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Interview with Joseph A. Mackey, Jr. by Andrea L'Hommedieu

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee

Mackey, Joseph A., Jr.

Interviewer

L'Hommedieu, Andrea

Date

October 16, 2003

Place

Augusta, Maine

ID Number

MOH 411

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Biographical Note

Joseph A. Mackey, Jr. was born in Providence, Rhode Island on July 22, 1947. His father, Joseph Mackey, was an attorney, and his mother, Margaret Mackey, was a teacher. At the time of this interview in 2003, she was 93 years old. He attended the University of Pennsylvania and received his degree in English Literature. Mackey moved to Maine in 1970, and later went to law school at the University of Maine in 1973. He worked on many Democratic campaigns in the state of Maine, and also worked on the presidential Campaign of Jimmy Carter.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: family politics; politics concerning the Vietnam War; Jimmy Carter presidential campaign; Ken Curtis; Carter's "peanut people"; John Martin; Maine State Legislature; term limits; George Mitchell; Muskie and Carter campaigns working together; Ed Muskie; legal counsel to the Maine Senate; Charlie Pray; Louis Jalbert; Larry Benoit; Muskie in Portland, Maine; Jane Muskie; and Bob Monks.

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Transcript

Andrea L'Hommedieu: This is an interview with Joe Mackey at his office at 185 State Street in Augusta on October the 16th, the year 2003, and this is Andrea L'Hommedieu. If you could just start by giving me your full name and spelling it.

Joseph Mackey: It's Joseph Mackey, it's M-A-C-K-E-Y.

AL: And where and when were you born?

JM: I was born in Providence, Rhode Island, 1947.

AL: And the date?

JM: July 22nd.

AL: And is that where you grew up?

JM: I grew up, I spent the first sixteen years there.

AL: And what brought you to Maine?

JM: I came in Maine, to Maine in 1970. I was just out of college and I was looking for an alternative service job for, I was applying as a conscientious objector during the Vietnam era. And ended up finding a job here and ended up staying.

AL: Was there anything that connected you with Maine before coming?

JM: Not really, not really. I had a couple friends who came up here after college and so I came, it was a place to go at the time and I was lucky enough to find a job doing that so it just sensibly worked out.

AL: And what was it like growing up in Providence in the fifties and sixties?

JM: It was an interesting place. There was a lot of activities, a lot of school activities. It was pretty active a place. Most of my activities were centered around school. Interesting place, quite a bit of sports, I played football and hockey and baseball. And it was, you know, a good group of people I think that I was with so it was a really good time growing up.

AL: What were your parents' names and their occupations?

JM: My father was Joseph A. Mackey, and he's a lawyer, and my mother is Margaret Mackey and she's a teacher. She's still alive, she's ninety-three.

AL: And do they still live, does she still live in Rhode Island?

JM: It is kind of interesting; she lives on the same street that I grew up on as a kid. They built an assisted living project on the hill that I used to slide on as a kid and so she's right there, you know, a quarter of a mile from where I grew up.

AL: And so did your dad's profession have a bearing on what you wanted to do?

JM: It most likely did at some point. I kind of always thought, I'm the last of, I'm the youngest of three children and the two others are lawyers, too, so it obviously did. And I sort of resisted going to law school for a while and then ended up doing it anyway.

AL: Now, you went to college where?

JM: Went to the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

AL: And you majored in?

JM: English literature.

AL: And then on, you went to law school eventually.

JM: I went to law school at the University of Maine.

AL: And when did you first start feeling you had an interest in politics? Was it the Vietnam era or before that?

JM: My father had run once for mayor of Providence and he ran once for attorney general in Rhode Island, so I think that's where the original start came.

AL: So were you involved helping your father in those campaigns?

JM: No, I was pretty young at the time so I wasn't really involved in that, but it was always, politics were always the talk of the house.

AL: Do you remember any of the political conversations that stick out in your mind?

JM: I don't remember any particular ones but I know my father really couldn't stand Richard Nixon and he was a big Adlai Stevenson fan. Didn't like the Kennedys too much, either, that was interesting, he didn't really like them. He was a Stevenson supporter back in I think it was, 1956 and '60.

AL: And so would you characterize your parents politically as middle of the road Democrats?

