

8-6-1999

## Eastman, Joel oral history interview

Mike Richard

Follow this and additional works at: [http://scarab.bates.edu/muskie\\_oh](http://scarab.bates.edu/muskie_oh)

---

### Recommended Citation

Richard, Mike, "Eastman, Joel oral history interview" (1999). *Edmund S. Muskie Oral History Collection*. 125.  
[http://scarab.bates.edu/muskie\\_oh/125](http://scarab.bates.edu/muskie_oh/125)

This Oral History is brought to you for free and open access by the Muskie Archives and Special Collections Library at SCARAB. It has been accepted for inclusion in Edmund S. Muskie Oral History Collection by an authorized administrator of SCARAB. For more information, please contact [batesscarab@bates.edu](mailto:batesscarab@bates.edu).

## **Interview with Joel Eastman by Mike Richard**

*Summary Sheet and Transcript*

### **Interviewee**

Eastman, Joel

### **Interviewer**

Richard, Mike

### **Date**

August 6, 1999

### **Place**

Portland, Maine

### **ID Number**

MOH 131

### **Use Restrictions**

© Bates College. This transcript is provided for individual **Research Purposes Only**; for all other uses, including publication, reproduction and quotation beyond fair use, permission must be obtained in writing from: The Edmund S. Muskie Archives and Special Collections Library, Bates College, 70 Campus Avenue, Lewiston, Maine 04240-6018.

### **Biographical Note**

Joel Eastman was born in Bridgton, Maine on March 11, 1939. His father graduated from Bowdoin College and taught at Berwick Academy, then went on to work for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) as an educational advisor. His mother was a homemaker. Joel has four siblings. He grew up in a Congregationalist, Republican family and was the first Democrat in the family. He lived in Fryeburg, then Salisbury Cove on Mt. Desert Island, then Portland (during WWII), and then Buxton, Maine. He worked for a year after high school, and then attended the University of Maine where he spent his first two years in Portland, and his last two years in Orono. He received his degree in English, but history became his true interest. He went back to USM (University of Southern Maine) to get his master's degree in History. He became involved in the Orono Democratic Town Committee around the time of the 1964 presidential election. He then went to the University of Florida and earned a Ph.D. in U.S. History. During his Ph.D. coursework he taught at Appalachian State University in North Carolina, he was assistant editor of the *Business History Review* at Harvard Business School, he taught at USM, and returned to University of Florida to finish his degree in 1973. He has done editorial cartoons for the *Maine Sunday Telegram* and has taught at USM since 1970.

### **Scope and Content Note**

Interview includes discussions of: Sagamore Village (war time housing project in Portland, Maine during WWII); diversity in Portland; 1960 presidential campaign; Orono Democratic Town Committee; Lyndon Johnson's speech in Portland; first interview with Ralph Nader; interview with Ribicoff; interview with McNamara; Portland economic boom during WWII (steel ship building industry, shipyard in Portland, B&M, Pepperill) and fall afterwards; Bob York; Maine Historical Society; symbolic contributions of Ed Muskie; Republican vs. Democratic parties in Maine; assessment of governors Brennan, McKernan, Longley, King, and Reed; Republican Party development; Margaret Chase Smith; Bill Hathaway; and Muskie's legacy.

## **Indexed Names**

Banks, Ronald  
Bass, Herb  
Baxter, Percival  
Blaine, James G.  
Brennan, Joseph E.  
Celebrezze, Anthony J. (Anthony Joseph), 1910-  
Clauson, Clinton Amos, 1895-1959  
Coffin, Frank Morey  
Cohen, William S.  
Curtis, Kenneth M., 1931-  
Eastman, Joel  
Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969  
Fessenden, William Pitt, 1806-1869  
Hamlin, Hannibal, 1809-1891  
Hathaway, Bill  
Humphrey, Hubert H. (Hubert Horatio), 1911-1978  
Johnson, Lyndon B. (Lyndon Baines), 1908-1973  
Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963  
King, Angus  
Kyros, Peter N., Jr.  
Kyros, Peter N., Sr.  
Longley, James, Sr.  
Major, Charles W.  
McKernan, John  
McNamara, Robert S., 1916-  
Mitchell, George J. (George John), 1933-  
Muskie, Edmund S., 1914-1996  
Nader, Ralph  
Nixon, Richard M. (Richard Milhous), 1913-1994  
O'Brien, Larry  
Oliver, Jim  
Reed, John H. (John Hathaway), 1921-  
Reed, Thomas Brackett, 1839-1902

Ribicoff, Abraham, 1910-  
Richardson, Harrison  
Roberts, Kenneth A.  
Scontras, Charlie  
Smith, Margaret Chase, 1897-1995  
Turner, Roy  
York, Robert

## **Transcript**

**Mike Richard:** This is the first side of the tape of the interview with Professor Joel Eastman at the campus of USM in Portland, Maine, and the date is August 6th, 1999. Interviewing is Mike Richard. And, Professor Eastman, can you please state your full name and spell it?

**Joel Eastman:** Joel, middle initial W, Eastman, that's J-O-E-L, E-A-S-T-M-A-N.

**MR:** And when was your date of birth?

**JE:** I was born March 11th, 1939.

**MR:** And your home town?

**JE:** Well, I was born in Bridgton, Maine. But we- my father, well he was in the CCCs then and he taught for, at Fryeburg Academy. So we lived in Fryeburg for a year, and then, oh we lived in Salisbury Cove on Mt. Desert Island for a year when he was in the CCCs. And then during WWII we moved to Portland. And I lived in Portland through my freshman year in high school when we moved out to Buxton. And I finished up at Samuel D. Hanson High School, one of the predecessors to Bonny Eagle High School.

**MR:** And what were your parents' names?

**JE:** My father's name was Brooks Eastman, he didn't have a middle name, and my mother's name was Frances Louise Webb Eastman.

**MR:** And what were their occupations?

**JE:** Well my father, again, he worked, he graduated from Bowdoin. He taught, he taught at Berwick Academy and then he was an educational, what did they call it, he was a, he worked for the Civilian Conservation Corps as an educational advisor. I think that's what, I think that was his title. Basically, a lot of the men, young men, didn't have high school diplomas so he worked with them on their GEDs. And then, again, he taught at Fryeburg Academy and then he took a job with the Federal Housing Administration here in Portland during WWII. And after the war he worked for the city of Portland in slum clearance, in their Slum Clearance and Redevelopment Authority during the, in the sixties. My mother was- I don't think she ever worked outside the home, she was basically a housewife.

