. Oh, great. And so I'm following things through. So I have the manifest that has a six year old Vic coming back into the United States after he visited his father village in 1929 you know. So I have all that kind of stuff, but one thing that he when we were talking about the black commission, Hispanic commission, and all that kind of stuff, and he talking about, you know, why in the neighborhood I grew up, it was just everybody. Was just Americans. We're all from all over the place. So I had the 1930 census, and you go through and it's, it's, you know, there's a bunch of people from Syria, because that's his family, and there's Japanese, and there's German, and there's Swedish. Yes, it's exactly the neighborhood

Gerry Thompson 53:55

he grew up. We're all living in that neighborhood. We're all human beings. And you

James Moore 53:59

just look up that single page from the sentence, isn't that interesting?

Gerry Thompson 54:04

Isn't that interesting? Yeah, so there's but he really didn't look upon anybody being a minority. Now we the Americans, classified it that way, but that wasn't in his head, right? I swear to you, that was not ever in his head. Yeah. And it did bother him when people Wow, it's just like when the economy was so bad. He said, Jerry, if they quit talking about how bad it is, it'd get better. What do you mean? Vic, he said, it's a self a self fulfilling prophecy. All we want to do is talk about how bad it is. Let's talk about how good it can be. Yeah, he was right. That's what we tried to swing over into this Economic Action Council, yeah, how good it could be, absolutely. That's the way he led me, right. Which, when I look back on it, it's interesting. It wasn't. Here's the task. It. Was make them stop talking about how bad is. Let's talk about how good it can be. Oh, now I got to go back and figure out where that applies.

Unknown Speaker 55:07

Exactly.

James Moore 55:12

On the economic side is the temporary economy is shifting. Talk about some of the triage kinds of things, because there were, there were several things going on. First of all, federal lands were basically, people were saying, well, there's a limit here, and the spotted owl is coming on at the tail end of that. But the spotted owl didn't cause this. The spotted owl is kind of a exclamation mark at the end of this. But a big thing that's happening is that the corporate buyout trend is starting. And so all of those towers that used to have corporate offices and headquarters in Portland, they're all moving to everywhere else, the South, primarily. But so the timber industry is being bought by people who say, Well, I used that to buy this thing, so I got to cut down a lot of trees to pay off the debt. So what, what kind of triage, kinds of things were you doing with the timber industry? Was it focusing on, we got to retrain people? Was it focusing on opening up for timber lands? I mean, what kinds of things were you? Were you kind of

Gerry Thompson 56:21

better person to discuss that with you would be Pat Amedeo who was assistant for natural resources, but I would tell you, the thing that gets forgotten is that, as the timber industry began to fail, then so did the funding for education, right? So we were putting a huge focus on education. We were putting a huge focus on federal regulations that were hurting us. Yeah, I can't Pat may know more about this, honestly than I. I don't recall that we were terribly concerned about corporations buying up some of those. Tim, there were still a lot of the timber barons out there doing that.

James Moore 57:06

It kind of takes into, well, it's almost the end of the governor's second term before things finally, you know, the medicos finally go out.

Gerry Thompson 57:15

Well, yeah, we had the Georgia Pacific's and all of those. But, but that wasn't just because of the timber industry. It was because they were kind of on the those that I would dealt with were kind of on the other end. They received the product, and then it was what they did with the product, right? And that's what was changing, yeah? Now, granted, the product was being diminished, but those that moved out of here went where they could grow, what's the tree that they grow so fast, where they could grow those, yeah, for the paper products. And, matter of fact, there's still a stand up over in Eastern Oregon, which we started as an experiment when we were in office. But that's more what was happening, in my mind, is that the the use of that product and obtaining that product more quickly. And granted, we had over harvested. Had to wait for that the old growth was depleted. But at the same time, corporations were looking for something they'd get their hands on more quickly. And I think that was a lot of that change, along with all the federal regulations that interfered.

James Moore 58:23

Okay, good, yeah. Pat Amedeo happens to live in Santa Rosa, where my wife and I go occasionally. Oh, wonderful. This next spring break, we're probably going to say, Oh, that's wonderful. So

Gerry Thompson 58:33

yeah, she came up for that. Did you get to meet? Yeah? Well, I think she shot me an email and said, Yeah, I said that I wasn't going to be around but to find you and good, good.

James Moore 58:43

You know, we connected definitely, so still sticking with economics. What I mean at the height of that 82 recession, 82, 83 ish recession, 81, 82 83 ish recession, I mean, employment is above 12% and just stuck there. We've got interest rates that, you know, I tell my students about it, they just can't believe it. I know I graduated from high school in 77 and my grandmother gave me \$1,000 Benjamin Franklin savings certificate because in the Great Depression, yeah, you needed that, yep. And because I went to Stanford, I spent it by the beginning of my second year. Because, you know, that's a lot of Oh, I know, I know. But you know when I tell my students, well, I had this, this, this saving thing that my grandmother had given me, and it was getting 19% interest. Oh, yeah, but then you have to explain, but inflation is here, so it's basically the same interest you're getting now, but you have to do these magic things to me exactly, and they just

Gerry Thompson 59:52

blows their mind, yeah, just blows their mind. Um,

James Moore 59:54

but so, so during that time you. Uh, how, how much time would did you spend on? Let's plan for the future. The governor talked about specifically that he wanted to protect and increase the amount of money going to higher ed, and he wanted to protect and increase the amount going to economic development so did that take a lot of time to make that because the legislature is not going to like that everything else is being cut?