JM: I kind of think so, yeah, fairly much middle of the road Democrats. My mother used to switch parties every so often but, not really parties but votes, and my father was a pretty hard core Democrat, but on the conservative side of the Democratic Party.

AL: During those years, in the fifties in Rhode Island, had you ever heard of Ed Muskie?

JM: I probably had not.

AL: So you came to Maine and went to law school in what year?

JM: Well, I came to Maine in 1970 and I started law school in '73.

AL: And at that time you were pretty much against the Vietnam War.

JM: Yup.

AL: Passively, or were you -?

JM: I was relatively active, in anti-war protests and things like that.

AL: Do you recall any specific instances?

JM: Oh, I went down with Abby Hoffman to the Pentagon when we tried to levitate it one year, with a large group of people, and I went down, I was down to the Martin Luther King speech. And those are the two big ones I think I can remember.

AL: So you went to law school at the University of Maine. Was there any, I know there are quite a, there's sort of a famous, pretty famous group of people that went to law school at the University of Maine in the seventies.

JM: I guess quite a few. Jock McKernan was there, I'm trying to think who was there also in the seventies, there was, well quite a few people now, Janet Mills was in my class. And you had Kathy Moynihan who's now working for Gov. Baldacci was in our class, too. Early seventies, Joe Brennan was there a little earlier, he may have gotten out in the sixties. And a series of legislators who've gone through there, too.

AL: Jim Tierney.

JM: Jim Tierney, that's right, Jim was a couple years ahead of me I think. Phil Merrill who ran for governor and the senate once, was I think, a year or two ahead of me.

AL: Did you have, did you feel that your time at the Maine law school was, had a lot of political interest around it?

JM: No, not terribly. I mean, it was during the, sort of the Vietnam, the end of the Vietnam War and there were a lot of people who were kind of influenced I think by that period, who were there. But my, in fact in '72 before I went there I was a McGovern supporter over Muskie in 1972. Didn't really know Ed Muskie at the time and McGovern was the, sort of the most anti war of the candidates.

AL: Okay, so that, the candidates' stance on the Vietnam War did you feel played a big role in your -?

JM: There was no question, no question about that. It was a defining time for people. And Muskie was running with Hubert Humphrey I believe at the time, and we went to some Democratic, the convention, and it was, there was a lot of testiness there between the traditional Maine Democrats and then the newer people who were coming in who were largely motivated by the anti-war sentiment.

AL: Now, are you thinking of '72 when he was running for the presidential nomination, or '68 when he was running for vice president?

JM: In '72, '72, yeah.

AL: And I think that was the year they wanted, some people at the conference wanted to have him as the favorite son.

JM: Yes.

AL: Do you remember that term being used?

JM: Yes, and the anti war folks that I was with were much more convinced that we ought to have somebody who was of an anti-war candidate.

AL: Do you have recollections of Ken Curtis?

JM: I didn't have any real recollections of Ken at the time. I know him now because he is the, the Public Affairs Group where I work is a subsidiary of Curtis Thaxter Stevens Broder & Micoleau, so.

AL: Oh, okay, so you didn't -?

JM: I knew of Ken, I really didn't know him well. I didn't get to know him really until the '76 campaign.

AL: And that was for Jimmy Carter?

JM: Jimmy Carter.

AL: You were helping in Maine to organize?

JM: I was the field director for the Maine part of the Jimmy Carter campaign, and I worked with Marty Rogarth, who was the campaign manager.

AL: And what were your experiences like during that campaign, what did you do?

JM: Well, I was, we got started somewhat late in terms of the actual, it was after I got out of school, I graduated in '76 and I think we started sometime in July, the campaign office. So we had to put together sort of an entire volunteer grouping and do all the stuff you have to do, arrange all the phones, get the printing out, and there was a little less of a media emphasis then than there is now. So we had to put together a sort of campaign from scratch, and it was an enjoyable time. Marty Rogarth is one of my favorite people, and we both were very different folks but we got along pretty well. Marty was, I was the night person, Marty was the morning person.

AL: And you said you got to know Ken Curtis at that time. What was his role?

