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Muskie, Edmund S. oral history interview

Don Larrabee

Interview with Edmund S. Muskie by Don Larrabee

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee
Muskie, Edmund S., 1914-1996

Interviewer
Larrabee, Don

Date
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Place
Washington, DC

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Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: May Craig; Margaret Chase Smith; Eleanor Roosevelt; Roosevelt Campobello International Park Commission; hats; and women in journalism.

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Transcript

Don Larrabee: I'm with Senator Muskie on November 28th at DeCarlo's Restaurant [in Washington, DC] and we're discussing his memories of May Craig.

(*Tape stopped, restarted.*)

DL: . . . .there's the bridge, the bridge dedication and she went up there; May Craig went up there with. . . . Well you were there. . . .

Edmund S. Muskie: Oh sure.

DL: . . . .and Eleanor, wasn't Eleanor around?

EM: Eleanor, but we didn't see her because she was not well. She stayed at the cottage.

DL: At this; she mentioned that in here. Now May went up there more as a friend of Eleanor Roosevelt as you know, than she did as a press person.

EM: Yeah, this, this looks pretty accurate on the Campobello Commission.

DL: Yeah, it's pretty good. I thought you'd like those; I just copied those from the. . . .

EM: Oh then, you have the original of that?

DL: Yeah, I've got, I've got the original columns.

EM: The one thing I could remember; of course I was in Maine most of the time when she was (*unintelligible phrase*).

DL: Yeah, you've probably read her columns from Washington.

EM: I've read her columns. I don't remember exactly when she dropped the Elizabeth, which I thought was rather unfortunate, in fact I gave her a. . . .

DL: Most women writers always had middle names; Mary Roberts Rinehart, Elizabeth May Craig.

EM: We didn't give any of our girls a middle name.

DL: But she dropped it. I don't know whether it was her idea or Gannett's, but she did drop it. Do you remember, did she ever talk to you about Eleanor Roosevelt much; her relationship with her? She had a very close relationship.

EM: She may have but I just don't remember, I don't have Alzheimer's but. . . .

DL: No, I know, I know. But she probably never talked about it but I know that she went (you read in here she talks about being a friend of hers), she went to Hyde Park with her quite a bit. And I think there's stuff in the Hyde Park library, the Roosevelt library, about Eleanor's (*unintelligible phrase*) and May. And she, the book, the Roosevelt book which has been written- Doris Kearns Goodwin, she has three references to May Craig and Mrs. Roosevelt, and May is advising Eleanor Roosevelt on some things.

EM: Have you called. . . .?

DL: Well, I haven't called there yet and I think, I will, I know I will, the question is whether I have to go there. Go to the library and look up some stuff.

EM: Well but I mean. . . .

DL: The Hyde Park, oh, Doris Kearns Goodwin, no, I haven't talked with her, no. But there's. . . .

EM: You should because she's. . . .

DL: She's got just three references to her there, but she's already done; been at Hyde Park and looked it over. But that would be interesting.

EM: She could certainly tell you what there is there.

DL: Yeah, that's what I would think.

EM: She also would go beyond the references of the book. She may well have got in her mind more about the relationship.

DL: Yeah, that's a good idea. Did she. . . .?

EM: She's got a good memory.

DL: That was a good book.

EM: Yeah, it's a good book. I'm reading the new Lincoln biography which is really something.

DL: Who did this?

EM: I can't remember the author's name, but it's a, it gives you so much detail on Lincoln's law practice and Lincoln's early political days, of his war days; it just gives you some. . . . I've got all kinds of Lincoln books but this one has got stuff that nothing else ever had and it's well worth reading. And it's well written. I can't think of the author's name. It's not a familiar name but it's on the best-seller list; has been since it was published. There may be stuff up at Campobello, but I doubt that. . . .

DL: I don't think too much there, but I think, I think, but the very interesting thing that I haven't explored at all is the eighteen containers at the Library of Congress. She left all her papers at the Library of Congress, May Craig did.

EM: Oh, really?

DL: And they're all up there. Nobody's ever asked about them before, until I did.

EM: Well, you certainly ought to get a lot out of that.