Gerry Thompson 1:00:30

Yeah, I would say, last four years, in fact, I've often said all of his efforts as it related to natural resources kind of got laid aside and forgotten. Not that it wasn't still going on, right, but there was no focus on that anymore. Yeah, no media focus, no legislative focus. If I'd been Pat Amedeo, I would have been very, very frustrated. Yeah, he had it. He had installed that huge energy commission, alternate energy, commission on which my husband sat, and they'd come up with all kinds of alternative energy. And, I mean, it was a he kicked off his first term with that, and it was a big deal, yeah. And it's amazing to me how that just kind of not that it wasn't still going on. It just nobody was paying attention. It was all about, what are we going to do for this state, right? How are we going to get out of this, and how are we going to protect our economy and still change it? And I would tell you mostly that that and the Rajneeshees consumed us the last four years. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Now, when I say that, that means the special sessions, exactly everything economically related? Yeah,

James Moore 1:01:41

just all the time. Did you work directly with the legislative leadership? Oh, yes. So you because you know you were in all those meetings.

Unknown Speaker 1:01:52

So is the liaison. So what

James Moore 1:01:55

was that like in the stress of that second term?

Gerry Thompson 1:01:59

You know, it wasn't as stressful as you might think it was. We had Vera Katz, we had John Kitzhaber. We had Ed Fauci Lee. I mean, they kept changing on us. Grant and Karen's Fred heard Who am I leaving out? Larry Campbell, anyway, they kept changing on us. But, you know, I never felt, I never felt the animosity. Sure, they were looking at things, you know, how can I better myself politically when that's the nature of a political person, but we met, all of us. Met weekly

with the governor when he was in town and when he was not in town. They met with me. We would discuss the issues, why they were important. And here's my observation of the governor. Legislators would come into the governor with this, what they think was a brilliant idea. I'm not talking about leadership. I'm just talking about because the first order was Jim Campbell, his good friend and Tom Gaught, they always got put through the governor period into subject. Any legislator that went talk to the governor got put through the governor regardless, even if he was in a meeting, we'd ask them to wait, because the governor would want to see them. So they respected him for that. They've never worked with a governor that had the door open to both R's and D's. Really hadn't. I mean, they kept saying to me, are you sure? Yes, I'm sure. And then the new legislators, as they would be elected, they come in to me and say, Is there any chance I can visit with the guy, certainly when, when's your time? They just be, you know, like, really, yeah, that's the governor's rule around, yeah. Anyway, where was I going? Or we would meet the governor often. When he'd listened to their ideas, he'd listen very politely, and then he'd start talking to them, and the idea would suddenly change, and they'd walk out there was their idea. I watched that gym so many times I couldn't believe it. I just kind of shake my head. Wait a minute. That isn't even what they came in with. But the governor would just, in his quiet way, turn them around, and they'd walk out with a new idea that they thought was theirs and offer to go. It's putting it very simply, but that's the way he would do it. They respected the governor. And again, it goes back to that. It sounds so trite Jim, but it's so true. It was that respect and integrity that they knew he held, the trust they had in him that I cannot tell you of any. There was one time and I got, I've got to find the Doodle for your folks. But we were working, I think it was one of the last tax measures we were working on. We had to come out with something to balance the budget. And we had, that was when Ed Fauci Lee was here. Now he was the problem. Yes.

James Moore 1:04:57

Oh, very clear. And I. Can do always Yes, always

Gerry Thompson 1:05:02

the problem. And he had all the leadership. He had a the president, the speaker, the minority, the majority leaders, all of them back in our little conference room and on the whiteboard he drawn one of his doodles, big this time, railroad track that went I got the dude. I just haven't dug it out yet. He drew on the board this railroad track that went like this. And this was his way of illustrating that they weren't meeting. And he had it. He had to bring the railroad track together. And then he drew this, and called it the golden spike. And he had to get that golden spike in there to bring those together. And when he could move Ed Fauci, that'd be the golden spike. And he did, finally, yeah, but he kept that on that whiteboard, and every time they came in, they had to look at that whiteboard. And I know that he was doing that for psychological reasons. Sounds mundane and dumb, but I know he was doing that for a psychological reason. And that's when, I'm sure you've heard Denny tell the story. When every time we come out of those meetings, and we met and we met and we met, and every time we came out, the press would be waiting, yeah, nope, no decision, yeah. And then he finally got this put together, it walked out, no press, no press. That was, that was, that was the incident. Yeah, that's the only one. I'm sure they went back. I'm sure they went back and said, Oh, you can't believe now what Vic wants, right? But they worked with it. We couldn't have done all those special sessions. Yeah, and the governor would not call a special session unless he had the agreement before we went and he and he would not allow any outside issues to even from his own party. Yeah, it was constrained and it was going to go, and his idea was to have a 24 hour special session, right? And we did, but not always, yeah,

James Moore 1:07:11

yeah, there's one. One of them ends up being a record special session for length, 34 days, or whatever it is, yeah,

Gerry Thompson 1:07:18

oh, I know. I know incredible. I mean, Jim, I know I sound like Pollyanna here, but I'll tell you that man was something else. People just even to this day, don't know how great he was in his own quiet way.

James Moore 1:07:37

So did you ever travel around the state with him?

Gerry Thompson 1:07:39

I traveled around the state and went to Taiwan for him, he begged me to go on his Middle East trip, and I wouldn't go with him. And the reason I didn't go with him was because, in those days, women were not well received over there, and

I didn't want to be hanging that burden on him. And he kept begging and begging, and I kept saying, Yeah, I just don't think it's wise. Did not go to Japan with him, though I knew all the Japanese and when they came to the States, I would work with them. It was better that I stayed home, plus we had the Rajneeshees's going, Yeah, exactly. And I was really in the forefront of that, and just very we were both very uncomfortable about when I went to Taiwan, the governor stayed in town. Yeah, we just felt more comfortable having somebody there, because that was getting very, very onerous. And yeah, and it could have been disastrous, absolutely, but travel around the state with him, yes, but not a whole lot, not a whole lot. I didn't travel. I'd usually send staff out with him, and I thought was good for staff to get out, oh, yeah, to see what's really going on. Don't get captured in that building. You know, did attend all the governor association meetings with him, but then I was a key staff person for him, it was meeting with everybody and following through on what was left and those I enjoyed. And he was very good, very good. The governor's all appreciating.