**MR:** And how many siblings did you have?

**JE:** I have four, I have three brothers and a sister, and I'm the oldest.

**MR:** And what were their names, or are their names?

**JE:** My, I have a brother Kim, a brother Mark, a brother Clinton, and a sister Sheri.

**MR:** And have any of them gone into politics or been interested in politics in some way?

**JE:** I guess I would have to say no. I think I was the one who was probably the most active.

**MR:** Okay. And what were the political beliefs of your parents?

**JE:** They were Republicans. And I think, you know, my family, my father came from Lovell, my mother came from Bridgton and, you know that since, you know, I think since the Civil War that both families have been Republican. And in fact when I finally became, I was a Republican first. In fact I was, when I lived in Buxton somebody just signed me up as a Republican. I never- you know, didn't designate a party, they did it for me. And when I became a Democrat, I was told that my great grandmother would roll over in her grave. So I guess I was the first Democrat in the family, you know, that anybody could remember. But I think most of my brothers and my sister became Democrats. I think I'm, my kid brother, youngest brother, youngest brother is I think a Republican.

**MR:** Now, as far as you could tell, were your parents Republicans kind of by default, like you were at first, or were they actually, they believed in what the party stood for?

**JE:** Well, I think, well I think a little of both. I think tradition, and my father was fairly conservative. And, you know, as far as my mother went, you know, I, you know, I think she, you know, I think she was comfortable being a Republican.

**MR:** And did they ever discuss politics with you kids in the home, maybe at dinnertime, was that a topic?

**JE:** No, I don't, you know, in fact the one time I think we discussed politics was when, you know, at the time of the Watergate affair. And they were terribly embarrassed at this, so. Embarrassed about, you know, Richard Nixon and his, and the Watergate affair that they were, you know, you know, almost ashamed to be Republicans at that point in time. But, no, we, I don't think we, we rarely talked about politics at home. But, you know, the few, one other incident I remember was when Eisenhower was elected president and, you know, we were, we as a family were pleased about that because, you know, everybody liked Ike. And we were Republicans.

**MR:** And, what were your parents' religious beliefs?

**JE:** Well, you know, religion, we, they were both Congregationalists. But when we moved to Portland we began attending the First Parish Church, which is Unitarian Universalist in Portland, mainly because some friends went there and liked it and we, we attended that church. But, you know, I think the, you know, the family was just kind of, you know, vaguely Protestant, you know, we never really got deeply into theology or anything like that.

**MR:** And how do you think your parents' attitudes and beliefs affected you in general while you were growing up in Portland?

**JE:** Well, I think, you know, that they did instill, you know, a basic, well, attitudes towards, well you know, hard work. That, you know, that, you know, we all, you know all the kids helped out at home and, you know, and in fact we, most of us got jobs as soon as we were old enough to. And, so I think the values were kind of traditional, perhaps rural American values of hard work and honesty and, and, well I'm trying to think. I think there was an emphasis placed on the value of education too.

**MR:** Okay, let's talk a little bit about the community you grew up in, the neighborhood in Portland you grew up in. What was it like economically, first of all, at the time you were growing up?

**JE:** Well, see we lived in, in Sagamore Village which was a war time housing project, and actually it was a very interesting place to live because it had a, a real mix of religions and ethnic groups. There were, I won't say lots of, the people tended to be, you know, most of them were working class people, although there were some, you know, management types. The people who could live there were, well it was the military and people who worked in war industry, and people who worked for the, obviously, for the federal housing administration. Because, you know, I know, you know, my father worked in administration and then one of our best friends was also in administration there. So, but I would say mainly working class and, you know, we had, you know, lots of Catholics, you know, you know, Irish Americans, Franco Americans, Italian Americans, Greek Americans, and even a few African Americans, which was, you know, there was no discrimination. And, you know, I don't think my parents really had known that many Catholics before the war, I mean they had lived in an overwhelmingly Protestant, you know, white Anglo Saxon Protestant community, and there were very few, in Lovell I don't think there were any Catholics. In Bridgton I know there were a few. I don't, I don't know if they had a Catholic church there or not. But, so it was, you know, it was an interesting place to live where you met, you know, you know, a variety of people and, you know, particularly during the war there were all kinds of activities going on. There was a, and there was a community council, you know, there were Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, there were child care, there were movies on Saturday nights, there were recreational activities, there were parades, and so it was a, you know, interesting place to live.

**MR:** And so growing up, your friends and your social group were a pretty diverse group of people?

**JE:** Yeah, yeah, I think, well the, you know, I was friendly with the son of- actually I guess it was my father's boss who lived quite near with us. And then there was another family, they

were Franco Americans, Catholic Franco Americans that, there were three boys and, you know, we were very close. And then, you know, then we, you know, we were involved in, you know, with the other kids in the neighborhood. You know, I never really got to know any African American kids very well at that time, there was only, only really I think two families. Later on there were some black kids in the Boy Scout troop that I was involved in, but I never really got to know them too well. Oh, one other little thing I've got to, got to tell you this. There was a retarded, you know I guess what we would call retarded today, but at the time, you know, you didn't, you know, retarded was not a commonly understood term. This was a guy in his, must have been in his twenties, but, who acted like a little kid. And he had, in fact he had a full size bike with training wheels on it that he rode around. And the other thing he used to do is he liked to wear his mother's dresses. And he'd have these house dresses on, you know, riding around with his, with his, on his three wheel, on his big bike, and you know this is during the war and, I know that, I can almost see this happening, the kids are trying to explain why is this big guy who acts just like this little kid. And the story that grew up among the kids was that his family had been at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked, and he hadn't been the same since. But, you know, we just accepted this and then, you know, years afterwards I'm thinking back, you know, I don't know if he was, he was at Pearl Harbor or not, but, you know, he was retarded, and, but we didn't understand what retarded was at the time.

**MR:** What was the economic situation of your family when you were growing up?

**JE:** Well, you know, again, my father was in, you know, the administration of the federal housing administration. In fact he was recreation director initially, and so I suspect that he earned more than, you know, probably the average family in the community, but not much. You know, we had, ultimately they had, while we were in Portland, you know, four kids, so, you know, I guess we would say we were comfortable. We didn't have a lot of extras but, you know, we had the basics, you know, we never thought of ourselves as being poor. And in fact I'd never really thought of anybody in the project as being poor, because, you know, at the time they all had good jobs.

When I went to school, I was a patrol boy, I don't know if you know what that is. There used to be a program of crossing guides, and you got nominated and you served with a policeman at the, there was, at the elementary school I went to there was a crosswalk on a main street, and a policeman was assigned to it during school times and he was assisted by these crossing guides. And we had these belts, it was sponsored by AAA I think because we had white cross belts with a shiny silver pin that said AAA on in and everything. And one time I was asked to take a student to his home and, and, you know, he was a, you know, obviously undernourished kid and, you know, who lived, and I, you know, I had to walk him home and he lived in a not a very nice place so I, you know, I knew there was poverty but I didn't really see it very often.

**MR:** Okay, well I guess we'll talk about your schooling experiences. Did you go to the public school system through high school in Portland (*unintelligible phrase*)?

**JE:** Yes I, well I, again, yeah, through my freshman year. So I went to, at that time you started at age four, you know, there was a kindergarten and a sub-primary, and then first grade. So I went to Chapman School through fifth grade and then they shifted us to a school on Ocean

Avenue for sixth grade. And then I went to Lincoln Junior High School, and then did my freshman year at Deering. And when we moved to Buxton, I finished up out there.