DL: Oh, there's plenty. In fact, I think she was starting her own autobiography. There's about four early chapters there which would give you the early life. I don't know much about her relationship with her husband. She was married to a newspaper man who wrote for the *New York Herald Tribune* and then sent stuff up to the Maine papers on the side, and that's how she took over. When he died she took over the Maine papers. But . . . .

EM: She was good, hell, she got attention at all the press conferences. Of course Roosevelt had more press conferences than any other president, really; over a thousand of them right in Maine. . . .

DL: Well, the trouble with those things, I don't know whether those transcripts were. . . .

EM: How detailed they were?

DL: . . . . I don't know. Like today, you know, you know who's asking the question and they have them all transcribed. But Kennedy called on her a lot; almost every time. And I think he used her for a little comic relief. I'm sure he thought it was a good thing to do and, they all were, you know, Truman and Johnson knew her. That would be the end of it.

EM: Oh yeah, they did.

DL: That would be the end of it. But she was on. . . .

EM: I might check Truman's library. . . .

DL: There's an idea again. She was on Meet the Press more than any other person up until recently. You know who's got the longer, more? David Broder. Now. But she held the record for a long time; about two hundred and forty-five appearances, and. . . .

EM: He's the guy that got me in on the crying. . . .

DL: Who, Broder?

EM: Yeah. Because he influenced all the other people in writing.

DL: He does influence, he's sort of a lead. . . .

EM: So he got that spread all over the country.

DL: He's the lead horse.

EM: He, I saved the. . . . He called me once and said in effect he'd apologized, but he hadn't. I read that, and I've still got it, his so-called apology.

DL: He read, he wrote something in a book that said he was wrong.

EM: Yeah, what he said; no, he didn't say he was wrong about the crying. He said he was wrong in not connecting this with the dirty tricks.

DL: Oh yeah, all right.

EM: I mean; that's a different kind of apology. But he didn't say "I'm sorry," because the crying thing to this day people are referring to that. And of course Bush has cried in public and Reagan has cried in public.

DL: The latest cry baby is Gingrich.

EM: Yeah. No, what he says in the book is that he wrote what he did because they were trying to, they were trying to prove that I was unstable. Well that's a little different thing. So I, every time I see David I'm depressed.

DL: Well actually she, and she had damned good questions on Meet the Press.

EM: Yeah, very good.

DL: She told me one time, she stayed up late at night working, getting ready for those programs.

And the questions were good. And the, Meet the Press has quite an archive with all of those questions, too. That's another resource on her. She, there were things, in this town most of the men reporters around the White House would see her; all they, they made, kind of made fun of her because of her hats. And nobody ever read anything she wrote.

EM: I bet that's true, yeah.

DL: Up in Maine, they never read it. They knew her from the presidential press conferences and Meet the Press. But, I mean the people like you who were in public life remember (I don't know whether it was Frank Coffin or Tupper or John Reed told me), she used to have a habit of calling very early in the morning. Do you remember that? Getting awakened at six. . . .

EM: She might have.

DL: . . . .early, and she said she was afraid that people would get away from her, you know, during the day; she had to get them while they were still at their homes.

EM: One thing I remember talking to her about was Castro.

DL: She went down there.

EM: Yeah. And she came back and she told me he reminded her of me.

DL: She said that?

EM: That was before he had a beard. But he had apparently a straight nose like I have. I never did see any likeness, but on the other hand most of the time since then he's had that beard. I remember that very well; she was struck by the similarity. She never told me what there was about the similarity that struck her.

DL: Did she ever talk to you about any special interest that she had. You know, she was always for equal rights for women in the press and all of that.

EM: She might have.

DL: She didn't ask you to do anything? She didn't. . . .?

EM: Of course I was just a very young freshman senator.

DL: Somehow she got the ladies' room put in the press gallery; she lobbied for the ladies' room in the press gallery. They didn't have a ladies room. I mean, women, you have to go downstairs in the first floor of the Capitol where the tourists went.

EM: Well hell, you know, there's a story, in many of these small towns with business districts there's never a restroom anywhere in any of those towns, including Kennebunkport, Kennebunk. And now there are service stations there that; goddamn hard for a woman to go shopping and

find a restroom.

DL: Well you know she, when I came here and I was just a freshman, young reporter working for *The Bangor News* then, she had the Gannett papers. She, I heard she could go in to Margaret Smith's office, walk right in there and open the file cabinet drawer and take out anything she wanted and write about it.