But I got to tell you one funny story, the first trip I took with him to National Governor's meeting, which was usually held late January, early February, in Washington, DC, and of course, they always had their big dinner with the president and had lawn with us, our security and Lon [Holbrook] didn't leave. And I said, Lon, don't you going with the governor over to make sure he said, Well, no, he takes a taxi. I said, he does what. He takes a taxi. Well, instantly my vision is this Yellow Taxi pulling up in the right and I'm thinking, Oh my gosh. Well, what was happening is that all the other governors, the. Minute they got there, they either rented a limo or they flew their own limos in. Oh, a lot of them flew their own limos in, uh huh. And I said, No, no, no, I don't care how humble this man is, you don't go to the White House in the taxi cab. So from that point forward, we rented a limo a minute we get there, Lon [Holbrook]'ll drive him around. That's great. That one almost embarrassed me exactly,

James Moore 1:10:28

exactly your middle east misgivings. You need to know that when Queen Elizabeth went to Saudi Arabia, she was declared to be a man in the Saudi religion, but see that, yeah, because the you know, they couldn't, the king couldn't shake her hand, no nothing. So she was declared to be a man. And they had a great trip, and it worked out fine.

Gerry Thompson 1:10:52

No kidding, isn't that interesting? Yeah. Well, that was my biggest fear. Plus, they were taking anybody of any notoriety, is hostages and trying to exactly get money. And before the governor left, he made me sign that if he were taken hostage, which he doubted he would be. But he said, if you're not do you do not let anybody negotiate for me. No way. I said, Vic, I can't do that. He said, Yes, you can. And he said, You can't let Delores either. Oh, thanks. But I understood where he was coming from.

James Moore 1:11:31

Delores, let's shift a little bit to family. So did the family go visit him in the office? Did you see them much? I mean, he in the 1992 stuff, and a little bit with me. He really talks about having missed raising his kids. And, you know, Delores was a great political spouse, from his point of view, but she was so happy to get home.

Gerry Thompson 1:11:58

Oh yeah, one of the first words were so good to be home. Yeah.

James Moore 1:12:02

So what was the family? Did you see those kinds of things in the office? Did you socialize with them? I mean, yes,

Gerry Thompson 1:12:17

in our day, there was nothing to support the governor's wife. There was no money. There were no funds, no nothing. And I don't know you maybe uncovered this, but most governors, when they were elected, would raise money, and they'd call it kind of their slush fund. It was just this pot of money over here. And every governor is too fast, yeah, but every governor up to Vick Atiyeh had done that, both Republican and Democrat. Yeah, they found out Governor Tia had started that Lee Johnson did and blew out of the water. Vix said, give the money back. It's not worth it. So there was nothing to financially support anything that Delores Attia did, plus they had to rent the house from the state of Oregon,

Unknown Speaker 1:13:04

which raised the rent. Yeah,

Gerry Thompson 1:13:05

yeah. And only, only half the house was heated. I mean, I can give you all kinds of stories on that, but God loved Laura's. She would entertain all those legislators when they come to town, and she'd have to do it in shifts two days in a row, put out all the wonderful food she'd have. One girl helping her. We did have one little, tiny room. It was almost like a closet, and we made that Delores room, and she had a volunteer. We found a volunteer for her to help her write thank you, notes, organizer, trips, that kind of thing. And so Delores was in and out, not, I can't say frequently, but sporadically. And we always enjoyed it. When she was there, she was always very presentable. She went way beyond she'd have Easter egg hunts for all the staff's kids. When my daughter got married, she had a big shower for her. When my daughter went to college, she pledged the same sorority as Delores. So Delores gave her her sorority pin to be initiated with. When my daughter got married, Vic did a proclamation that named her the princess of Oregon, and his her husband, the prince, and how the prince had to answer to the princess. And it's a beautiful proclamation. It's just wonderful. Delores went on several trips with us. I have to tell you. You hear horror stories about governor's wives and how they get in the way and get demanding. You've

James Moore 1:14:49

been reading too much about Virginia's governor. Yeah, my wife has been fascinated. Oh, yeah, those stories. Oh, I know

Gerry Thompson 1:14:56

what? Isn't it amazing? But I have to hit goes. On and went on here in Oregon, big time, but not Delores, not Delores. In fact, I'd have to pick the phone and call her and say, Delores, you doing okay? Stop by the office when you're in. Is there anything you need? She was she was tremendous. She obviously understood what she had to do, as the wife did to bickia support him the kids. I don't want to say they got cheated. He loved his kids. I mean, if they were to show up at the bill in the Capitol building, they were in his office right away. Yeah, starting grandkids. He was thrilled to start having grandchildren. And their daughter. When she first married, they bought a little tiny house. I mean, a little tiny house here in Salem for her and her husband to live in. Loved it. Loved having her here. But I think he did worry. I think he worried that he did. But you know what, until he was governor, it probably wasn't as crucial as you might think. A lot of men were long hours, oh yeah, yeah, and more than five days a week, and it probably was no different. I mean, if he still was in the retail business selling rugs, yeah, he would have been there six days a week no matter what. And I think, but I think Vic worried about it more than he had to worry about now, since his death, I've spent a lot of time with Suzanne. She's probably having the hardest time. Yeah,

James Moore 1:16:37

no, that's what I've heard from basically everybody. Yeah.

Gerry Thompson 1:16:42

I mean, I one night, I was getting texts from her, why am Wow, she's going through all of this stuff, and it brings back memories, and I think she's having but she was kind of a daddy's girl. I think Tom has his own life going. You know, Suzanne's divorced, and it's just very unsettling for her. Yeah,

James Moore 1:17:02

yeah. It's interesting. I was talking with Suzanne, talking to her several times at the service, but I was talking right in the middle of the rotunda, right where it's roped off there, and Vernon Duncan's daughter came over, and Suzanne had talked about how cool it was to be in college. And people say, what did your dad do? Yeah, but you know, well, the politicians are corrupt. It's like, no, they're not. You don't know my dad. And and Verne Duncan solder came over and said, Oh, that's exactly what happened to me. And exactly you don't know my dad. These are straight arrow kinds of guys. There's a neat little bonding moment there, yeah, right in the middle of the rotunda.

