

COLORADO GOVERNORS

John A. Love



Scope and Content Note

The Governor John A. Love collection constitutes approximately 140 cubic feet of record material covering his terms of governor from 1963 – 1973. The collection is described down to the file folder level. Major record series in the collection include correspondence files; the Executive Record; photographs; speeches and messages; proclamations; reports and some newspaper/media material concerning legislative actions. The correspondence files comprise the main group of record material.

Governor Love's terms of office is well documented throughout the 140 cubic feet of records that are in the custody of the Colorado State Archives. The strengths of the collection include documentation concerning state budget issues, civil rights, air and water pollution and economic development. There is also material relating to tax cuts, tourist and business opportunities, economic expansion, and public school reform. In addition, there is a small amount of documentation focusing on the 1976 Winter Olympics planning.

Biography

John Arthur Love was Colorado's 36th governor and served from 1963-1973. While he was born in Illinois on a farm near Gibson City on November 29, 1916, his family moved to Colorado five years later after John's father, Arthur Candee Love, was diagnosed with a respiratory illness. As many Colorado transplants attested to at the time, the state had a healing environment for such patients.

The family settled in Colorado Springs where John graduated from Cheyenne Mountain School in 1934. Love then attended Denver University earning his bachelor of arts degree in 1938. He became editor of the student newspaper, *The Clarion*, during his senior year. He was also elected president of the Rocky Mountain Collegiate Press Association. He received his LLB from Denver University Law School in 1941 and passed the Colorado Bar in the same year. He married Ann Daniels in 1942. They had three children, Dan, Andrew and Rebecca.

World War II temporarily interrupted his professional law career. He enlisted in the Navy's Aviation Cadet program and served as a U.S. Navy pilot, for which he was twice awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Following the War, he opened a law firm in Colorado Springs. After the war Colorado experienced unprecedented growth, especially in and around the urban areas. The economy became more dependent on industry and tourism rather than its traditional agriculture and mining orientation. There was also a heavy infusion of federal funds into the state as federal agencies proliferated following the War. While the economy began to diversify, a schism between the more populous Eastern Slope cities and Western Slope rural areas began to develop. Competition over Western Slope water became especially important.

Because of these conditions, Colorado politics was in a state of flux in 1962 when Love decided to run for an office. His bid to become El Paso County Republican Chair, however, failed by one vote. Shortly after this unsuccessful attempt, he decided to run for governor so that he could at least make his name more well known in the political arena. Surprisingly, he won the primary battle against the longtime legislator and Speaker of the House, David Hamil. Two factors then especially influenced the race for governor. The Republicans in 1962 were more unified than the Democrats which gave Love an edge. Coloradans were also looking for a change in their leadership. Plus, although Love had no particular cause or agenda to promote, he seemed to be an attractive candidate both physically as well as politically. Although he was relatively new in politics, he had no past record to defend and, as yet, few enemies. He was also a moderate Republican which gained him more broad based support. For these reasons he beat the incumbent, Stephen McNichols and became the first Colorado governor to be elected to three terms.

During his terms he was responsible for attracting many businesses and jobs to Colorado as part of his "Sell Colorado" campaign. The tourist and ski industries also boomed. Colorado became more influential at a national political level as the state's population grew and became more prosperous. The popularity of his "Sell Colorado" idea began to ebb in the late 1960s, however, as some Colorado leaders, notably Love, began to press for Colorado to be the site of the 1976 Winter Olympics. In 1972 an initiative was passed which refused to allow any state money to be spent on financing the games. The environmental movement had strong support in Colorado where residents were fearful that their outstanding quality of life, based largely on the scenic mountain landscape, would be compromised if the Olympic developments were allowed to proceed.

Despite Love's support for the Olympics, his record concerning environmental protection was much more moderate than many conservative Republicans. In his State of the State addresses in 1970 and 1972, he stressed taking action to preserve, protect and improve the environment. He supported state land use legislation and promoted careful growth instead of growth for its own sake. He signed important air and water pollution acts in 1970 which reduced pollution and helped to protect the environment.

Budgetary concerns were always difficult for Love to negotiate with the legislature and joint budget committee. In Colorado, the governors and legislatures have traditionally sought to acquire or retain power over the state's coffers. As other governors before and after him, Love believed that the Executive Branch should have more power over the budget. Despite these actual limitations on his power Love was able to influence the passage of many bills. He got increased state support for public schools and universities, and increased scholarships and tuition waivers for college students despite the fact that during his first term he supported a raise in college tuition. He also signed controversial bills legalizing abortion and making possession of a small amount of marijuana a misdemeanor. During his last term Colorado set a nation-wide precedence by passing the Sunshine Law which opened government meetings to the public and set disclosure requirements.

During one of the most contentious decades in our history because of the Viet Nam War and civil rights disparities in the 1960s, Love was known for his moderation. He was influential in keeping the state relatively undivided and continually prosperous. He resigned the governorship in 1973 to become the nation's first director of the Office of Energy Policy for president Richard M. Nixon but resigned this post after five months due to much political bickering and feeling like he did not have enough to do. The upheaval of the Watergate scandal and the subsequent resignation of Nixon possibly influenced his decision to return to the private sector where he took a position on the board of directors for the concrete and potash maker, Ideal Basic Industries. He would later become the CEO of the firm while remaining

counsel to the Denver law firm of Davis, Graham & Stubbs, and in addition taught history at the University of Northern Colorado. He died in Colorado, January 21, 2002 at the age of 85.

Bibliography

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- Love, John A. *Papers*. 4 c.f., 1960-1974. Denver, Co.: Denver Public Library Western History Collection.
- Love, Ann. *Interview / Oral History* by Jean Smith and Elaine Walsh, 1975. Denver, Co.: Colorado Historical Society.
- Love, John A. *Interview / Oral History* by David McComb, 1974. Denver, Co.: Colorado Historical Society.
- Love, John A. *Interview / Oral History* by Barbara Levin and Governor Richard Lamm, 1975. Denver, Co.: Colorado Historical Society.
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Series Descriptions

Correspondence

The correspondence series is separated into administrative and miscellaneous. The administrative files contain documentation concerning the National Governors' Conference, development of natural gas reserves in Rio Blanco County, the 1976 winter Olympics, collegiate campus protests and marches during the Vietnam War era, and XXX-rated movie drive-in theaters. There is also material relating to federal agencies and their programs in the state, higher education issues, water related topics and the environment. The miscellaneous files deal with a wide variety of topics ranging from tax studies to general government affairs. Legislative bills and actions as well as the governor's role in the legislative process are documented.

Executive Record

The Executive Record contains executive orders; appointments; legislative messages; pardons, extraditions and requisitions; honorary citations; and proclamations that were issued by Governor Love during his terms of office from 1963 – 1973.

Photographs

There are approximately 60 photos in this collection. The subjects documented are Ruedi Dam groundbreaking in 1964, traffic safety, the Eisenhower Tunnel construction, the National Western Stock Show, and visits to Estes Park and Rocky Mountain National Park. There are additional photographs located in other parts of the correspondence collection.

Newspaper/Public Relations

This series is comprised of news clippings, news releases, and other materials regarding public relations that Governor Love made while in office.

Speeches and Messages

Copies of topical speeches concerning subjects such as taxes, air pollution, government reorganization, agriculture, economic development, and water issues are part of this record group. Included within the Executive Record Governor Love's speeches and messages to the General Assembly are printed.

Proclamations

This series consists of the Executive Proclamations issued by Governor Love and deposited with the Office of the Secretary of State.

Reports

This record series consists primarily of reports from state agencies and are filed as part of the governor's legislative records.