EM: Oh, really?

DL: She'd look at the correspondence and she had free entree to that office, and she was, got a reputation as being not only very friendly with Margaret but, not an advisor, but giving her advice, you know. And of course that ended. She had a, they had a falling out over Joe McCarthy which is recorded in the book there that Margaret Smith wrote, Bill Lewis wrote. They, Bill, or I think it was Margaret did her declaration of conscience and they felt that May was entirely too sympathetic to McCarthy. And she, you read her columns and you don't see this at all because she, she was concerned about Communism but not; she was very critical of him. But anyway, that was the image that Bill Lewis built up in Margaret's mind and they had a terrible falling out to the point where he was, wouldn't even let her in the office. Quite a change from the days when. . . .

EM: She could open the files.

DL: Yeah. She told me she's *persona non grata*. But he had a lot of; anybody who'd ever advise Margaret Smith was. . . . He didn't want around anyway.

EM: Well, you know when Margaret died, I thought, or I rather assumed that I would be asked to deliver the eulogy but I wasn't. It was fine with me but I, because I couldn't find anything to talk about except the declaration of conscience; that's all there was.

DL: In truth, she didn't do anything nationally; legislation. That was the, I was asked that question by somebody one time and I said aside from (*unintelligible word*) very diligent work in the Armed Services Committee, but never sponsored any national legislation or pushed any cause that I know of except that one thing. That's all that she's remembered for. But. . . .

EM: And the important pieces on her that appeared in the press after she died, that's all they mentioned. That's all they mentioned.

DL: But I'm intrigued. I've got the, the Margaret Chase Smith library again is another source for the relationship with May Craig; there's got to be a lot of stuff up there about that. But I do know of my certain personal knowledge that where they had been very close once. . . .

EM: I'm sure there has to be something there).

DL: Yeah, yeah, that would, but there's a, there definitely came a time when she wasn't welcome around the place.

EM: Well the interesting thing about that library is that it isn't referred to much as an archive.

DL: No, no.

EM: Not memorabilia.

DL: Yeah, it's a library. Well. . . .

EM: But what these, you know, what they say for files, that's what. . . .

DL: But May as far as you can recall was a pretty good reporter?

EM: Well I thought she was. Well, I think this indicates it. This little piece is; that's pretty detailed.

DL: Well I am amazed when I look through these clippings to see how many subjects she dealt with. She didn't confine herself just to Maine; she wrote about everything. [She] wrote a lot about segregation in Washington in the restaurants and things like that in the early days, and how. . . .

EM: That doesn't surprise me at all.

DL: . . . .the blacks didn't get fair treatment. And then she wrote a lot about dress styles, you know, of public figures, and she, the inside of press conferences at the White House, stuff that, you know. . . . Maybe Maine people got more out of that than anybody else in the country. I don't know of anybody who was writing as detailed stuff about what was going on in Washington at the time than she did.

EM: Oh, nobody writes anything deep here anyhow. When you compare, you know, the letters, you know this is. . . . I bought a three-volume set (I've got it down at the office), of all the correspondence between Madison and Jefferson, 1789 until they died. They both died the same day as you remember. And, I mean no politicians write letters like that now.

DL: I think Truman was still writing a lot of letters, if you read his books. He wrote a lot to his wife who was back home, and, you know, as if she couldn't read about some of these things in the paper. But he'd write her a letter; tell her what was going on, what he did the day before and stuff like that. Writing letters has gone out of style, but May. . . .

EM: It's too bad.

DL: May wrote this column seven days a week and mailed it up to the paper, see. And she just, and she went, she traveled a lot too, you know; she traveled all over the world.

EM: She probably, she may well have written more about me than I remember because I. . . .

DL: Oh, I'm sure she wrote a lot of columns about you. But you don't, you have any particular

memories of her, her style or?

EM: No.

DL: She was persistent I guess when she wanted to know something, questions.

EM: I think these will remind me of her style because they look just like it, you know?

DL: She wrote in a very chatty way and yet very informed and, very informative. Well I've just been, the more I've read of her stuff the more intrigued I've been about. . . .

EM: She wasn't eloquent but she was a good writer.

DL: That's it. She also had a unique relationship with that paper, that Guy Gannett. The old man liked the idea of having her here in Washington. But I know for a fact that, what her salary was because when she retired they asked me if I'd like to do it, sixty-five dollars a week.