Gerry Thompson 1:17:49

Well, they're both good kids. Yeah, I love both Tom and Suzanne, and they've always been very good to me, and I'll stick by him to the end. And I loved his brothers. His two brothers were just absolutely delightful. Yeah,

James Moore 1:18:00

yeah. Ed is sending me his only copy. He wrote a book about the T brothers. Oh, did he, yeah, before, just right when they retired. And so he's sending his, Oh, that's wonderful. So I'm going to scan the bejewes out of it and get it back. That's

Gerry Thompson 1:18:13

wonderful. And it's a doll. I love, Doc Ed, yeah, I feel I felt bad for him. I really gave him a lot of extra attention. It's got to be hard on him to have lost his twin brother and now his other brother, yeah,

James Moore 1:18:26

yeah, he's 92 but still, yeah, that's one after another,

Gerry Thompson 1:18:32

yeah. But anyway, back to Delores. As a first lady, you couldn't invest from a staff viewpoint, right, right. No demands, yeah, no pushing, no scolding us. No. I mean, she did her thing over here that she needed to do, and the rest was up to Governor Atiyeh, Jim, I just can't tell you how lucky I was worked for, for those people just incredible. And, you know, we were considered family, Denny myself, and lon Holbrook and any family occasion we got. I mean, he truly did. I mean, he always said, you'll always be my family. Well, yeah, I can say that to a lot of people too, but I think he truly did, yeah, we were always part of whatever. Yeah, exactly. That's how close we all became, yeah. I hope Delores does Okay. Bless her heart. Yeah, I gotta get up and see her, yeah. Have you had any opportunity? I mean,

James Moore 1:19:29

I just was able, when I would go over and talk to him, you know, kind of way. But she was always kind of in the back. She had an attendant with her, you know. So

Gerry Thompson 1:19:39

that's too good, so nice to know her. Yeah, perspective, I don't know, but yeah, but I think that's past. Yeah, I'm afraid it is. I'm afraid it is, too bad, too bad

James Moore 1:19:54

we're been going for about an hour and 15 minutes here. So let's do one last. Thing, and then

Unknown Speaker 1:20:02

can call it, okay, whatever my time is, your time,

James Moore 1:20:05

okay, I find an hour and a half is good, just for me, processing for us. When I get done with these things, it's like, Oh, more questions. Good. I have more questions. But also, you know, that's, that's a good chunk of time. I There's been references, just by Vic obliquely by others. I think you might have the service. He would lose his temper behind the scenes, apparently. But you know, there's this, there's this nice guy here. What was, what was losing his temper about? Was it the short thing, like when he came into your office, and 15 minutes later came back in and said, I went too far. I mean, would was that blowing off steam for him?

Gerry Thompson 1:21:04

No, what did you see? I would not say frustration, yeah. I wouldn't say lost his temper. Okay. Not ever, okay. I never saw him lose his temper. Okay, angry, yes, so okay and visibly angry. Now, I'm sure there were times where he was angry inside, uh huh, but he had this innate ability just to not show it. But I'll give you an example, Ron Schmidt. Do you know who Ron Schmidt is? When I mentioned his name? Well, he badly wanted to be involved with the T administration, and he did everything in his power to become involved. And we hired pious Schmidt westerdall to do some of the commercials, right? And it was his last we were having budget problems, and I can't remember if the governor was actually running for for re election or we were about to run for re election. Anyway, it was right in that area, and Ron Schmidt called me and said he wanted to meet with me and a perfect idea for the governor that would not only lock in his election, it would make him a hero to the citizens of the state. Of course, I want to hear it, so I meet him. I meet him in Portland at a bar, and Ron and I sit and visit, and he lays the plan on me. And I say, Ron, it's not gonna fly. Oh yeah. He said it will. He said, You know, once Vic realizes what it'll do for him, politically, he's got no choice.

Jerry, he's got to do it. Ron, well, you mean, you're not gonna let me present it to him. You're gonna withhold it from him. I said, No, I'll make him aware of your suggestion, but it's not gonna fly. Ron, I'm telling you right now, don't waste your time. It is not going to fly. Well, then Ron got angry at me, and I don't blame him. I mean, he wanted to present his idea, and he believed in it, and I'm becoming the wall, which, by the way, I never was. I always passed on to the governor in my daily briefings, everything, I mean, from the scuttlebutt on up. Finally, I said, Okay, Ron, you know you've done some work for us. You deserve to meet with him. I'll call you and let you know when you can see him. I did. Ron showed up, went in the governor's office with him, and Ron lays out his plan, and His plan is very simple, Governor cut state employees salaries 10, 10% across the board, doesn't matter who they are, and that'll free up money to solve your budget problem. And people in Oregon who are sick and tired of state employees will think you are the hero. Silence. I mean absolute silence, and I literally watched his eyes get blacker. He got up from his desk chair, stood up with his hands on his desk, gritting his teeth, literally turned around to the back of his desk chair, leaned forward, looked Ron right in the eyes, and he said, Don't you ever run your pink elephants in front of me in my office again, meeting over, that's the kind of anger, yeah, not so not lose temper, right? Anger, right? And he was angry. Nobody was going to use state employees for political purposes, right? And that's the kind of gamesmanship that Vic would not tolerate. I warned Ron, that was the end of that, yeah, and pretty nearly the end of Ron, yeah,

James Moore 1:24:48

no from other sources and a little bit from from the oral history, yeah, Ron, basically, kind of put over on the side. Good. Ron. And find something else to

Gerry Thompson 1:25:00

do that's right, don't bother us. Yeah, exactly. And I'm telling you, I the way I describe that is not intense enough. I mean you literally. Yeah, could see him, and on more than one occasion I witnessed it, you could just see his body, his eyes, everything change.