**MR:** And what were some of your interests and activities growing up through this time?

**JE:** Well, my interests pretty much involved around cartooning. In fact, I, both my brother and I were talented artistically and, you know, in fact from very earliest times we used to draw all the time. We shared a room and our room, you know, we covered every inch of wall space with our drawings. And so in school I kind of stood out because I was a good artist and, and, you know, I was involved in, you know, I'm trying to think of, you know, any, any kind of projects that involved art work. You know, then I was involved in it and, you know, got quite a bit of special attention because of that. In fact, you know, that was, you know, art was my main focus, I can't, I mean I did the other things that kids did. You know, played marbles and, I was never a good athlete but I did play baseball, like we used to have a little informal, we had an in-, baseball team in the village, an informal team, and we played kids from other neighborhoods, so, you know, I was never very good but, but I did participate.

**MR:** And when you were in high school was art or history kind of the dominant academic interest you had?

**JE:** Well actually, the other thing, the thing that I got into in high school- and this was actually not at Deering but at Samuel D. Hanson High School, I worked on the newspaper and the year book. And there it was not only my artistic talents but writing. I got very interested in writing, you know, I wrote, you know, news articles and columns for the newspaper, and I was, actually ended up as editor of the editor of the newspaper and of the yearbook at Samuel D. Hanson High School.

**MR:** And, do you remember any teachers or groups or extracurricular activities, anything along those lines that really affected you or were significant?

**JE:** Hmm, well, you know, in junior high I took art and I did have one, one of my art teachers, Mr. Patterson. I'm trying to think of his first name, he just died recently, but he, you know, he was very, very supportive and encouraging of me and my art. And, and actually he's the, you know, I think, you know, most of my teachers, particularly when I transferred to Samuel D. Hanson High School which was, you know, very small. I went from Deering with, I don't know, a couple of thousand students to Samuel D. Hanson, which was a hundred and twenty-five students. And so I became kind of a star student, you know, the teachers, again, were very supportive, you know, all of them. And I did well in all my classes without really trying. I was also president of the student council for a year so I was a, a big frog in a little pond.

**MR:** And where did you go after the Buxton high school?

**JE:** Well I, after, I graduated in 1957 and I was planning to go in the service, you know, that was the time when, you know, when the Cold War, and there was, let's see, I'm trying to [?] remember if there was, if the draft was operating at that time. I think it was. And, you know, a lot of my friends were going in the service so that's what I thought I would do. But for some

reason I never did. I worked for a year and then decided to go to college, and at that time this campus, USM, was a two-year branch of the University of Maine. Then, University of Maine had taken over Portland Junior College and you went, you could go two years here in Portland and then you just went to Orono for your junior and senior year. So after a year of doing, I did not very great jobs, I worked, matter of fact I worked at the, one of the housing projects for a while in maintenance. And then worked on a chicken farm and I got, in fact I got fired. The only job I got fired from was working on a chicken farm. The owner said that I just didn't understand chickens.

**MR:** That's pretty rough.

**JE:** And then, and then I, I'm trying to remember, I took a summer job at Deering Ice Cream here in Portland and in fact I worked for them for, let's see, for three summers while I, before I started at UMP and then the, and two summers after I was going to UMP.

**MR:** So you started here at the, what would become the USM campus for two years and then went to Orono?

**JE:** Yes, went to Orono for my junior and senior years.

**MR:** And what were some of your interests during the college years?

**JE:** Well, again, I pursued, I worked on the newspaper. In fact I became editor of the newspaper in my second year here. It was just a monthly, and I also worked on the yearbook, which we had at that time. I can't remember if I did that for one or two years, but, so you know, my interest then was writing and, and then, you know and also I guess I started perhaps getting interest--, a little bit interested in politics. But my, you know, my undergraduate major was English because at that time I was, you know, because of my interest in writing.

**MR:** And you mentioned off the tape that it was about between '60 and '65 was your most intense political involvement?

**JE:** Yes, and that was actually when I, when I went to Orono. Because I went to Orono in the fall of, fall of 1960, and that was also the presidential campaign and it was, again, it was that 1960 campaign that really awakened my political interest and changed me from a Republican to a Democrat. Although I voted for Nixon in that election, you know, very soon I just became really, well fascinated by and kind of infatuated with John F. Kennedy, you know, and he really changed my whole outlook, you know, on politics and the world. I became a big fan of Kennedy and, you know, switched from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party, you know, not, actually after the, you know, the years following the 1960 election. And at Orono I worked on the newspaper and became editorial page editor and, you know, began, you know, thinking about, well, well state issues and national issues and writing editorials and doing editorial cartoons for the newspaper.

**MR:** So it was basically at that time, it was Kennedy himself who pretty much wholly influenced you to switch to the Democratic Party?

**JE:** Yes, and again I was, you know, before I hadn't even really thought about politics and what the different parties stood for and what needed to be done, and you know. Once I did, I real-, you know, I realized I was a Democrat, that, you know, I was not a Republican and, you know, and I shared the values and goals of the Democrats, you know, on the state and national level.

**MR:** And how did your parents react to your switch immediately?

**JE:** You know my parents, I will say, were always very supportive. They, in fact they never, they never basically told me what to do, they were just supportive of, you know, pretty much whatever I decided to do. You know, they, you know growing up they talked about me going to college and, but, you know, never really pushed me. And, you know, and in hindsight that was I think a good approach. Because I'm not sure if, you know, if they had, you know kind of sent me off, how I would have responded because, you know, it took me a while before I was really ready to go.

**MR:** Okay. And you were also involved with the UMO Young Democrats?

**JE:** Well that didn't happen until, let's see. I graduated in 1962, I got a teaching job in New York state in Glens Falls, New York, I taught for a year, and I had a miserable time. The school was in chaos and I had, you know, I had discipline problems with some of my classes and, and I decided during that year that, well the other thing is during my junior and senior year I got very turned on to history. In fact I, they didn't have minors at that time but I ended up almost with a double major. I began, I completed my degree in English but I took as many history courses as I did English courses and ended up in effect with a double, you know, an informal double major in history. And I realized that, you know, history was my real interest and after, you know, during that year of teaching I decided to go back to get my masters in history and, you know, applied at Orono and got accepted. And so after just one year of high school teaching I came back and, in the fall of 1963, at the University of Maine. And that's when I, you know, really got involved in politics. And I don't remember, it, most of it focused around the '64 election. Although I remember, well Kennedy spoke up there, gave a foreign policy speech at Orono in '63, then he was assassinated. And, but I got involved in the Orono Democratic Town Committee which was dominated by professors. Mainly, at that time the history department was history and government, so there were, you know, political scientists and historians who were involved and, Herb Bass for instance, who was a historian, was very involved. Charlie Scontras, Ron Banks, John Hackeler, and then a guy, actually a biologist, [Roy] Turner I think his name, Charlie Major, and, you know, these guys, well most of them had come from other parts of the country and they were, had been involved in politics before and they had the town of Orono really organized, you know. You know, we had "get out the vote" campaigns and "all the voters to the polls" campaigns, and so that was a really interesting experience to get an introduction to grass roots politics in that way.