EM: Really?

DL: Yeah, and I said "Well, gee, I've got to have more than that." I got up to a hundred. But I'll tell you, she probably made a good bit on the side with the Meet the Press and. . . .

EM: My first salary in the Senate was twenty-two thousand.

DL: What was it?

EM: Twenty-two thousand. And as governor it was ten thousand.

DL: With a home.

EM: Yeah, with a home.

DL: Such as it was I guess.

EM: Well, there were. . . .

DL: The Blaine House was nice, but. . . .

EM: We enjoyed it; we loved it. But it hadn't been very well kept up.

(*Aside: DL: You know what that is? Potato. EM: Yeah I know, but it's got a strange color. And I love the salmon. DL: I don't know, I don't know what they put in, it's not real mashed potato that we know. But she. . . .)*

EM: I don't know how many times I might have seen her in the course of the Senate week.

DL: Like all of us there, I mean, she dealt with the press, your press secretary and the people in the office like that. She went to you for some quotes on things and comments. But she flitted around. She was just, she had a base in the press gallery, a desk. And then she would shoot on down to the White House; be around there and go wherever, anywhere else something was going on in town. She was all over the city; amazing energy. You know, I don't know today whether she, you remember Kay Mills? [She] worked with your staff as assistant press secretary, a woman named Kay Mills.

EM: On my staff?

DL: Yeah, Kay Mills. Probably late sixties, before you ran for president; used to work with Shepherd, maybe with Bob. . . .

EM: I don't remember Kay.

DL: Anyway she wasn't there too long. She's out in California now and I thought, she wrote a book about women in the press and. . . .

EM: Well I should think she'd (*unintelligible phrase*). . . .

DL: Called me here when she was here working on it. I said, I got in touch with her and I said, asked her what she remembered. And she, she really couldn't tell me an awful lot about May but. . . .

EM: You ought to talk to Don Nicoll.

DL: That's a good, yeah Don dealt with her (*unintelligible phrase*).

EM: Don remembers these things.

DL: Oh sure, yeah, but I, I really think he probably dealt with her quite a bit. Gee, that's a hell of a good. . . .

EM: Well he was a newspaper man himself (*unintelligible phrase*).

DL: That's right, that's right, yeah.

EM: I haven't seen Don in. . . . See the University of Southern Maine is now about to embark on a fund-raising campaign to convert the Edmund S. Muskie Institute of Public Affairs to the Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service. They need a new building; the office of the president of the university will be in that building. . . .

Lucy DeCarlo: [owner of the restaurant] I hate to be rude; I just wanted to know what the guys did on their day off. Now I know, you chit chat with each other.

DL: We're interviewing each other.

Decarlo: You're interviewing each other?

DL: No, actually we're stirring old memories, or new memories.

Decarlo: New memories? That's the good things, that's the good times.

DL: We're talking about a lot of, you never heard of May Craig did you? That woman in Maine? She was a newspaper woman?

Decarlo: No.

DL: Well.

EM: She was a real celebrity.

Decarlo: Really?

EM: In her time. Oh yeah, up until her retirement, what, thirty years ago.

DL: Mid-sixties.

Decarlo: I came in '65.

DL: Well that's when she retired. Sorry.

Decarlo: I just mention it.

DL: Actually she's well known among the public figures of the day and the press people and press conferences and all that; quite remarkable. But we were talking about her a little bit.

Decarlo: See, those were the good old days.

DL: Well they were.

Decarlo: That's the good times.

DL: The press was a. . . .

Decarlo: A little different.

EM: We still didn't like them.

DL: We didn't like them. . . .

Decarlo: That's right, but now they hate them. I mean, before they didn't like them; now they

loathe them, and throw things, whereas before they just didn't like them. Well, they weren't very pleasant when I was there, but now they're crazy.

DL: They do dig into your personal life a lot more now than they used to.

EM: Oh yes.

Decarlo: They're very, they're much more aggressive now. And I'm not sure that that's really necessary.

EM: Well the trouble is, you know, those who really have an in, you know who have background into what actually goes on in this town, have to guess. So they follow some of the leaders. Dave Broder is probably is followed by a lot of the young fellows who are in the press corps, so they, and they get an impression but it isn't very accurate and. . . .