James Moore 1:25:20

So when you saw it, if there's a it was focused, you know, to the wrong in the room. So there's a clear message, oh, boy, okay,

Unknown Speaker 1:25:28

yeah, no doubt, no doubt one way or the

Gerry Thompson 1:25:33

other. No doubt whatsoever. Okay, and if you don't get the message, then there's something there with you. It was very clear. Yeah, very, very clear. Then I saw another instance that that to this day still bothers me. We knew funny things were going on over at safe, and the board was all gubernatorial appointments, and Governor had a couple of his good friends on there, and the ag and his was Dave from Meyer and Stan long who came and met with me behind closed doors, and we were getting ready to do the infamous raid, yeah, yeah. And they came over and meet with me, and they said, You asked us to go over and take a look at what the funds are, which we did. I mean, I knew in my heart, having come out of the insurance business, I knew in my heart that they weren't being honest with us with what the reserves were and that they had excess reserves, and that if we were going to do the safe rate, I wanted to be sure that what I thought was true. And on the quiet the AGs office had been investigating, and they came back and behind closed doors, said there's some games being paid played. I think Jim I'm not positive. I think it was Oregon log truckers association that Monty Montgomery represented, and they had some kind of a special deal with safe where they were kind of running their own workers comp under the auspices of safe and I'd have to go back. I mean, it was a very complex thing, and the AGs office beginning to tell me that Monty Montgomery had been playing some games. Now, to shorten the story, Monty Montgomery could have gone to prison after the investigation was completed. Oh my gosh, Monty Montgomery, one of Governor's friends. They said, yep. I said, we've got to tell the governor. So I got them into the governor's office the next day, and Stan and Dave and myself are sitting there. It was, I was hard to do, Jim. It really was hard to do because of the trust that man had in everybody. Yeah. And I said, Governor, we have some bad news for you, and I've asked Stan and Dave to explain it to you. And then they did. They went through again. The room was absolutely silent, total different. Body, head down, body, limp, and he just sat there, and finally raised his head and he said, That's not the Monty Montgomery. I know we said we know that Governor, but you need to understand this is real, head down. I mean total, absolute. What would be the right word for a man who saw showed very little intent, very little

emotion. He was devastated that a guy he had trusted did that to the governor. Yeah, and, you know, another Monty Montgomery story. We're trying to pass. We're in a special session, and Monty Montgomery is having a big fundraiser down in Eugene that this is before all this happened, and the governor stand there. This is one time that John kitsager and Ted koongoski were giving me a bad time. They who had promised they'd be with us on this very short, quick special session. Word got to me that they were holding out, and so I immediately marched down to him and said, Yeah, come on, guys, you promised. Well, obviously they're playing a game, you know? And I got concerned enough because we wanted end it that night. Yeah, I got concerned enough. I got back to my office and I called dick. Oh. Down at Monty's office and late at night, and somebody asked when I asked up to Monty. So I finally got money on the line. I said, money. I have to speak to the governor right away. Well, he's busy. I said, Monty, this is Jerry Thompson, do you understand I need to speak to him? We have a special session going, and I need the governor now. I must have hung on the phone for 15 minutes, and I understand when the legislators moving, they're moving. Yeah, exactly. Finally, Beck came on the line and and we got it resolved. But later Monty Montgomery was bragging to everybody that he made me wait on the line for the governor. And besides that, he could beat the governor. When the governor came to visit him, he could make him wait 30 minutes out in his outer office. In other words, look at me. I'm the kingpin. Never told the governor that part of the story, yeah. But then this other happened, yeah. There was no need.

Unknown Speaker 1:30:57

Yeah. A devastating

Gerry Thompson 1:31:00

governor. Yeah. Was horrible. But see, I was part one of those deciders too.

James Moore 1:31:05

Yeah, exactly. It's interesting because, because the Pacific universities involved with the archives and that kind of stuff, and Denny is, you know, former fundraisers. And our fundraisers are an interesting, weird world, you know, God bless them all. But there are friends that the governor has really close friends. Goes down to Southern California, you know, all that kind of stuff. And so there's, there's names there that you know should be money for, for the projects. And the governor is really reticent on saying, Well, you can call this person and that person and so, you know, can't ask him anymore. But just kind of wonder, there's those kinds of dynamics going on.

Gerry Thompson 1:31:54

There could be, but I have to see the names, and someday I'd love, I could. I'd be happy to stand help you guys with that, but there could be that. But also I have to he was the worst fundraiser there ever, ever, ever, ever, worse than me, and I hate it, yeah, but he, I mean literally, we'd lock him in a room and say, here's a list, and you're not coming out until you called them all. Because there are certain people that would only Oh yeah, yeah, unless they heard from him, yeah? Who he hated it, yeah. And it might be he just, he's embarrassed to tap people, yeah, yeah. That was my concern about what we did to raise money for the Memorial Fund. I kept going through my head with the governor, approve of this. With the governor approve of this. And then finally, I decided, wait a minute. He gave us authority. Gave Denny me authority, and we got to have money, and, and, and I don't know why it came to me, but in the middle and I to the night he died, it came to me. Wait a minute. The Oregon State Capital Foundation, of which I've been a member since its inception, stands for everything the governor loved people of Oregon, the history of the Capitol, the Capitol building itself, preserving all that. If we could use their 501, 3c, and while we can't use it as a pass through, Why could they not collect the contributions, and if there's excess left, commit to us that it would be used for some similar situations, like we do for the governor's portraits. Yeah, well, the minute I mentioned it to him, I mean, they were right there. Yeah, right there. Yeah, sure saved us. Because I'm not calling

James Moore 1:33:39

it's like having to raise private funding for the President's inaugural and stuff like

Gerry Thompson 1:33:42

that. Yeah, yeah, well, and in those cases, often you still got your core of the big givers. Yeah,

James Moore 1:33:49

the election just happened to

Unknown Speaker 1:33:52  
do anything. Yeah.