JM: Well, he was, I'm trying to think what he was doing. He was Carter's campaign chair I think in Maine. And he later then became, no, Ken was, I think he was, Ken was then, went to the, became chair of the Democratic National Committee I believe after Carter was elected, and

then he became ambassador to Canada. But Ken was a friend of his I think from his days as governor, he knew Jimmy from the Democratic Governor's Conference and they became good friends and he was the, sort of the leading Carter person in Maine at the time.

AL: Now, during that campaign, Senator Muskie was at the same time running for reelection to the Senate. Did you, did your campaigns cross over anywhere?

JM: Very much. They were upstairs in the building. I believe we were on the, I can't remember, we were on the, 22 Monument Square, we were on the third floor, they were on the fifth or fourth or sixth, I can't really remember. But, so we worked a lot of things together, you know, we would do some events together and then towards the election generally the campaign staff kind of divided up, and we ran a coordinated campaign for getting out the vote. And I, my responsibility was, towards the end of the campaign, was Portland. But my good friend Mary McAleney did sort of all the surrounding towns from there. And so we sort off of our individual campaigns and all worked together on the joint campaign.

AL: And I understand that you sort of first met and got involved at the Democratic headquarters on Ocean Street in South Portland? I think, Pat was saying -

JM: No, no, that doesn't ring a bell. The Democratic headquarters was actually in Portland. There probably was a South Portland office.

AL: That's probably what she meant.

JM: And that's where I may have met Pat at the time.

AL: Yeah, maybe that's what she was referring to. And then this came later.

JM: Well, it was about the same, no, it was about the same time. No, I met Pat during that campaign.

AL: And Mary McAleney, you mentioned her a minute ago, do you remember the story about her taking Charlie Jacob's place?

JM: I don't remember, I didn't know that, at the time, but she was, she sort of was roughly the equivalent of what I was doing. She had, for Muskie, but she had York and Cumberland counties which were the most populous counties, so Mary and I worked together a lot on organizing during that time.

AL: Did you have a chance to observe or meet Senator Muskie during that '76 period?

JM: Yeah, but not very often. I mean, we knew each other and we'd say hello, but I spent my time doing things with Carter. Most of the stories I know about Muskie came either sort of through Phil or Mary, at least amusing ones anyway.

AL: Do you have any Carter stories?

JM: I didn't, well, there's some, (*unintelligible phrase*), the most interesting thing of the Carter period I think, or that campaign, for me was, Jimmy Carter came here on October, the beginning of October and he had a huge rally in Monument Square - - it's the first time you really got a sense that he might have a shot at winning this thing. And in the last two or three weeks of the campaign, they flew up a half a plane load of what was known as the "peanut people", and these were some neighbors of Jimmy's from Georgia, and it was a wonderful idea because a lot of people up here just didn't quite know who Jimmy Carter was.

And we, I was scheduling the "peanut people" to canvas areas, go to meetings and varied things, and if I remember correctly, when I sort of checked it, the places that we sent people, actually sent people to, neighborhoods and things like this, got out a better vote for Carter than the ones that we weren't able to get because we didn't have enough of them. So working with those folks was a very enjoyable experience. I didn't see, you know, I didn't meet Jimmy I don't think, I may have shook his hand when going, passing through a line, but we worked mostly with the campaign staffs, the advance people and those folks.

AL: Now, John Martin was speaker of the house, and you got to know him?

JM: He was, I think he was speaker. I started, I didn't get to know him during the campaign.

AL: No, but later?

JM: Later on. I started working for, after he got (*unintelligible word*), in '77 I started working for the Maine State Employees Association and I was doing legal work for them and some lobbying. And that's when I originally got to know John, was speaker of the house and a very influential person. So that's, I've known John twenty five years or so.

AL: Did you know him in terms of his ability in the legislature?

JM: Primarily, yeah, that's really where I know him from and, you know it's, and I've dealt with John in a variety of different capacities. I was legal counsel to the senate president so we'd have some back and forth on that, and I did that for a few years. But lobbying for the State Employees Union and lobbying as I do now, there are all sort of very different relationships.

AL: And how was it working with Martin over those years?

(*Pause in taping - ambient noise.*)

AL: So, any thoughts on John Martin?