And then, I don't even know how I got asked to be chairman of the Young Democrats for Johnson-Humphrey, but I did and, you know, and accepted. But, you know, I (*unintelligible word*), and my contribution was, I think it was relatively minor. You know, I tried to coordinate what was going on in the state, I visited some of the other campuses, but you know, I really

didn't do very much. It was almost kind of a, you know, token figurehead, and, you know, and I don't know really why. It was partly, you know, I lacked experience and, you know, there was not much of a budget. The one thing that, and again it was kind of a token thing, they, obviously they wanted to have a speaker at Orono and so they called me and, you know, I was kind of a go between. I just went to the, I can't remember who I went to, maybe the president's office and said, hey, they want to send a Cabinet secretary up here to speak and from then, you know, they basically took it over and made all the arrangements. But, but you know, I was present then, you know, I met him and I met Muskie. And again, I think it was Anthony Celebrezze. I looked through the list of Cabinet people, the other one it could have been is Larry O'Brien, but I think it was, and it may have been an undersecretary or something. But, you know, that's something that I'm sure wouldn't be that difficult to find because, you know, he spoke at Orono and I'm sure it was in the newspapers and everything. And then I did go to the, Lyndon Johnson came to Portland and I went down to that event. A hundred thousand people turned out in front of Portland City Hall to hear him speak, which was pretty impressive.

**MR:** And you mentioned the town council was pretty much, Orono town council . . . .

**JE:** Well not, not the town council, the Orono Democratic Town Committee, not the council, no.

**MR:** Oh, all right.

**JE:** You know, there was a Republican Town Committee and a Democratic Town Committee. And, you know, and the, you know, the faculty, in fact I don't remember, maybe one or two towns people in it but it was, you know, the active people were college faculty.

**MR:** Were most, or at least the majority of the faculty at UMO, were they leaning towards the Democratic spectrum of things?

**JE:** Well, I would, I'd probably say no. I think that probably the majority of the faculty were conservative Republicans. And in fact that's probably even true of the history department. But there were, the, they, there were a number of relatively young history faculty and, you know, I mentioned their names, who were, you know, liberal Democrats and, you know, they were the active ones that I got involved with.

**MR:** As far as you could tell, what was the Orono local political situation like, was that Democratic?

**JE:** Oh gosh, oh gosh, I, you know, I can't even say, you know, it was a, you know, it's a small town. You know, I suspect that it was, that probably the Republicans were in the majority. Although, you know, there were some mills in Orono, which I assume would have been Democrats. I suspect that Old Town was probably Democrat, but I don't even know that.

**MR:** Okay, well what was it like to be at the Lyndon Johnson speech in Portland?

**JE:** Well, it was, it was, you know, there's always positives and negatives. I had a ticket, you

know, to sit up with, you know, they had some stands set up around the president and I had a ticket. But there were so many people I couldn't- I gave up trying to get there. There was just a mass, you know, that, the area was just crammed with people, you could barely move. And, you know, it was exciting except, well I know what they'd done is they had, they had crammed one of the set of bleachers with high school students. And, you know, and they were, you know, they were like, you know, choreographed cheerleaders, you know, hollering and yelling and cheering and waving placards and things like that. So it was, you know, Lyndon Johnson liked to micro manage things, and you know, I think this operation was, was, I got the impression it was, you know, pretty much choreographed. But it was, you know, it was effective.

**MR:** And what about when Ed Muskie came to speak at Orono, was he pretty impressive?

**JE:** Well, see, I don't remember hearing him speak at that time. Again, when the Cabinet secretary came, Muskie was there but I don't, he may have introduced him but he didn't speak. It was the Cabinet secretary or under secretary who spoke, that was the event and Muskie was just there.

**MR:** All right, so what did you do after graduating from the UMO graduate program?

**JE:** What I did was, after I got my masters I decided to try for my Ph.D. so I applied in a number of different schools and ended up going to the University of Florida in Gainesville to get my Ph.D. in United States history.

**MR:** And what were some of the factors that led to that choice?

**JE:** Well, you know, basically everybody advised me to go someplace else for my Ph.D. Orono did have a Ph.D. program but I had, you know, I already had my B.A. and my M.A. there, and I decided, well my wife, I was married at that time, my wife and I decided to try some southern schools. Because, you know, I had spent four years in Orono, and that was before global warming and it was colder than hell, it would snow, ice, and so, you know, the result of those two things, you know, deciding to, you know, go to another part of the country, and also the cold winters. I applied in, I applied to North Carolina, Virginia, Duke and Florida and I got accepted everywhere, but Florida gave me the best financial package so I went to the University of Florida.

**MR:** And, you mentioned your wife, when did you meet your wife?

**JE:** I met my wife, I'm trying to think, actually when I was going to UMP, and we got married after I graduated in 1962.

**MR:** And is she, actually first of all what's her name?

**JE:** Her name is Linda Joyce Bolton, B-O-L-T-O-N.

**MR:** And has she shared, or did she at the time, share your political interests?

**JE:** Well, probably not. She wasn't, she's kind of, you know, I don't want to say apolitical, she's a Democrat and normally votes, but she, no she did not, she was not greatly interested in history, in politics. . . . or history.

**MR:** Okay. And, after you graduated with a Ph.D. at U Florida, well that must have been '66?

**JE:** Well actually, no, let's see, let's see I went, I was there, I grad-, got my masters in '65, went to Florida in the fall of '65, I was there two years doing my course work. And my written exams, then I took a job at, teaching job at Appalachian State University in (*name*), North Carolina. Then I had a chance to go to the Harvard Business School as a research assistant. And I was there, actually my position was assistant editor of a historical journal, the *Business History Review*, but I had time to, and money to do the research on my dissertation. So I was there for two years and then in 1970 I took a position here at what was then the University of Maine at Portland as an instructor, and I, I have to think of the sequence here. Okay, I took my writtens and orals before I left Florida, then I did my research when I was at the Harvard Business School, and then I did my writing the first two summers I taught here, and I went down to defend my dissertation in 1973 and got my Ph.D. in 1973.

**MR:** Actually, while you were at the University of Florida, were you still active in politics?

**JE:** No, I was not. In fact I, I worked, well I did get some financial aid, but I, while I was there, I worked in a filling station. And also my wife worked, so I really, and then, you know, in graduate school I really didn't have the time for, didn't do any outside activities. Also at that time, we got to Florida, my first child was born so were married, one child, both of us working, so I was not involved.

Although, the other thing though that I did do, after I graduated, got my B.A. at Orono in '62, I began doing free lance editorial cartoons, political cartoons, for the *Maine Sunday Telegram*. And I did that actually for three years and I had, oh, probably (*unintelligible word*) scrapbook, you know, thirty to forty cartoons published for which I was paid for at, by the *Maine Sunday Telegram*. But then, again after, after I got my masters and went to Florida, I just, first of all I was out of the state and, and so I stopped my cartooning and, and pretty much stopped my political activity.