Gerry Thompson 1:33:56  
Governor lived too long. Exactly. We didn't have any of those left. That was the thing that was worrying me, because I, you know, that's the first thing that went through my mind, is how we're going to raise the money. All of us good ones are gone. Yeah, unlike Senator Hatfield Jerry Frank, picked the phone up to six people, and they raised, I mean, their memorial was in it cost over way, but like, like, \$35,000 Wow, we're not even close to that. Yeah,

James Moore 1:34:24  
it's funny. The people I kind of connected with, just because I was there doing television early. So it was the loan for cemetery people, and Vic and Barbara were the kind of the honorary people on their board and stuff. And it was just really fascinating. One of the one of the loan for cemetery people had been a staffer back in DC, and then come back here, and she works for a finance firm, or something like that, and she was talking about the difference between this and the Hatfield one, said the Hatfield one, just then Jerry Frank was like seven rows in front of us instead of was it. Very frank production, totally,

Unknown Speaker 1:35:01  
you know,

James Moore 1:35:02  
tickets order this, that of the others just walking in here. This feels so much like a vickate production. Well,

Gerry Thompson 1:35:12  
I don't know if you heard me, Sarah, but I declared it his last open house. Yeah, absolutely, absolutely, as far as I was concerned, that's exactly what he would have wanted. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. I mean, yeah, of course. Mark catfield was Jerry Frank. I'll say it right straight out. Yeah, I got Jerry Frank stories. Tell you about the too interesting world we live in. Jim. It is, it is, okay, I'm gonna give you something else. Okay, well, you got something else? Nope, nope. I don't know if I've been any help to you. Have been great, but you know that I will always be available to you. Yep, this I thought was probably something you may not even have. Uh huh, toward the end of his last term, the pressure came on to get a sales tax passed. Yes, do tax reform? Yes. Governor was opposed sales tax period. End of subject and somebody, I'll tell you that Jerry Frank story behind that one, Jerry Frank, and I don't speak anymore because of it. That gives you any clue. Anyway, he finally called me in his office and he said, You know what, I've got nothing to lose. And if, if a sales tax plan can be designed that meets my requirements, I'll be willing to go out with it. Okay? So we went to work, and we designed exactly what you wanted, and then the campaign began.

James Moore 1:36:44  
Yep, it was something else. Yep. This is

Unknown Speaker 1:36:50  
all the documentation. There we go. Wow,

Gerry Thompson 1:36:52  
the bill. What we did, fantastic. The only thing it doesn't have is the campaign material being in the governor's office. I never can be. I kept it completely separated, but this will excuse some of my handwritten stuff. Those are notes to myself. That's great, and you do not need to scan it. I have no reason to keep it, other than I'm very proud of the work we did on it. But who cares? Yeah, who cares what I did on it? Yeah, no, that's that's fantastic. It even has some of our statistical analysis. You might be able to use it. You might not.

James Moore 1:37:25  
Yeah, no. Handwritten stuff is great. The very first, the very first thing that I use from the archive with one of my classes. Two years ago, I teach parties and elections classes during election years, so all my students are just in campaigns right now, off doing stuff. Oh yeah. And so two years ago, presidential the conventions were the first two

weeks of school. Oh my gosh. So the first thing I did is we, you know, met class. The next time we met, we went to the archives. And there's all of Vic's stuff from his conventions. Yeah, you know, which is buttons and pictures and fun, the handwritten notes that he kept, and especially the handwritten notes, because he was, by God, gonna get a neutral Israeli view into that platform, never successful at all. But just, just that was with all this stuff here, you know, this is, this is basically what he wrote out to go, go in and talk to the platform committee and and, you know, the students eyes kind of get big. It's like a, a Republican thought like this, and B, wow. You know, this is, this is amazing. I'm going to teach a Middle East class for just a couple of weeks, and we have a short January term, and I'm going to use some of that in that I need now done enough stuff here. Yeah, I can shake things out from his Middle East trips to

Gerry Thompson 1:38:44

using the client. And you know when, when was Reagan and Ford? You know that he was supporting Ford? Yeah, oh, absolutely. And he got in real trouble with the Reagan people here? Yes, absolutely. One of whom was my best friend, Diana Evans, who's even mentioned in Reagan's books. And she just couldn't understand why bicker. Tia couldn't support Reagan. Yeah, but, boy, once it was over, oh yeah, there he was. There we go. Yeah, it's our guy. I'm with him, and that's the right on Air Force One. So there you go, yes, and you know that I was supposed to go on Air Force One with Oh, didn't do it. Oh, that was just my way. I just didn't feel like I was entitled go governor, enjoy, yeah, but bring me some men to watch. It's funny.

James Moore 1:39:27

I can't remember whose description it is. It's either his or I can't remember if Denny was with him. I can't remember who it was, but someone who's saying, you know, we landed and people just started filling their

Gerry Thompson 1:39:36

pockets. Yeah, that had to be back, because Denny wasn't on the flight with Yeah, he wasn't on the fly with him, yeah,

Unknown Speaker 1:39:41

very funny, yeah.

Gerry Thompson 1:39:42

But he was like a little kid. I'm the one that called him and said, you want to go home on Air Force One? Oh, you're kidding. I said, No, I'm not kidding at all. Governor, do you want to go? Absolutely. So I immediately got on the horn and said, Yep, he's accepted. And he had. Past clearance and do all that. He was like a little kid, yeah? He was so excited. Yeah, you know, here's a governor, and he's excited anyway. That's great. This can go to the archives too, if you like, okay, yep, that's

James Moore 1:40:16

excellent, excellent, excellent. So, good, good interview. And, well,

Gerry Thompson 1:40:23

I hope so. I hope I just don't talk too much. No, you're doing great.