JM: Well, John is, you know, he's been one of the most significant political figures this state has seen, and he's not a noncontroversial person. In fact, he's probably responsible for the fact that we have term limits. It was perceived that John had been in power a little bit too long and the state was in a bit of a, fiscal and sort of political crises and there were a number of people who wanted John out. And eventually the term limits passed and John left because he was term

limited. Now, of course, he's back as a senator and I expect him to be there for quite a while and once he gets term limited as a senator he'll probably go back and run for the house again. It's his life. But he's a very interesting man; he's very smart, not the easiest guy to deal with all the time.

AL: And separating him from term limits, I know I've talked to a lot of people about term limits and how they see it change, how it has changed the legislature and how you see it affecting the legislature in the long term; do you have thoughts on that?

JM: I think it's, generally over all it's a negative thing. The problem being, I mean to some extent it's good to get some new people in. Prior to term limits we would turn over about a third of the legislature anyway, and now it's, I think it's high in the forty, over forty percent, and what you lose is the experience of legislators in particular substantive areas. It takes people a while to learn things and to learn what the issues are, and when you have everybody new coming in there's two negative effects: first you get freshmen coming in who say, "Well I'm going to do this, this, this and this." And there are very few people around who can tell that freshman, "Look, we tried that last year and this is why it didn't work, and it may not be worthwhile doing it this way." There's far less of that.

And secondly I think to some degree the people feel that they have to pass something, right away, especially the leaders, they have to put their mark on it. Because if you, you know, you come into the house and you're a freshman you might be lucky to get a good committee, the second year you might get a chairmanship, the third year you run for assistant leader, fourth year you run for speaker, then you're done for the term. And you don't really have time to build up a knowledge base or, substantive knowledge base, and you think, let's pass something. And I think that's led to some less than ideal laws being passed here because they were done for political purposes as opposed to real substantive purposes. But it really is like, and I would rather deal with somebody who disagrees with me but knows why, rather than playing just a party position or whatever. I think that's, it's the constructive way to do things.

AL: And what do you see in terms of, and you touched on it just slightly, the relationship between Republicans and Democrats, and have you seen a change in the level of civility or bonding?

JM: No, I really, I don't think I have, really seen a difference. I mean right now they get along fairly well, I mean the leaders up there now are nice and good people and they're not, none of them are terribly obstreperous. I mean they are, they try to work things out. But I think it's the quality of, or the knowledge that they have over a period of time that really changes the legislation. But I don't notice a real difference in terms of the tenor up there.

AL: And do you recall Jerry Conley?

JM: Very well.

AL: Can you tell me -?

JM: Which one? Jerry, Sr.?

AL: Senior, yes, I haven't had a chance to meet him yet and I'd like to know what -?

JM: He's a piece of work. One of the nicest people I've ever met in all the political times I've been around. Good guy, kind of mercurial, funny, and a good legislator. He's one of the more decent people I know. And his son, Jerry, Jr., was sort of equally good as a legislator.

AL: And George Mitchell, did you know him or work with him at all?

JM: Yeah, I remember in fact in the '72 campaign, Marty and I, we would occasionally go to see George, he was practicing law at the time at Jensen, Baird. And we'd go over and spend some time with him, try to get his advice on a variety of different kinds of things. And I always remember, when I first went in to his office, the thing that surprised me was there were no political pictures on the wall. There was artwork. He's maybe the first significant politician that I've known that didn't have political pictures on the wall. And George is, you know, a different fellow. Now, Ann Mitchell who works here in the Public Affairs Group is his niece, and Jimmy Mitchell who works, has his own lobbying business, used to be here with me.

AL: Jimmy as in Jimmy and Libby?

JM: No, Jim (*unintelligible word*).

AL: Different Jim.

JM: Yeah, he's George's nephew. And I've dealt with Senator Mitchell over the years, I lobbied for a while for the, a nursing home association, Maine Health Care Association, and George was majority leader of the Senate at the time, was senator and then became majority leader, and he was a significant player in terms of health care and long term care legislation, so I would deal with him on those bases, too. And now I just want to get Red Sox tickets from him, that's all.

AL: Any luck?

JM: No luck. He says, last time I saw him he said, he says, "I get more calls than anything else." Of all the things he's doing, going to Ireland to settle that, all that kind of stuff. He says, "What do they want now?" "Red Sox tickets."

AL: That must have come about as, he was talked at one time about being baseball commissioner, or running to some day be.

JM: Yeah, I think he was brought in there because one thing he's a bright guy, but he's also, it lended, I think the people who bought the Red Sox finally thought it would be wise to have him on the team.