**MR:** And since 1970 you've been teaching at this campus, ever since?

**JE:** That's correct.

**MR:** And what has been your particular field of interest in history and politics?

**JE:** Well, actually my, I got into economic history. My masters, for my masters thesis I did a history of the Katahdin Ironworks, which was a nineteenth century blast furnace iron, they manufactured pig iron up north of Brownville Junction. And then, so that, I took economic history at Orono and kind of got interested in it and ended up doing my M.A. on an economic history topic. And my dissertation, for my dissertation I did a history of auto safety, of the auto industry and the development of automotive safety. Which does remind me that my one other

interest starting in high school was automobiles, I did interested in autos, and that's led to my interest in the auto industry and auto safety. I got very interested in safety in the, well, in the late fifties, early sixties. And so when I came to pick my topic for my dissertation I picked that topic and, and ultimately got my dissertation published.

And of all things just, like three years ago, I got a call from NOVA, they did a series on safety and one of them was on auto safety, they found my book, and they interviewed me for that program. It was kind of neat, particularly after all those years, it was published in like '76 and, you know, so it was twenty years later when it finally got some attention. But I interviewed some interesting people, I interviewed Ralph Nader, Abraham Ribicoff who had been involved with safety in the Senate, and Robert McNamara who had been president of Ford Motor Company when they first started some of their safety features.

**MR:** And when you were interviewing Ralph Nader, did you have any opportunities to talk about his dealings with Ed Muskie? I know for a while they were pretty (*unintelligible word*).

**JE:** No, they, there's a story there. I, one of the nice things about being at the Harvard Business School in this position was I did have some, some travel money. So I got to- I got to go to. . . . Oh. I went to Detroit for instance, and I interviewed people there. And I went to Washington and interviewed people. And I- and I don't know how I got it, but I got Ralph's telephone number and when I got to Washington I called the number, and Ralph lives in a boarding house, or he did at that time, with no phone. There's a phone in the hall. And somebody answered and he wasn't there and I left a message, and about one in the morning in my motel room the phone rings, it's Ralph Nader. And I said I want to make an appointment to interview you, and he said well if you want to ask me any questions, you've got to do it now. So I interviewed him over the telephone, and I've never met him in person until, you know, gosh, twenty years later when he spoke here on campus and I went up afterwards and introduced myself and gave him a copy of my book.

**MR:** Okay, I'm going to stop the tape and flip it.

**JE:** Sure.

*End of Side A*  
*Side B*

**MR:** This is the second side of the tape of the interview with Joel Eastman on August 6th, 1999. And we were talking about some of the people in Washington, like Ralph Nader, that you had the opportunity to interview. You also mentioned Senator Abraham Ribicoff.

**JE:** Yes.

**MR:** What was he like?

**JE:** Well, that was, that's another great story. Ribicoff had, as governor of Connecticut, he had, he'd gotten interested in the highway safety issue and he'd ordered the police to crack down on

speeders. And then when he ended up in the Senate it was his committee that really launched the, the hearings that, you know, ultimately led to federal regulation of automobiles. And so that was the reason I wanted to interview him, you know, to talk about, you know, how he got interested in that and so forth. So I called and I scheduled an interview and it was like at maybe twelve o'clock, and he came in from the Senate and he was hungry, and he was, he said, oh, I have to talk about auto safety again, you know, I'm tired of talking about all that. I'm hungry, I want my lunch. And so it was not a great interview, I didn't get much out of him.

But, now the McNamara interview was wonderful, he was, that was when he was president of the World Bank, it was scheduled like at 5:30, you know, after he, kind of after he finished his business. He came to the door, I was waiting outside, and he came and ushered me into this enormous office, you know with, one end was his desk and then it was set up as kind of a sitting room in the other end. And, in fact I remember he, there was an enormous wrought iron and glass ashtray, a wrought iron stand with a big, and when he came, no, it must have been, the secretary ushered me in and he came over to greet me and he ran into the ashtray and knocked it over. It didn't break, but he was as gracious and cooperative and nice as he could have been. You know, I must have interviewed him, well, you know, a half hour to forty-five minutes, and then afterwards, when I wrote my first draft of my chapters, I sent the chapters that contained interview material to each of the people I'd interviewed, because I interviewed probably, you know, twenty to twenty-five people. And I sent them the drafts and asked them to review them. The one person who sent back his draft was Robert McNamara, and he had gone through it himself and made little comments and corrections. In fact I still have that. Nobody else returned them, except the president of the World Bank.

I also interviewed Congressman Kenneth Roberts, who was, who had actually started or attempted to deal with the issue of auto safety back in the fifties and hadn't, I think the one thing that came out of his was require-, the federal government requiring certain safety features on cars that they purchased. But he was, you know, a mild mannered, you know, not well-known person but very, very nice and very cooperative and, you know, his interview was very good. And I guess those, the other people that I interviewed were safety researchers and engineers rather than political types.

**MR:** And from your perspective as an economic historian, how would you say that Portland, the community of Portland and Maine in general also have changed over the period that you've been living here?

**JE:** Well, you know, during the war of course Portland was booming and, you know, certain parts of Maine boomed, you know, the, not only the steel ship building industry, you know, at Portsmouth and, there was a shipyard here in Portland, and in Bath boomed, but there was a revival of the wooden ship building industry. They built, you know, wooden launches and barges and mine sweepers, you know, a lot of old wooden shipyards were brought back.

And then of course every Maine industry benefited from war contracts in some way, you know. B&M was turning out K-rations, Pepperill was turning out, in Biddeford, parachutes and, you know, and like the tool and die industry, the paper industry, every industry benefited.

Then after the war, you know, Maine really went into the doldrums, you know, everything was way behind the national average, you know, the growth, growth of industry, you know, wages and incomes. You know, Maine was behind, you know all except, you know, Mississippi in almost every category. In fact, you know, that was one of the things that, you know, that Ed Muskie and the first Democrats to get into power in Maine were pushing, you know, economic development to try to improve jobs and income. And, you know they, I'm trying to think, you know, it really wasn't until, you know things started getting better in the seventies. But you know, it was really the eighties when, you know, we had a, had a boom, you know, part of the national boom and then, you know, then the recession that happened afterwards. But since then, you know, particularly southern Maine has been, you know, has been doing quite well, you know, I think sometimes growing faster than the national average. And, you know, since that recession in the late eighties, early nineties, you know, it seems to be, you know, pretty solid, substantial growth and, and adaptation to changes in the economy, of the decline of manufacturing and the increase in services. You know the, the area that, of Maine that, you know, has the most difficulty, you know, is rural areas, the, particularly, you know, Aroostook county and, you know, downeast, Eastport, you know, they're not sharing in the, in the growth of the rest of Maine, and that, but of course that's, you know, that's also a part of a national phenomenon of rural areas losing population to urban areas.