DL: They call it "pack journalism," "pack," follow the pack.

Decarlo: Is that what's going on now, (*unintelligible phrase*)?

DL: Well, oh yeah, a lot of that but really. . . .

EM: A lot of it is innocent. It's just ignorant.

Decarlo: I know.

DL: My, I think it's true some years ago that the press didn't report on people's private lives unless they impacted on public politics.

EM: Elizabeth May Craig.

Decarlo: Oh, oh yeah, I remember her.

DL: She was on Meet the Press and. . . .

Decarlo: Yes, yes, yes, oh yes.

EM: And she was writing about me.

Decarlo: Oh yes, yes, yes, well, there was a lot to write about then too.

DL: Oh yes.

Decarlo: President Lincoln *(?)*.

EM: And there's an earlier picture of her. . . .

Decarlo: First suggestion of the International Park at Campobello? I didn't know that.

DL: You should go there.

Decarlo: Oh my God, look at that.

DL: You know, women today don't wear hats, many.

EM: And men don't wear hats.

DL: No, men don't either.

EM: Kennedy ended that.

DL: Danbury, Connecticut went to pieces.

Decarlo: Hats; I only know prisons. . . .

DL: Oh, that's right, some members of Congress have gone there too.

Decarlo: They've gone up to Danbury.

DL: But Danbury was a hat town; hat capitol of the world.

Decarlo: Oh I didn't know that. I know like New Bedford is shoes and things like that but I didn't know Danbury was hats.

DL: Shoes, fish.

Decarlo: That's because hats are not, whenever. . . .

DL: Well men stopped wearing them. . . .

Decarlo: Men were the big, and women, but, Kennedy really was, the early sixties was the end of hats.

EM: See, that was '62.

Decarlo: You didn't wear a hat when you were campaigning.

DL: Yeah, but this woman wore pink hats and they were all these old-fashioned type things that even the young women didn't wear as hats.

EM: A lot of them do now.

Decarlo: Again. It's going the other way now; it really is.

DL: Yeah, I think it is. Maybe men are going back to them; I don't know.

Decarlo: Well because they found that really one, they look good, and really two, they really keep you warm up there.

EM: Well, you remember that reporter who used to write about me, he inherited a hat business. And for a few years he sent me a new hat every year. I never wore it. Straw hat in the summer time; a felt hat in the winter time.

DL: A reporter?

EM: I've still got them somewhere in the attic.

DL: This is a reporter?

EM: Yeah.

Decarlo: And you've never done that?

DL: I'm trying to remember. . . .

EM: Bajinski or something like that?

DL: Oh, *Time Magazine*, wasn't he?

EM: I think so; you remember the name better than I did?

DL: Bojinsky; it was like it, Brezinsky, no?

Decarlo: Not Brezinsky. . . .

EM: (*Unintelligible word*) Brezinsky was unattractive.

DL: He was with us on trips over there.

EM: Yeah, he was.

DL: Yeah, yeah, I'll think of it. He was- he had a hat business?

EM: Yes. He inherited it or something; I forget how. But it's been quite a while since he sent me a new hat, but I've got some of those old new hats up in. . . .

Decarlo: Business probably folded.

DL: Yeah, he traveled, I know he traveled over the Middle East and Moscow with

(*unintelligible word*).

EM: Yeah.

(*Ordering coffee.*)

DL: Memories. . . . It's wonderful to be able to remember things.

EM: Names particularly.

DL: Oh.

EM: Well, I do a lot of thinking at night because I don't sleep all night. I wake up at three o'clock.

DL: What do you do when you wake up? I'm waking up. . . .

EM: I just think.

DL: Do you lie in bed and think?

EM: Yeah. Think through problems.

DL: Think about things that happen.

EM: Sometimes I fall back asleep which is fine, but I'm not uptight about it.

DL: Usually do. I knew somebody who used to get up and read. I haven't. . . .

EM: I can't do that. I don't want to do it because I'm comfortable lying there; we've got a comfortable bed. I have to get up occasionally to go to the john anyway, but. . . .

DL: Well this gal I mentioned, Kay Mills, told me that she was a, as a little girl, young girl, she would see May Craig on Meet the Press. And she said, "Gosh, if a woman can do that I'd like to be able to do that." So she was sort of a role model for some women, but I don't know that many of the women in the press today. . . .