AL: Did you have a sense of George Mitchell from others that you knew in Maine who had worked on campaigns of his over the years?

JM: Yes, I did, and I'm trying to remember, going back into the '72, he had, he had run for governor in '66?

AL: No, '74.

JM: Seventy-four, so it's '74, and I did a little volunteer work on his campaign in '74 to, you know, hand out leaflets and go door-to-door with people. And that was the year of course that Jim Longley won. And George who was I think considered to be the, one of the rising stars of the party, it was kind of a shock when he lost, at that point. But it was a fairly difficult time in the state and Jim Longley came along as sort of a, just as an outsider and won. And then after George was appointed to the U.S. Senate, he was running for election, he was sort of a very different guy. It was somebody who was just much more sophisticated politically. He was always a very bright man, but, and knew how to run a campaign. And sometimes when you lose a race you learn a lot more things than you do when you win one. And of course I helped out with that campaign as a volunteer during that time, too.

AL: Do you think that over those, that time period after he lost the governorship that he changed his personal style of campaigning?

JM: I think, yeah, I don't know if I can really describe it but he seemed much more relaxed, and I think a little more forceful. I think people would view him as being sort of bookish prior to his gubernatorial campaign. And he seemed much more comfortable I think running the next time.

AL: Are there other Democrats during that time period that you worked closely with or having a lasting impression on you?

JM: Well, I'm trying to think. Phil Merrill is one; I worked on his campaign for governor.

AL: What year was that that you would have -?

JM: That would have been '78, 1978. Phil and I got to know each other because he was running the Muskie campaign in '76 and I was working, I was downstairs working on the Carter campaign. And then I saw him as a legislator, he was a legislator up here and I worked with him very closely when I was working with the State Employees Association. Phil was somebody you could turn to, to argue an issue on the floor, and he was as talented as anybody I've seen up here in terms of the floor debate, and it might even be something that he didn't really know much about, maybe you'd take ten or fifteen minutes explaining it to him, he could do an extremely good job on the floor and he would intimidate the other side tremendously because of his verbal ability. So I worked a lot with him my first couple years up in Augusta. And then as I helped out with his gubernatorial campaign, too.

AL: What was his car called; did he have a name for his car?

JM: He did. That was when he was running for the Senate, the U.S. Senate, and he had this,

he had a car that was, I don't remember the name of the car but he was supposed to, he was going to run again Cohen and, is that when Cohen dropped out? I'm trying to remember exactly what the sequence was. But he was trying to make the point of, that this car was as old as I think as Cohen had been in Congress and the Senate. I wasn't involved in that campaign, but that was, it was kind of amusing actually. I was a beat up; it was a little Caddy or something.

AL: Cadillac I believe, yeah. Over those years you sort of, at a distance at least, observed Senator Muskie?

JM: Yeah.

AL: What were your impressions of him?

JM: I think really my first impressions of him was, it must have been '68, is when I first had really an impression of him when he was running as a vice presidential candidate and he was sort of outstanding in terms of his, I mean it was a very heated campaign, the Vietnam War was right up there, and Humphrey was trying to move away from Johnson. I believe it was '68 where Muskie I think, the one thing I remember was he handled a heckler extremely well. And then he did a "fireside," I think, I mean either that year or it was a couple years later he did the "fireside," sort of a "fireside chat," of a national response to the president's speech, the Nixon speech, and he did sort of the Democratic response. I think that was sometime in the, maybe 1970 or something like that, and it just showed a very thoughtful well reasoned person after a period of a lot of people who were screaming and yelling and he looked like the moderate. And that's why a lot of people thought that he would have a very good chance of running for president in '72.

But I think probably my initial impression was is that, you know, well, he was part of the old guard a little bit, he's part of the Humphrey and the old Democrats who I was probably fighting at the time, but there was sort of, there was admiration for him because of the way he handled himself. And then he became pretty famous for his Clean Air Act activities and several other pieces of legislation that kind of made him sort of a, more of a national figure. And he was, so he became sort of impressive, as you saw more of him he became a more impressive individual and a very well respected senator. And influential, I mean really influential in Washington. And somebody who the, you know, the Nixon people were deathly afraid of, that he was the guy, I mean was the fellow that they probably set up some of the dirty tricks for. I mean it was, they were that frightened of him.