**MR:** Okay, and, I'd like to ask you a little bit about Bob York.

**JE:** Okay, Sure.

**MR:** (*unintelligible phrase*), and maybe your relationship with him or (*unintelligible word*) work?

**JE:** Okay.

**MR:** So what would you, how would say his work has been significant to the state (*unintelligible word*)?

**JE:** Well, let me first tell you how, when I first met Bob. When I was an undergraduate at Orono he was there, and he taught me history and I took Maine history from him. And, in fact, you know, did pretty well. I, he had people do research papers and I picked the Cumberland and Oxford Canal which actually had been an interest of mine and did my research paper on that. Then Bob, Bob moved into administration and became dean of students at Gorham State College. And, and so in 1971, you know, Gorham State and UMP merged together under the new expanded University of Maine which brought in the former teachers colleges. And so he, when the two campuses merged, he became a colleague because even though he was a dean, he taught Maine history, and that's when I got to know him. And then eventually he stepped down as dean and joined the department and taught with, you know, was a full time member of the department for many years. And I got to know him very well and, you know, and had I think a very good relationship with him. He kind of saw me as his successor in teaching Maine history, well, what happened is when he finally retired I took over the teaching of Maine history and he continued to teach summers for us. And so I think I have a very good and positive relationship with Bob. And, you know, I think Bob's contribution was almost more in the area of public

history. He was very involved with the state park department and historic sites, and I'm not sure. I don't know if, you know, I can't speak to what his formal relationship was with the park department but I know he was involved in some kind of advisory capacity.

He ultimately became appointed Maine State Museum-, Maine State Historian, the state historian, and in fact I think he still holds that position. And I assume he was appointed by Ed Muskie because it's, you know, kind of a political appointment. But he was very active in, you know, supporting state historic sites and, you know, advising Parks and Recreation on that, he was a big supporter of the creation of the Maine State Archives and Museum, and I suspect that he served on, you know, some kind of advisory capacity for the museum and the archives. So I think that's where he probably made his, his greatest contributions.

He also spoke all over the state of Maine on Maine history topics, you know, to local historical societies and civic groups, and I know he was, you know, he would go anywhere almost to speak and, you know, and traveled the whole state of Maine. And then through his teaching at Orono and here he, you know, he taught thousands of students, particularly teachers who went on to teach Maine history, so I think his major contributions were in that area of historic sites and the museum, the archives, teaching and promoting Maine history. He was, I think he was on the board of Maine Historical for a period of time, too. As far as his, as far as research and writing, he did, you know, the one thing that he did do was encyclopedia articles. I know, I think the, and I don't know how many different encyclopedias he did articles for, but I know for instance I think the Americana articles were written by him and, you know, they're fairly, you know, the major encyclopedia articles are fairly substantial articles. He published his dissertation but other than that and the encyclopedia articles, I don't, I don't know that he really published much of anything.

And in fact he was, back in the early seventies the former teachers colleges all had, well a number of them, Farmington and then Gorham and, Farmington, Gorham, and I guess Presque Isle all had centennials. In fact I organized a program on the history of the teachers colleges that was held on the Gorham campus and we had speakers who spoke on the history of each of the teachers college campuses, and Bob gave the presentation on Gorham State Teachers College and did an excellent job, and gave, I know he gave a talk for the alumni association on the same thing. And he was selected to write a history of, well I guess it was, it was going to be both the Gorham campus and UMP for the centennial of the Gorham campus and he was (*unintelligible phrase*), and I know he did the, I know he did a lot of research but he never, ever produced a finished product. And in fact, you know, they kept after him for years, where is the history, and he never, ever, you know, turned over a manuscript even though he had given, you know, wonderful talks on and obviously, you know, had done research, was very knowledgeable, but never finished his manuscript.

**MR:** Okay, well actually let's turn to talk about your own views of the state and state politics as an active state historian.

**JE:** Okay.

**MR:** What, who are some of the state political figures, either Democratic, Republican or

independent that you've been following over the years?

**JE:** Well, you know, obviously Ed Muskie and, you know, in many ways Ed Muskie symbolizes the rebirth of two party politics in Maine after, you know, a hundred years of the state being, you know, a one party Republican state. You know, Muskie wasn't alone, he was, there was a, you know, a cadre, a group of young politicians like Frank Coffin and Jim Oliver and later Ken Curtis and Peter Kyros who, you know, really put, put the, recreated the Democratic Party and put it on the map and made it, you know, turned it eventually into the majority party in Maine, which was quite a remarkable feat. See, as a historian, you know, I would argue based on the demographics of Maine, you know, the, the, you know, the make up of Maine people and the occupations they followed and income that, you know, Maine should have always been a Democratic state. In fact, you know, Maine was Democrat until the Civil War. You know, it was the Civil War that made the Republicans the majority party and, you know, and for all kinds of reasons, tradition and so forth, people stayed Republican. Even though, you know, if you looked at it from a, you know, from a practical standpoint, I mean they, they shouldn't be Rep-, you know, a farmer shouldn't be a Republican. I mean the Republicans aren't looking out for them, and obviously working people. So, you know, I see the rebirth of the Democratic Party as Maine kind of returning to its true roots and interests that, you know, had always been there.

Oh, I've got to tell you a great story. When I lived in Buxton and I had switched to the Democratic Party. In the village of West Buxton was, there was a local business man who owned, well you know, the gas station and the frozen food locker and an oil business and he was, you know, like the, you know, one of the, oh, I guess wealthiest people in the community of Buxton and Hollis. And I stopped in one day, I can't, maybe just to get gas, and he was sitting outside leaning back in a chair with the *Press Herald* in front of him and he said, look at this, he said, all these Democrats are foreigners. And he read off, you know, Franco names, Irish names, Italian names, Greek names and he says, all these Democrats are foreigners, which kind of reflected a lot of, you know, the prejudices of, you know, W.A.S.P. Mainers towards non W.A.S.P. Mainers. So, you know, I think that, you know, what Muskie and his colleagues did, well number one is to bring, you know, bring the Dem-, the two party system back, which you know, you need, you know, it's healthy to have that. And also to bring a lot, lots of people who had been Republicans only because of tradition or family history back to the Democratic Party where they really belonged, the party that really represented their interests. And in, also in, in the policies that they pursued, you know, really much better represented the best interests of the people of Maine than the Republicans. And I'll give you an example.

Another I think very outstanding Maine political leader was Ken Curtis, and I came back to Maine in 1970 when he was governor and when he was, you know, leading the effort to, you know, make a lot of basic, fundamental reforms like, you know, doing away with executive council, reorganizing state government to, you know, make it, well to give the governor more power and make state government more responsive to the needs of Maine. You know, setting up a modern executive committee, system, where the governor appointed department heads and they served at his interest, and terms expired at the end of it, which hadn't been the case. And, well, you know, and creating the University of Maine system, creating the archives and the state museum, getting the income tax passed. Although I would say, you know, a lot of these things

wouldn't have happened without the support of liberal Republican, Harrison Richardson for instance. You know, there are some Republicans who are, who are really Democrats for all practical purposes, you know, they tend to be more liberal, and Richardson was one of those, you know, he was what I would call a liberal Republican who, who cooperated with Ken Curtis and other Democrats to get through some of the reforms, like the income tax and the environmental legislation. So, you know, it's never just one party, it's, it, you know, it takes the cooperation of both parties.

