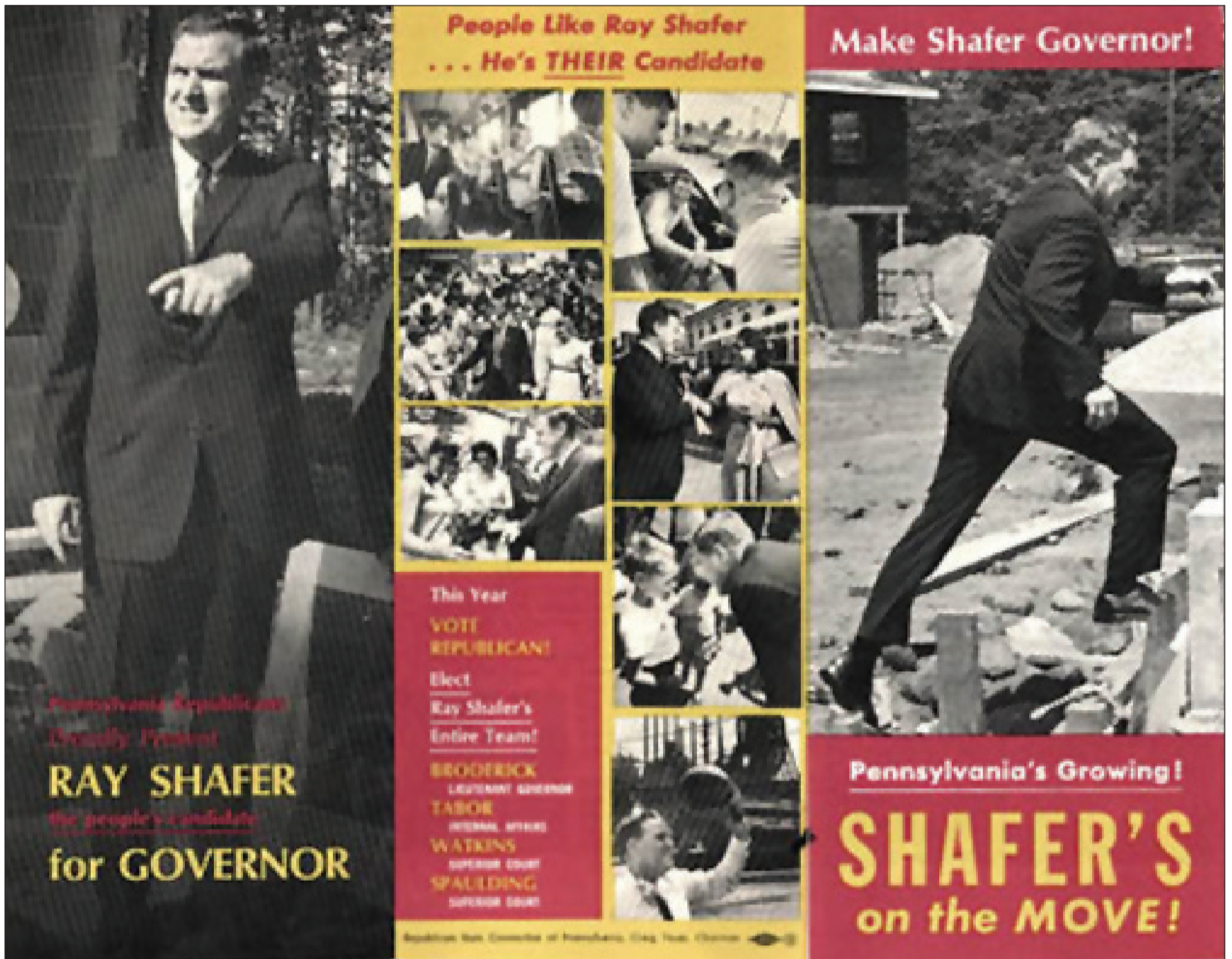




the state



Shafer administration responsible for many changes in state government

By Jane Smith
MEADVILLE TRIBUNE

"Ray has the determination, brilliance and personality it takes to get ahead in life." That was the caption underneath the senior picture of Raymond P. Shafer, valedictorian, in the 1934 Meadville High School yearbook. With those qualities, it easy to see why Shafer was so successful in achieving the many goals he set for himself — from becoming Crawford County district attorney to serving as governor of Pennsylvania. Elected as the state's 39th governor on Nov. 8, 1966, Shafer was the first person from northwestern Pennsylvania to serve in the state's highest office.