James Moore 1:40:29

And it's, it's, I mean, you've seen how I interview. We just kind of, I want you to tell stories, and, you know, Guide to where the stories need to go. But that's, that's my

Gerry Thompson 1:40:41

box of all my yellow page notes from the time I served him. If you want, you could, you could not decipher them. They're in not my own brief hand, and they're

Unknown Speaker 1:40:52

but you know, you want to give. My

Gerry Thompson 1:40:54

goal was to transcribe those and put them all in a long just day after day after day after day for my kids and I got started.

But I mean, oh yeah, huge

James Moore 1:41:05  
stuff, yeah.

Gerry Thompson 1:41:10  
Some of I look at now and think, what was that? But I'll keep going through it. But some things may come to mind, yeah,

James Moore 1:41:16  
absolutely, absolutely, yeah. So I hope this is, you know, a process that kind of helps you coalesce things. And, you know, as you feel comfortable, you know, more stuff is great, okay, because if I don't use it directly in the book, you know, be there for future people. I don't care if you do,

Gerry Thompson 1:41:36  
but I do like the tsunami and like the Rajneeshee stuff. I don't know quite what you want to do with some of that stuff. Well, the,

James Moore 1:41:45  
when I get to especially the Raj nations, they're going to be a particular part, but it's going to be how forthcoming you want to be.

Gerry Thompson 1:41:54  
I would be with this one. I would be very forthcoming. Okay, it's nowhere else. Have I been forthcoming? I mean, people oppressed me, but I just Yeah, and

James Moore 1:42:02  
it's because, it's because it's, you know, once again, when the when Vic and I talked about this book, it's funny, the very first time I sat down interview him, the first 10 minutes were, these are my expectations for the book, and his expectations were, you're going to write the damn thing, and I'm just a source. Yeah, perfect. And that's and he was sincere about that. Oh, yeah, absolutely, absolutely. But, you know, it's, it's, it's him as governor, but it's him as governor in that time, and the Roshni, she's, it's, it's a, in effect, an untold part of the story. Because, you know, there was Norma and then a little bit of Vern, were kind of the people out in front, because their offices were impacted, and so much stuff was happening behind the scenes that

Gerry Thompson 1:42:45  
we couldn't talk about, you couldn't talk about, no, see, that's so that's why people do not realize the whole story exactly. We were in a position where we could not publicly talk about, if we did, we would have heard everything we were doing, yep,

James Moore 1:42:57  
yep. And so that's, that's, that's a crucial part. And so as much, you know, there's going to be probably a rash issue chapter, but you know, if as much as you're willing to do, take hold,

Gerry Thompson 1:43:12  
but you can have it. I because, I mean, I did toy with writing the because I'm the only that's got the whole story. I mean, I've got the CIA, I got the FBI, I got the fire. What is it? Tobacco arms and whatever. ATF Yeah. I mean, they're all living in my office. And we're plotting, we're planning, we're coordinating and conduct that. Yeah, and nobody even knows that. Yeah,

James Moore 1:43:36  
one of the things, because I talked to Vic about it, but on so many things. You know, he's willing to go this deep and then on some things way down here. But you know, he's got his stories locked in his head until you go along and so great stuff. But one thing that he said really struck me. He said he'd never seen such great coordination among local,

state and federal during that time, during that time, and thinking about all the stuff in this post, 911 world, where, clearly that doesn't happen. We have the test in Portland, and they still can't do this stuff. So I think there's an amazing story to be told here in this post, 911 world that says A, it can be done, and B, get your acts together. Well,

Gerry Thompson 1:44:23

so but, but if the coordination came about, because I went to the Governor and I said, first, we had the political involved who always wanted to get their political bent out there to make them look good, yeah. Secondly, we had the different federal agencies who also wanted to be Oh, it's just horrible. I don't believe that goes on. And I gotta tell you, we didn't have that in state government because one, the governor wouldn't allow it. Consequently, I wouldn't allow it. We coordinated everything. Finally, I went to the governor. I said, Governor, I'm gonna put sign my fist on my desk. I said. They won't coordinating. He said, Go for it. And I did. I slammed my fist on the desk, and I said, you will sit here and coordinate with me, and we will have a conference call every day, and each one of you will give a report with the other ones on the line.

Gerry Thompson 1:45:14

If so, it took a lot of crack in the heads to make this it did. It did. But let me go

Gerry Thompson 1:45:19

to another example, when we went back and briefed the governor before he took his midish trip, they opened up on the State Department. Who all did we go to? State Department, National Security Council, FBI, or CIA? Maybe all four of them, I can't remember, just to brief the governor what to be aware of, what he could find out for them, Jim, I am not exaggerating. We'd be in with the NSC guys, and they stout. Now, when you go to the State Department, they'll tell you this, but they don't know anything, but we do. We've got the facts. Okay, go to state department now NSC probably told you, but they don't know, but we do, and here's what we know all the way around, that was that way. Does that scare you? Yeah. Why can't they coordinate? Yeah, they should all have the same goal. I mean, that was my that was my pitch during the Rajneeshee time. We've all got the same goal, keep the population of Oregon safe and secure and calm this down and get over it. That's the goal. Don't let the rednecks get out of control, and don't let the Rajneeshee get out. Get out of control. Protect the people in antelope. It's simple, yeah. So let's all talk to each other. Even normed policy. I mean, oh yeah, I know I had to Yeah. Did you know that she was starting to write her audit her biography not too long ago? Yep, you heard the story. Russell Sadler, yeah, have you talked to him? Well, he called me. He won me help with the Rajneesh section. And I said, I can't write. Then I couldn't I said, I'm collaborating with Les Zeitz on a series of articles he's running and and I said, Russ, I just, without talking to Les, I just don't feel right, don't I? Well, time went by, but I said, call me. You know, in a few months, well, he called me. He didn't call me. Didn't call me. So I finally he called. I said, What's happening with the book? He said, I'm not right anymore. I said, How come? He said, Well, I came to discover that she her memory is what she wants it to be. I thought that was an interesting,