Oh, let's see, other, you know they, you know what happened under McKernan was, you know, I think that, that was one of the low points in Maine political history that goes back to, you know, the dispute, there was a disputed election in the late 19th century where one party took over the State House and refused to let the other party in, (*unintelligible phrase*), but that whole episode when McKernan defeated Brennan, you know, I supported Brennan. And, in fact one of the staff people here, Tim Honey, did an economic projection that showed, you know, that the state was going to have a huge deficit. And, you know, McKernan denied it and, you know, didn't admit it until he'd been elected, claimed that the s-, you know, that the state was in a healthy situation. And then, you know, then he admitted, well then it was revealed that, you know, that the state was in real serious trouble and that started off the several years of, you know, really horrible partisan politics and uncooperative. And, and coming up with makeshift solutions to try to, to get the state's finances in order. It, you know, it's really an embarrassing period in Maine politics, and I think we're finally risen above that today.

I've got to tell you a joke about McKernan, to the record, because I think it's a great one. Somebody said, I don't know who, about McKernan that he had a fifty dollar haircut on a five dollar head. You know, McKernan, you know, I, I just never believed that McKernan was very bright, you know, that he was, he was really over his head when he was in office, particularly when the financial crisis came along.

**MR:** And what's your assessment of some other Maine governors, maybe Gov. Longley?

**JE:** Oh, you know, that now was another really bad period. Yeah, I was teaching here when Longley was governor. And, you know, again, that was, see, one of my current pet peeves is Independence. I see that, the rise of, well of, you know, and it's not really Independence, it's people failing to select a party and, you know, arguing that, you know, that they don't, you know, they don't like either political party and they want to pick and choose. You know, I think that's irresponsible and that you have to, you know, pick, you know, one of the, you know right now the two major parties are Republican and Democrat. You have to pick the one that best reflects your views and then work with it to try to make it better rather than, I see, you know the, not declaring a party as in effect a cop out. And I see, you know, the Independent candidates as, you know, using a, you know, a gimmick to get elected, you know, by using the Independent route and in effect splitting the vote into three, you know, groups, you know, your, you can be elected with a minority, you know, all you got to do is get a majority of the votes cast but you, you know, both he and, both Longley and the current governor have used that, you know, what I say is a gimmick as a way of getting elected. And I think that that is in many ways unfortunate.

And Longley was, well I hate to s-, well I'll say it, you know, I think he was, again I don't know

how bright Longley was, and he was I think a pretty shallow person, and you know, very simplistic in his outlook. And also a vindictive person because he had, I don't know if he chaired it or had been on the committee to study the university and they, which made a lot of recommendations, and not all the recommendations were followed so when he became governor he really went after the university. It was almost like he had a vendetta against it. You know, cutting our budget and, you know, the years under Longley were horrible, were terribly under funded and, you know, put us way behind. You know, we had to defer maintenance and things like that. And also I think Longley was a, what's the word that I want, which I can't think, he, but I think he resorted to some hypocritical devices when he was governor. For instance, on the Indian land claims issue he in effect encouraged people to, you know, to harass or take action against Native Americans for, you know, for the problems that the Indians lands claim case had caused the state of Maine. He came out with a statement that he was pleased that nobody had physically attacked any Native Americans because of this, all of the problems they were causing, which, I can't think of the word that I want, but it describes a person who does something like that.

You know, I think, you know King, King is a Democrat who didn't think he could win the Democratic nomination so he goes for the independent route instead. And, you know, I don't think he's done a bad job as governor. But again, you know again, I think the only reason that he was able to get elected was because, you know, of using this flukey Independent route to getting elected where you, you know, you don't have to go through the primary and all you have to win is, you know, thirty four percent of the vote to get elected.

**MR:** And how about the Republican Party's development? We talked about Democratic and independent party (*unintelligible word*).

**JE:** Well, you know, the, I guess it's kind of my view that, that since the rebirth of the Democratic Party they, you know, some of the best and most able people have become Democrats. And that I really feel that the Republicans really have, you know, a problem of finding good people, good candidates. That they just, they just haven't been able to find, you know, in recent years bright, able people to run for office and so the Republicans have almost been, you know, kind of a, like a bankrupt party or decadent party that just lacks the people to, you know, to mount I think, you know, good responsible leadership either in the governor's office or in the house or the senate. And, you know of course in the recent years some of the conservative Democrats have become, as they have nationally, much more aggressive and active and I think that that has, you know, in many ways soured politics in Maine and made it more difficult for the Republican Party because, you know, the conservatives see everything as, you know, as black and white and, and you know, things like abortion, you know, it's totally right or totally wrong, and you know, are less willing to compromise so it makes, it makes, you know, the legislative process much more difficult and much more, you know, much more difficult for the two parties to get along and much more rancorous in debate and so forth. You know, that's not to say the Republicans haven't produced some, some good people, you know, Bill Cohen, again I think Bill Cohen is a Democrat, I mean he's, he's decided to be a liberal Republican. But, and I'm trying to think if there's any other Republicans I can think of.

I wanted to mention Mitchell, you know, I supported Mitchell when he ran for governor and he

was defeated by Longley which was, you know, such a, because you know, I think Mitchell is one of the most brilliant people ever to serve in politics and one of the most brilliant politicians, you know, he is just, just a remarkable person. And to think he was defeated, well, you know, then he was appointed, you know, he never won an office and had to be appointed to the senate position by Brennan which was a, I think was a very courageous thing for Brennan to do. And, you know, to, to, he, you know I suspect, you know, he knew how good Mitchell was and took the opportunity of, I can't remember what it was, somebody died or, oh, it was when Muskie was appointed secretary of state, yeah, that he took that opportunity to give Mitchell a chance, in effect. And that's all it took, you know, for, you know, and then, you know, he was always overwhelmingly reelected after, after that. And, you know, and then to go on and become senate majority leader, then that whole Ireland thing, but, you know, Mitchell, I've seen a lot of Mitchell and, you know, I'm extremely impressed. He's just a, you know, he's so bright, so articulate and such a good politician that, you know, I think he's quite remarkable.