AL: Now, in your lobbying positions that you've had, have you ever worked with Severin Beliveau?

JM: Oh, quite often, yeah.

AL: And have you ever had issues that related to the environment through your lobbying back, in terms of having to work with someone on Senator Muskie's staff ever, or was that too early?

JM: No, I don't think I, no I didn't. I worked with, that was, I never worked, I only did, I never

did a lot of Washington lobbying and the Washington lobbying I did mostly was with Mitchell.

AL: Okay, through his office.

JM: Through his office, yeah. When he, you know, he took over so he was the, I don't think I actually, I may have been down, trying to think of it, the timing of this. Muskie was appointed secretary of state when?

AL: In May of 1980, and then Jimmy Carter lost in '81, well in late '80 so in January '81 they were out of office.

JM: I don't think I had a lot. We probably had some contact when I was doing some work for the State Employees Association, but most of the issues were state issues and not national issues. So, I'm sure there was some contact down there and I knew people on the staff, but I didn't have direct lobbying experience with Muskie.

AL: Is there an area of your professional life that I haven't, oh, I know what I was going to ask you, about Charlie Pray and being his legal counsel. Now, he was secretary of the senate?

JM: No, he was president of the senate.

AL: I mean president of the senate, and you were his legal counsel?

JM: I was legal counsel.

AL: What does that entail; does every president of the senate have a legal counsel?

JM: Well, they started actually, I think Paul Zendzian was the first one and he, and that was just really a few years before I did it. And they, because they'd run into some problems, I think the legislature had run into some problems with some mistakes in bills, and they made the decision to have the house speaker would have a legal counsel and the senate president would. And I, it wasn't a terribly political position. You would work with the president on what his legislative agenda was, you would help out members of the Democratic caucus in terms of some legal issues.

And we used to review every, I used to review every bill that came through the senate and the idea was to have somebody who had sort of outside legal experience, sort of little different experience than the attorneys and other people who work on staff up there, for the legislative staff, someone with a little bit different perspective, because you'd catch things that they may not catch. And sort of a lot of time doing that, looking through bills and finding there were problems with them and then trying to correct them. And you worked, you know, you worked in a political capacity, too. A number of years later they, during one of our budget crunches, I think they got rid of the legal counsel and now, they're back on a very part time basis. Phil does that now, Merrill.

AL: And Charlie Pray, I can remember hearing something about him at one point,

(unintelligible phrase)?

JM: Well, Charlie Pray, well he was in at the same time that John Martin was in when they had the, sort of the move to, for term limits. And John and Charlie were, you know, they're both sort of northern Maine people and they were kind of viewed, although Charlie hadn't been in for that long compared to John, as part of the problem in Augusta. And they were having, it was an awful battle with Jock McKernan. And it was viewed a little bit that these guys at the top had just been there too long and they needed to get, to be "shaken up" a little bit.

So Charlie got sort of brought in with the same brush that Martin got brought in with. But he was a great guy to work with; very, very bright guy. Conceptually very bright, very good to, he wasn't the most articulate speaker at all, but he was, for ideas and things like this he was really quite, I was sort of, you know, I kind of, before I went to work with him I kind of viewed him as sort of the party guy, the tough partisan leader, and what I found him was extremely interesting and someone you could really discuss ideas with. And if I was stuck with an idea of how to do something I would talk to Charlie and he'd come up with two or three different ideas. I think it's an impression that not a lot of people have of him but working closely with him you saw that.

AL: Did you ever meet Louis Jalbert?

JM: I knew Louis Jalbert very well.

AL: You did? Tell me what your experiences were with him.

JM: Louis was a pain in the butt. Interesting guy, but he was a difficult fellow to deal with. He viewed himself as sort of the power behind the throne to some degree, and he would, he was a bully, too. But it was actually kind of fun working with him because you knew that you could ultimately deal with Louis.

