



THESE THREE Idaho Democrats made the leading headlines in Idaho political news the past year. From left are U.S. Sen. Frank Church, who had waged a rather impressive presidential campaign, became the most effective opposition leader to President Carter's nuclear program and become spokesman for the prestigious Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Cecil D. Andrus, who surrendered the Idaho governorship to become U.S. secretary of interior, the first Idahoan to ever win that position; and John V. Evans, who advanced from lieutenant governor to governor. (Post-Register staff photo)

Idaho politics in review . . . *Thu Dec. 30, 1977*

# Andrus, Evans ascendancy top Idaho political news in 1977

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The ascendancy of Gov. Cecil D. Andrus to secretary of state and Lt. Gov. John V. Evans to the governorship were the dominant political developments in Idaho in 1977.

It was curiously a Democratic show in such a Republican-ribbed state like Idaho, mostly because Democratic President Jimmy Carter was the national winner.

The Andrus appointment is still very much in the hearts of Idahoans who wish him the best of luck but regret seeing him leave the Idaho scene.

Most agree that Andrus was one of the best and most-liked governors that ever guided the ship of state.

In Washington, D.C., Andrus is attracting the same admiration and most consider him one of the most effective and popular cabinet secretaries in the Carter Administration.

Andrus has been getting some flak in performance of his duties, such as the 160-acre limit, increase in grazing fees, water regulations and other natural resource programs but it must be remembered he must follow national laws, despite his personal preference.

Andrus' heart still remains in Idaho and he has made it abundantly clear that he plans to return, if not in political capacity, then in the private sector. He has emphasized repeatedly he does not plan to run for the Senate or return to Washington in any capacity once he finishes his cabinet tenure.

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The departure by Andrus for Washington elevated Evans to the governorship, and subsequently placed a former state

senator and governor administrative assistant, William Murphy, to the lieutenant governorship.

Never has one with such qualifications as Evans ever entered the governorship. He has had some 20 years experience in public life, as Malad mayor, Senate minority leader and lieutenant governor which he won in his own rights.

Evans is following the footsteps of Andrus in getting around the state, meeting people and discussing problems. His most recent appearance in Idaho Falls to extend support for the strike to get better farm prices is an example of how he is solidifying his position.

Murphy is more of a low key politician but his popularity is reflected in his unanimous confirmation by the Senate, even though there was controversy in the legal point as to whether Evans could appoint the No. 2 man.

The Idaho congressional delegation did not need to face election the past year but the three Republicans, Sen. James A. McClure and U.S. Reps. George V. Hansen and Steve Symms confront the test in 1978. Democrat Sen. Frank Church doesn't stand the decision of the voters until 1980.

From political rumblings so far, both Hansen and Symms face tough fights for reelection in 1978 but at this time McClure looks solid for re-election, so much so, that not a single formidable Democratic opponent has been mentioned so far.

The ultra-conservative philosophy of the three Republicans will become the main campaign theme, plus to some extent, Hansen's financial

*Story Cont  
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difficulties which almost beat him in 1976.

**Democrat U.S. Sen. Frank Church also grew in stature from his rather impressive quest for the presidency in 1976, his opposition to President Carter on the nuclear phase of his energy program and his ranking majority status in the influential Senate Foreign Relations Committee.**

Likewise, Republican Sen. James A. McClure is recognized as one of the conservative leaders in the nation and heads such a faction in the Senate.

Symms and Hansen also are looked on as leaders for the right wingers, both incessantly opposing big government and high spending.

Hansen has propelled himself into the national limelight by filing lawsuit against the IWY for alleged wrongful fund expenditure, mounted campaigns to raise funds to fight OSHA in court, and with Church and McClure, has made strong personal efforts to try to get Tom McGinnis, 26-year-old Idaho Falls man, released from a Bolivian jail on drug accessory charges.

The opposition to OSHA has grown to such an extent that President Carter abrogated some 1,100 OSHA rules.

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**The Republican dominated Idaho Legislature did not particularly shine in 1977, but then, neither did it perform poorly. It could be rated as fair.**

It adequately funded the state agencies; it did not raise taxes — in fact it gave some relief by lopping off the \$10 head tax — an action which is of questionable merits.

In view of the strong conservative tide which lapped over Idaho in the Nov., 1976, general

elections there is little question Idahoans wanted a low key legislature — and they got it.

Among many, the legislature's legally-questionable rescission of the Equal Rights Amendment and partial repeal of the state building code were among the main accomplishment which is like giving a pat on the back for tearing down rather than building.

The controversial Right-to-Work law comfortably passed the House, but languished in committee when the Senate affixed an amendment that would have called for inclusion of the farm commissions. It is slated to become one of the most emotional issues in 1978.

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**The city elections proved an astonishing show of confidence for the administration of Mayor S. Eddie Pedersen. Pedersen voluntarily stepped out for retirement, but all of the administration candidates won handily, holdover Councilman Thomas Campbell for mayor and Councilmen Melvin Erickson, Paul Hovey and Ralph Wood re-elected.**

A lone challenger, Wesley W. Diest, finished a strong fourth and outside the money but the lack of opposition to the city administration precluded his winning, even though he was beneficiary of all the opposition vote.

A sudden surprise was the resignation of Councilman Gilbert C. Karst announced Dec. 22 and effective Jan. 5.

In other political developments, Idaho Falls lost and won a party chairmanship.

**Deckie Rice resigned as the Democratic chairman and was later replaced by Boise attorney John F. Greenfield, while Dennis M. Olsen, Idaho Falls attorney, vaulted into the state Republican Party chairmanship after Vernon F. Ravenscroft resigned to run for police office.**

There were no party conventions the past year because of no general elections.

Andrus also was forced to drop his chairmanship as the chairman of the National Governor's Conference when he accepted the cabinet post.

**The women also took a prominent place when the International Women's Year Convention was held at Boise in May.**

The liberally-adopted resolutions came under criticism by the more conservative sisters, but these resolutions also were endorsed in November at the national convention at Houston, Texas.

Other political happenings of more than passing interest was Neils Theuson ousting Mayor Merrill Rose at St. Anthony, and William Cannon reversing a defeat four years ago of Mayor Don Vial at Salmon; the drug scandal at Idaho State Hospital South at Blackfoot; the agreement between the Region 7 Department of Health and Welfare and the Eastern Idaho Community Mental Health Center; and the sudden withdrawal of Attorney General Wayne L. Kidwell from the governor's race and the probable entry by Ravenscroft.

**Also of eye-catching note was the current farmers' strike for higher prices, and actions to alleviate the drought which appears to be handled so well recently by heavy precipitation.**