EM: What have they got for dessert? (*Waiter responds.*)

DL: What's that last one?

Waiter: Tiramisu (*etc., etc.*).

(*Continue discussing desserts available.*)

EM: I'll try the spumoni.

DL: Somebody asked me, "Was she a role model for women?" And she certainly was a pioneer, you'd have to say, in this town.

EM: May?

DL: Yeah.

EM: Oh sure.

DL: A pioneer.

EM: Is there some sugar? Oh there it is.

DL: She was ahead of her time.

EM: Oh, no question about that.

DL: And fighting battles, and she had a lot of nerve. It was really a man's world when she was doing this business.

EM: Yeah, and she did a lot of thinking. I mean, she had a lot of, she wasn't just writing, she was thinking about all this.

DL: It took a lot of nerve and courage or whatever you want to call it. And she'd go into those press conferences (*unintelligible word*). . . .

EM: And she had a presence that gave her an entree, you know. Nobody would say, "No," to May, I wouldn't think, for anything.

DL: She had some good questions. She wasn't like Sarah McClennan who gets up and asks kind of cock-eyed questions, or some causes.

EM: I don't remember if May came up to Skowhegan when I came up.

DL: Oh on that trip? She probably did, she probably did.

EM: Maybe she did, yeah.

DL: Yeah, she probably did.

EM: Brought him up there to sort of put me in the shade and I got the front page of the *New York Times.*

DL: She, I've got columns that she wrote about Eisenhower in that time, too. I can't show that, but she, no she liked, she liked Truman, [and] she liked Eisenhower. Didn't, there wasn't so

much going on then, you know. She liked Kennedy but she wrote critically about some of the things he did, you know. And she always wrote, every President that I've read about, she wrote how they exposed themselves to danger; she was always worried about that. And she wrote about how the White House was decorated at Christmas and things like that. A lot of people love reading that stuff.

EM: Oh sure they do.

DL: But nobody was writing about it much, you know? And, to send this stuff up to Maine, and people up there had a good education, you know.

EM: Oh sure, well that was the only connection they had with Washington. There was no television then.

DL: That's right.

EM: And radio didn't really cover it.

DL: You know, I just, I admire what she did and I think I want to get the story down. But whether anybody wants to read it is another question.

EM: Oh, sure.

DL: How much interest there would be in it I don't know, I don't know. I don't know that I can get a publisher interested.

EM: Well I'm thinking of, I finally got a title for my. . . .

DL: Oh good.

EM: I think I have, if I ever get around to writing it. I'd like to get a title that tears people away from the present cynicism about politics. So my present version of my title is "Politics Became My Life (And I Am Grateful)." I think that might even catch a publisher's eye.

DL: Oh it would, it would. Well I think (*unintelligible phrase*) story to tell (*unintelligible word*), you have a story; are you trying to do this now?

EM: I've decided that I should try; I've got to figure out a way to do it. I don't know whether I could get an advance to do it; I (*unintelligible phrase*). . . .

DL: I think you could; I'm quite sure you could. I don't know whether you've read many of Bill Cohen's little murder mysteries and novels that he's written or any of that. He loves to, he's a fiction writer really.

EM: Does he make any money at it?

DL: I don't think so. But he's got a publisher. They'll publish him; I mean, he writes. It's some guy in New York, a good reputable publishing house, and he's got an agent there named Adler. You might ask him for advice on that. This guy might have an interest. He's a good publisher. But Bill's books are always murder mysteries and stuff like that. Apparently he's written one with a, with his son, or a scenario for a movie.

EM: He's written a, he's written some poetry too I think.

DL: Written a lot of poetry. You know he's got a girlfriend.

EM: He got a good piece out of his most recent trip to Maine, and his vote. . . .

DL: Oh did he?

EM: Yeah. His vote against. . . .

DL: On the budget?

EM: Yeah. *The Bangor Daily*, he does a good job.

DL: Well, I think they are more aggressive, better coverage of the delegation, and the Maine scene in the Gannett papers; I don't know what's wrong there. The Gannett papers ought to be doing better. Bangor is an attractive paper. I think, this young Rick Warren is the publisher, I don't know. His mother's still in control.

EM: But I still get it.