But he was a showman, he was a bit of a character, he was kind of predictable in some ways. He was, he would stand on the house floor and if he was mad at you he'd say, "And my good friend," referring to another legislator, and if he was very mad at you he'd, "My VERY good friend" and, you know, he was an absolute character. We used to have a little secret with this, he was involved, he was on the appropriations committee a lot, it affected city employees a lot in the budget process and things like this, so he was always a player and you'd have to deal with him. But his wife was a retired state employee, so when Louis would get mad at us, and start yelling and screaming, which he would do from time to time, we'd call (*name*) and then he'd come in the next day and be really mad at us but he wouldn't yell and scream. She was, I think she's still alive.

AL: Yeah, she was a couple years ago but I think she may have passed away by now.

JM: Yeah, she may have. No, Louis was a notorious fellow.

AL: Was he believable?

JM: I don't think towards the end, no, because he had sort of slight brushes with the law from time to time, and he was always dying. I think he got out of some of his slight brushes with the law by, you know, saying that he was a, you know, he was dying and all that stuff. He was dying for a good twenty five years.

AL: And Severin was his attorney, do you remember (*unintelligible word*)?

JM: In one of the cases I think, and I don't remember the details of it now, but oh yeah, and Terry could tell you some great stories about Louis, I'm sure. But I remember one time we were, I was working with, we were trying to get a transportation highway department bill passed, and we needed two thirds. You needed a hundred and one votes. And we worked on Louis, we worked on Louis, and he was always saying, "Well I'll be the 97th vote, I'll be the 98th vote, okay, but until you get to them, I'm not going to vote with you get to them."

And finally my old boss John Oliver who was the head of the State Employees Association at the time, finally confronted Louis and says, "Louis, it's about time to stop doing that." Well, Louis got unbelievably angry at him and said, and started screaming and saying, "Well, you want to take a punch at me, why don't you take a punch at me now!" And John, who didn't particularly like scenes, was sort of backing off and all that.

Well, it turned out a couple nights, maybe the next night or the next day, Martin actually had, he had gotten Louis' vote, but he wanted to make sure of that, but Oliver had to leave the building, and I was to be the one to sit in the balcony so that Louis would make sure that I was there and not Oliver because he was mad at Oliver. But they, you know, patched things up later on, it wasn't that big, but he was a mercurial kind of a guy and kind of wanted to be in the center of things. And I think he wanted people to think he was sort of more integral to the process than he actually was.

AL: And do you think from your time spent interacting with him and observing him that he represented well the Franco American community, especially in Lewiston, or was, do you think he was more about Louis?

JM: I honestly think he was a little more about Louis. Now, I wasn't there for the early part of his career, but he wasn't, he represented Lewiston but he wasn't, it was a little before the time where you really sort of, I'm sort of the Francophile and I've got to do more stuff. He would always, you know, try to do what he could get for Lewiston. He tried to get the vocational technical school down there; Louis spent a lot of time working on that which, he was good for that. But I think towards the end Louis was Louis. He enjoyed the game of the politics.

AL: Larry Benoit, did you work with him some?

JM: A little bit, yeah. I worked with him, he was working on the Muskie campaign I think, during '76, I think he was on it.

AL: Yeah, some time in the seventies I think.

JM: Yeah, and then he was working for George Mitchell. And I always found Larry very enjoyable. He's a little more my kind of Democrat, he's a little more the conservative Democrat, but he, he is I think very perceptive and a practical kind of a guy. But he, one of the good luck things that happened to John Baldacci is that he had Larry to run his office. And Larry had been in the Senate, he'd been I think it was sergeant at arms in the U.S. Senate, knew people back here, knew how to run an office, new computers.

I mean, he was an incredibly asset to John I think when he first went down there, because it's a big change coming from the state legislature down there, and I think he was a very good asset to him. And he was always, he always kind of represented the little more conservative side to the Democratic party which was a healthy thing to do I think, it was healthy at the time, because there were enough liberal voices in those jobs and in those places. And Larry's a lot of fun. He's always complaining, but he doesn't do it in a bad way, it's just, "Oh," you know, always whining about something, you know, but he's enjoyable.

AL: Is there anything that I haven't asked you that you think is important to add today?

JM: Not that I really can think of. I mean, I didn't really have a lot of direct contact with Ed Muskie but I was with a lot of the people who were around him. And it was a very interesting time. So I don't really have a lot of good, you'd get more direct, the stories that I know, the funny stories about Muskie Mary McAleney, Phil knows. There's a wonderful one, I don't know if you've heard it. Have you talked to Mary yet?