**MR:** And what's your take on Senator Margaret Chase Smith?

**JE:** What's my take on Margaret Chase Smith? Well, you know, Margaret was an old, how do I want to put this? Margaret was not a feminist, Margaret was a, was a, you know, a traditional woman, and basically, you know, she, she was a, you know, fairly conservative Republican at a time when there weren't that many in office. And, you know, and survived by, you know, basically trying to do what male politicians did. You know, she rarely used the fact that she was a woman. And I think she, you know, I, you know, taken that she was a conservative Republican from Maine, you know, she, I think she did a good job in the House and the Senate, you know, particularly given the fact that she was a woman and, you know, hadn't ever gone to college or anything. But, you know, of course, you know, the high point of her career was her declaration of conscience in many ways, and I think over the years she did, you know, I think she stayed in Washington too long and got, you know, lost touch with, particularly after Maine became a Democratic state, with her constituents and relied too much on her, her assistant, her chief of staff who was a retired Navy guy. And, you know, her last campaign was a disaster, you know, it was embarrassing when, when she was defeated for reelection to the Senate. And after she was defeated I think, you know, she bounced back and I think, you know, in her latter years, you know as a private citizen, won back the respect of Maine people.

**MR:** And how about, I was just thinking, oh right, Bill Hathaway, Senator Bill Hathaway?

**JE:** Okay, it was Hathaway who defeated her, yeah, and Hathaway I did, you know, Hathaway was active in the party at that time and, you know, I think he was, he was probably the most surprised person in the world when he defeated Margaret Chase Smith. But for some reason Hathaway just didn't have what it took to, you know, to sustain himself in office. I think he was- was he defeated by Cohen? I think he was defeated by Cohen.

**MR:** I think it was Cohen.

**JE:** Yeah, I mean Hathaway was, you know, basically a good, a good person who, you know, represented us pretty well. But I don't know, for some reason he just didn't have the persona or the charisma that, you know, that Cohen had. You know, I mean Cohen did this stupid thing,

walked the whole state of Maine. I mean it was, it was another gimmick, but it was a way to get him some attention and, you know, Cohen is a pretty impressive person and he's very bright and quite articulate and, again, not in the same class as Mitchell, but.

Oh, I mentioned Peter Kyros [Sr.], I did, I did know Peter Kyros a little, that was another one, kind of like a Hathaway who, you know, was a, kind of a flash in the pan. I don't know if you remember he, he got picked up in Washington for drunk driving, he'd left a party kind of intoxicated and, you know, drove home kind of crunching along the sides of the cars parked along the street. And in fact I remember him making a joke about that later on at a, one time when I saw him. And his son, Peter Kyros, Jr. got very much involved in politics, in fact he was involved as a high school student back in '64 I think, and went to Washington and worked as a, an aide to a congressman or a senator. In fact when, oh, when the senator from Missouri was picked as vice presidential candidate by, you know, the guy from North Dakota, Kyros jumped from one staff position to this guy's staff position. And then he, then he had to step down because of the whole, he had, it had, it became revealed that he had mental health problems and he stepped down and, oh, who was the senator from, it was North or South Dakota, he was, in fact he was a historian. Anyway, that's just an aside.

**MR:** And also, we didn't mention Governor Reed, what do you think of his term in office?

**JE:** Well, you know, I guess I kind of felt that Reed was kind of a joke. You know, he had become, in fact he became governor because he was, you know, majority leader and, and I can't, I'm trying to remember how that happened. He was in the senate. . . .

**MR:** I think he was in the state senate, he was, either that or speaker of the state house, I don't remember.

**JE:** Well, but he, he got, Clinton Clauson got elected governor and died, and then, and Reed succeeded him because, see we don't have a lieutenant governor and, I think it is the president of the senate that becomes, because that's the way Percival Baxter got to be governor the first time, because he was president of the senate and succeeded when the governor died. In fact, I did, Reed was one of my favorite politicians as a cartoonist because he was always doing kind of dumb things and I was able to, I did a lot of cartoons about John Reed. I think John Reed was a decent person who pro-, you know, who, you know, you know, was an accidental governor and kind of, you know, perhaps got over his head a little bit in office.

**MR:** Okay, well is there anyone else or anything else that you'd like to talk about?

**JE:** Anyone else in Maine politics. Well I'll tell a Muskie story, which is not necessarily a positive one, but we invited him as our commencement speaker probably five years ago now. And we probably gave him an honorary degree, I don't remember what the occasion was, but we were on a very tight commencement because, you know, people don't like to stay. You know, it starts, I think it starts at nine and we're out of there, we like to be out of there before twelve, so everybody who speaks has a limit, you know, and that's made very clear in advance. Well, Ed Muskie gets up there, he had apparently not prepared anything, and he gets up there and he talks about whatever comes into his head. And he talks and he talks and he rambles and, I don't

know, he must have gone at least a half an hour. And the audience starts leaving and even some of the graduates start getting up and leaving before he finally stopped and we were able to finish it. But that was, that was not his finest hour, you know, I've seen Muskie give good speeches, but that wasn't one of them.

**MR:** What were some of the good speeches you saw?

**JE:** Oh God, now you're, no, I shouldn't have said that. I guess probably the ones that I would have witnessed would have been ones that were carried on, on television. And this was probably, you know, when he was in the Senate and then later when he was, I don't know if I saw him when he was, well when he was campaigning for the Democratic nomination. And a number of times he got picked to speak for the Democratic Party, you know, under the equal time provision, and, you know, I, you know, I thought that his, you know the national speeches that he gave that were televised were very effective.

**MR:** Okay, and, actually one last little thing I didn't mention, what's your perspective on the recent green party movements?

**JE:** Well, you know, I think, I think, you know, it's- I think it's a tiny minority. It, it's, you know, I think, you know, Maine people are very concerned about the environment but, you know, most of them take, do not take a radical view on the environment. And so, you know, I think the, you know, the greens are a kind of, balanced off by the radicals on the other side who, you know, who, you know, don't want any regulation of land or timber lands or all that so I don't, you know, really see them as a, you know, a significant political force.

**MR:** Okay, and I guess as a final overview question, what would you say Muskie's legacy for state and national politics (*unintelligible word*)?

**JE:** Oh gosh, well I think, you know, I think Muskie's legacy is in, you know, in the best tradition of Maine politics and, you know, and that, you know, he is, has got to be one of the, you know, most able, most successful politicians in Maine history. You know, it really goes back to, you know, to compare it back in the late nineteenth century when the Republican Party was at its peak and was sending some very talented people to Washington, you know, people like Thomas Brackett Reed and William [Pitt] Fessenden and, and Hannibal Hamlin. You know we, in the late nineteenth century we sent some very able people to Washington and, who moved into prominent positions and made, well James G. Blaine, and made significant national and even international contributions to, to the United States and the world, you know. And Ed Muskie is kind of like those people for the twentieth century when the Democratic Party was the majority party in the country and in Maine, you know, we were able to, you know, very able people were able to go up through the ranks and be elected to office and be appointed to national and even international positions. I mean like, you know, Muskie served as secretary of state, Mitchell served as majority leader and then, you know, in the Ireland thing, you know, Ken Curtis served as ambassador to Canada and Frank Coffin, you know, became a federal judge. And, but, you know, in many ways because, you know, Muskie was governor, he kind of symbolizes the, you know, the rebirth of the two-party system and the return of the Democratic Party to state and national prominence.

**MR:** Great, thanks a lot for your time.

**JE:** Oh, this was fun, it was a pleasure.

*End of Interview*