He was the last governor who could not legally succeed himself for a second term. That's because of changes in the state's constitution under Shafer's administration that overhauled the workings of Pennsylvania government.

The constitutional overhaul, which included revisions in five areas of government, was one of the major highlights of Shafer's governorship.

In fact, the legislation permitting the changes was seen by at least one political news reporter as one testament to Shafer's ability to gain bipartisan support for his ideas.

The proposal would not have been possible without votes provided by some Democratic members of the House. Six governors before Shafer had tried and failed in their efforts to get a constitutional convention.

Perhaps one of the most visible changes to the public in the state's constitution was the creation of the Minor Judiciary system — commonly known to most people as district jus-

Shafer an active promoter of state's industry, business

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While Pennsylvania Gov. Raymond P. Shafer was very involved in promoting legislation as governor, he also took an active part in promoting Pennsylvania industry and businesses.

In 1967, he led the first Pennsylvania Trade Mission on a two-week European campaign to increase the state's foreign commerce.

He and his wife, Jane, were joined by 20

Pennsylvania industrialists and officials.

The first stop was Stockholm, Sweden, followed by visits to Denmark, Germany, Italy, Spain and England.

While in Germany, he paid a surprise visit to the Berlin Wall, leaving the mission members in Frankfurt during the six-hour visit.

"I felt that I had to take a personal look at Berlin," he told an Associated Press reporter in Berlin that day. "The

city is a living representative of freedom and we Pennsylvanians feel close to its cause."

While there, Army Sgt. 1st Class Walter Penkala, a fellow Pennsylvanian and combat veteran of three wars, pointed out locations along the Berlin Wall to Shafer. They were pictured looking at Checkpoint Charlie.

Shafer also visited Pennsylvania soldiers stationed in the Frankfurt area during the two-week mission.

tices, who are the first to handle all criminal complaints as well as minor civil lawsuits.

Other initiatives that emerged during Shafer's administration included creation of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Department of Community Affairs and Department of Environmental Resources.

Shafer was described as a "governor who believed government was something not just to be avoided, but government was something that might be utilized to help people bet-

ter their lives," said Lee Donaldson, GOP floor leader of the Pennsylvania General Assembly from 1969 to 1970.

In the first two years of his governorship, 75 percent of Shafer's 180 "administration bills" — legislation submitted by the governor — were signed into law. Most were accomplished in spite of the "hair-thin" pro-administration

Republican majority in both the Senate and the House of Representatives, according to a 1968 analysis of Shafer's achievements in his first two years by an Associated Press reporter in Harrisburg.



Among legislative highlights of the Shafer administration

were improvements to the environment; consumer protection laws; establishment of the Pennsylvania Crime Commission with strong powers of investigation; and increased state aid to education and new programs, making Pennsylvania the first state in the nation to provide some assistance to non-public schools. Shafer's administration also enacted a mandatory meat inspection law as well as increased the powers of the state Human Relations Commission.

It was also during Shafer's tenure that the completion of Interstate 79 was achieved. The highway was credited for the establishment of a PPG manufacturing plant in Greenwood Township, which brought many jobs to Crawford County.

Although Shafer was instrumental in implementing a lot of new programs, he was criticized for initiating \$300 million in new taxes during his first year. He also increased the sales tax from 5 to 6 percent and when the state budget exceeded \$2 billion, the state income tax was put into effect.

In a 1969 interview discussing his increase in government spending, Shafer said, "The really difficult problem is convincing the citizenry that when additional programs and services are requested that these services have to be paid for."