AL: I have, several years ago, yes.

JM: There's one little story that you may have not gotten, but he, this was in the summer time I think, or August or maybe, it must have been August or something like this, and they were, Ed was up campaigning and they were trying to find something for him to do, and you know you had him for an hour, you know, Muskie could be as crotchety as they come. Well, what are doing this hour? And so they took him down to Monument Square right in the center of Portland. And they just wandered around, it was a nice afternoon, people were out there and he was saying hi to people.

And there was a woman came over, she says, "Senator, don't you think it's awful that they're tearing down this beautiful library here to build a new one, I mean it's a beautiful building, to build the Portland Public Library?" And Muskie was pretty good, he would say, "Well, I agree with you that we ought to try to preserve as many building as we can and this history and architecture. But I don't really have much to say about that," he says, "that's really pretty much of a local issue and you really ought to talk to the people, the renewal authority here and the city manager and your city councilmen." He was really very quite nice about it. And she just, I just think it's the worst thing, (*indicates clucking on*). So Mary had left him alone with her for a little while, and she turns around just as Ed sort of grabs the woman by the arm saying, "Listen sister!" so Mary grabs him and pulls him away.

And there's another good Mary story, too. She won, Muskie won like almost every town in Cumberland and York counties, even beat Bobby Monks in Cape Elizabeth which was,

somebody had a good bet on that one, too, I forget. But they were listening, they were looking at the returns, either on TV or they're coming in, and the only town I think that Mary lost, at least at that point in the evening, was Newfield, so she'd won every town in her areas of Cumberland and York County. Ed, from the back of the room, goes, "Mary, what happened in Newfield?" Phil's got some great stories about, just before the campaign, of him driving the car down to a thing, with the ice cream maker. Have you heard that one?

AL: I think I have.

JM: Yeah, that's a, it's a good, it's a great story.

AL: Tell me again just in case I don't have it from Phil.

JM: Phil's taking the, he's got a station wagon I think, and he's driving a bunch of stuff down to, it's sort of the beginning, early parts of the campaign and they go down and meet with Muskie and some other people down in Washington. So he's driving down with his wife, and he offered to take some stuff down for Ed and Jane.

And Jane's bringing out all these plants to put into the car rather than put them in a truck, and things like this, so he's putting these things. And then he's saying, "Jane, Jesus Christ, he says, give the kid some room, will ya, Christ, you're filling the whole thing up with these, all these goddamn plants and, Jesus Christ." So Jane stops the plants, and then two minutes later you see Ed coming around the back of the house with an ice cream maker. Okay, and Jane catches him. She says, "What are you doing? You told me to give him some room. You haven't used that, that thing is twenty- five years old, you've never used that!" You know, just boom-boom with Ed. It's a great story.

AL: You mentioned Bob Monks. Did you observe him some over the years?

JM: Yeah, yeah.

AL: I know that Christian Potholm, who's a Bowdoin professor, has a new book called This Splendid Game, and he talks about Monks' appearance on the Maine political scene as sort of a revolution equaling Muskie. Do you have any sense of that?

JM: No, I disagree. Monks ran against Margaret Chase Smith, didn't he? Wasn't it Monks who ran against Margaret Chase Smith in the primaries?

AL: No, that was Hathaway.

JM: No, Hathaway was the Democrat. I'm pretty sure of this anyway, we can check with Pat, but I'm pretty sure that it was Monks who raised the issues of age with its icon, Margaret Chase Smith. That hadn't been raised during the primary, and he got beaten in the primary. Hathaway, was able to not really use the issue but the issue had been raised significantly as to whether or not she was getting a little too old to really be an effective senator. So that, Monks having opened that up, opened it up for Hathaway. And that really was a change, so indirectly, I don't

think Bob Monks was that significant a political figure here in the long run. But for what he did in opening up those issues of Margaret Chase Smith, you know, brought in Hathaway and then Bill Cohen came after Hathaway. Hathaway wasn't that strong, he was a wonderful guy, he was a good senator, but didn't have that real warmth, and Cohen who was an attractive candidate came in and was able to beat him. But yeah, Monks did open things up, because of that primary run.

AL: Is there anything else that we should add?

JM: Not that I can think of.

AL: Well, thank you very much.

JM: You're welcome.

End of Interview