James Moore 1:47:36

very good way to put it. Yeah, that's a very good way to put it. Now

Gerry Thompson 1:47:40

I'm afraid she's not able to No, no, she's beyond that, I think, which is too bad. Yeah, absolutely, too bad. Well, did you get I'm curious. You don't have to answer me, but did you get enough from the governor? Yeah,

James Moore 1:47:54

no, no, I because I met with him four times. So I've got like, six to eight hours of stuff, good, deep questions that i Because, you know, when I started this, you know, you've got to get this stuff, because who knows how long you have. So what I don't have from him is learning things from other people to go back and say, so when this happened, what were you thinking? Why did you do? Oh, yeah. So it's those little, those little things, yeah, there and, and that is also that my job is to go through the archives, because he kept notes on a lot of this stuff, so that there may be that kind of stuff in there. But it's just I'm not able to take the shortcut, yeah, and go say, so.

Gerry Thompson 1:48:40

Well, I promise you, I will start going through all mine. Because with my day to day to day to day, every day, involvement with him, there may be something in my notes would be helpful, I don't know, but yeah, I'll start going

through all that stuff. Yeah, anything

James Moore 1:48:55

you can do. And the archive has been really good. As they get funding, they put people on things. And so one thing that occurred to me is, I'm gonna, because I'm gonna hire a research assistant, a graduate student, and then probably an undergrad for other kinds of things. And one thing I was gonna have the undergrad, which would be good, is going through and on all of those trips I need to know dates, all these kinds of things. And finding out that, you know, in a seven day trip, he could have 85 or 90 different engagements, I need, I need to know what those things are. You know, that's a great little research thing. It turns out, our archivists have already gone through and use their own work study money, and they've done a lot of that stuff already. So they're amazing. What they're doing, some really neat stuff.

Gerry Thompson 1:49:44

I am amazed. I am so you know that Antoinette Hatfield said to me, why couldn't they do this for Mark? Yeah. I mean, she's really sad, yeah, exactly. And I feel bad for her. I mean, here he was a graduate from Willamette, and it's. And she said, I did, I don't know why. And I felt like saying, Well, talk to your good friend, Jerry Frank, yeah, I've been naughty. Exactly I am being naughty, Jim. I'm sorry,

James Moore 1:50:08

but, you know, Pacific was thrilled. I mean, clearly it's the biggest thing that's happened. Oh, the library in the energy

Gerry Thompson 1:50:13

you could feel, yeah. I mean, it was when he called and said, Okay, send everything Pacific University he was really excited. And I thought, Pacific. No, it wasn't Pacific, it's Vic. Are you sure that they're going to do something with it? Unlike the other schools who do put a file in the basement, and oh, he was excited. He was really excited. And then wasn't wonderful. We got to do what we did last fall, yeah, yeah, perfect. And he eyes he was walking out all by himself to the car. He does that so many times, I know, but he was walking by himself, and he looked so alone, and he was starting to get very free. I every time he hugged me, I noticed his voice, oh yeah. He couldn't project anymore, and I ran up and caught up with him, and I said, Aren't you pleased and proud? He had a little tear, and I thought, I've not ever seen that. Yeah,

James Moore 1:51:10

gotta put that with his wedding in his first inauguration. Isn't that

Gerry Thompson 1:51:14

great? Yeah, it just really is Jim that got to make you guys feel good. Yeah, no, and you deserve it. I'm going to tell you when you agreed to write it. We Denny and I were both. I was so angry about the other situation, I just And in fact, Denny didn't even know about I called him. I was spewing all over him. Did you let the governor do this? No, well, you didn't even know about it. And we were both so relieved, and Governor was very pleased too. But see, that was another time when he had complete faith and loyalty. Yeah, backfired on him, yeah, absolutely. We didn't make him embarrassed by it. We just said we'll take care of it. Yeah, absolutely. But Oh, to see what you guys at Pacific University have done and then to display it, the memorial story. No, I have had more people you'll find you need to take this back with you, because, as I said, I didn't get even a piece of cake or a cup of coffee. I mean, I think about, I was about the last one to leave the Capitol. Everybody else had gone. But I have had more people I've either run into or on the telephone say to me, When did all this happen at Pacific University? And why Pacific University? Wow, that was perfect to have it the cat and they just rave and rave and rave. Yeah, I just think that's cool. Yeah,

James Moore 1:52:33

that's great. One of the questions that I didn't really get a chance to ask him Is it still a bit of a mystery, why Pacific? He served on our board, but at some point in his district, fell in love. In his district, yeah, in his district,

Gerry Thompson 1:52:49

he always said that to me, yeah, because I would say, why Pacific? Well, I think you probably know his first choice was U of O, yeah, exactly. And he kind of got that, yeah, sure. We'll take it

Unknown Speaker 1:53:03  
your Phil Knight, yeah, right,

Gerry Thompson 1:53:07  
yeah. And then he and then he would have always followed that up with that. He knew you guys would do something with it, yeah? And could use it, yeah. And that's what he wanted, yeah, not that it was his ego. No. It's got to be actively Uh huh. What are you gonna do with this? Yeah, it's great what you guys are doing. It really is fantastic. Great, good,

James Moore 1:53:27  
good, good, okay, okay.

Gerry Thompson 1:53:30  
Now call if you need anything. I mean, even it has nothing to do with my

James Moore 1:53:37  
think I might have just sat on my shoes.

James Moore 1:53:41  
I thought it was coming out of there. What? There we go. Who

James Moore 1:53:46  
knew it went that far? I've actually been having a hard time opening the door to kind of aim it right, yeah. It's like seven years old now, but apparently this works. Yeah, there you go. I thought it was coming out. It's like, no, this doesn't make that sound you got what you need for.

[Recording ends.]