DL: You getting it, at home?

EM: Yeah, I don't know if I pay for it or not, but I still get it each (*unintelligible word*). They accumulate when I'm not in the office. Carole saves them for me and I at least read the op-ed piece and the front page every. . . .

DL: Oh yeah. Well. . . .

EM: And they cover Maine, you know, those little towns and Maine people.

DL: They really do, yeah. The Bangor, I mean the Waterville and Augusta papers are still going I guess.

EM: I rarely get them.

DL: They're not local.

EM: They cover my trips up there all right when I go. And they're pretty kind to me when they do write.

DL: Well May never lobbied you to help the women in the press; particularly she never did any of that, no? But she, listen, you know she came to me when I was running for the. . . . We have something called a standing committee of correspondents in the press gallery. Five elected press people set the rules and pass on the credentials of everybody who comes in there; applications for, people to cover Congress. So I ran for that one year and May came to me and said, "I'll vote for you if you get rid of the cuspidors in the press gallery." She said, "When I sit down at one of those leather seats there, I kick my foot against the cuspidor and it spills that stuff all over my stocking, and I don't know why we have them here; nobody uses them." And I said, "May, I will see that they are removed if you'll vote for me." And the day after I was elected I went to the superintendent of the press gallery and he picked all of them up, took them in, put them in the closet in the men's room, and nobody ever missed them. They may still be there. Those solid gold, or brass, spittoons, and she wanted those out of there, see. What a gal.

EM: I was sorry she disappeared so fast.

DL: Well, her heyday must have been the fifties and up to Kennedy and up to the time she retired in '65. But during the war in the forties, she somehow wangled trips abroad as a correspondent. She was over in, she was in the bombings in London and she went to, immediately after war to Germany and saw the devastation and all that stuff, and Hitler's bunker and all of those things she wrote about. And she went to Korea, she was over there, and Japan and China, really a- quite a story. I don't think anybody's doing anything like that today. But I'll bet you if asked a question like I asked Lucy here, "Who's May Craig?" most of the young women in the business today wouldn't know the name. Trouble is, today the women are getting into it, mostly television; there are a lot more women in it now. But. . . .

EM: You ought to try to get into it, you know, some, something of her personality which is not easy to write about.

DL: I know, except as reflected in her writing.

EM: She was. . . .

DL: But any thoughts you have on that. . . .

EM: And you ought to have a lot of pictures. Are there a lot of pictures?

DL: Yes, a lot of pictures; a lot of good pictures, yeah, there are.

EM: I think you could do that in a chapter on her, you know, Meet the Press and all that.

DL: They have a great many, Meet the Press.

EM: You could do that and that chapter could have some pictures.

DL: Yeah, there's a lot of good pictures.

EM: And there must be pictures of her with Roosevelt and, a few of them.

DL: Oh yeah. I've got one picture of her- Truman came over to the White House after Kennedy was in and there's a picture with Truman and Kennedy walking around in the White House and May's standing there. And Truman is saying, "Kennedy, be careful of this woman," you know, "she's kind of a tough cookie," something like that.

EM: Yeah, that kind of thing, yeah.

DL: Yeah, we've got those, this, look, I tell you, I talked to the two grandsons; son and daughter are dead. And they're so excited that anybody is slightly interested in grandma. And all, I discovered all this stuff at the Library of Congress. She left all these papers and things. Just, she had a home on Capitol Hill, you know, she had a little house on North Carolina Avenue. She used to walk from the Senate press gallery home at night in the dark. She wouldn't do it today I don't think, but she did. And she'd have, she had little dinner parties there. You may have been there, at her. . . .

EM: I don't remember it but that doesn't mean it didn't happen.

DL: I've seen some columns she wrote about. She'd invite Senator Taft for instance, over there and invite several other women reporters and they'd sit around and have chicken. She had one dish she served, one chicken dish every time. And they'd sit and then they'd talk and she'd, they'd get a good story. Something that nobody else had, you know. Unbelievable. And one of the grandsons told me that they had dinner with her every Wednesday night up there in that house. Unbelievable. And all the other things she was doing.

EM: Well, you know, it demonstrates what you leave behind when you finally say "Bye, bye," without ever thinking, you know, what you're leaving without a trace.

DL: Don Nicoll. Don Nicoll's good, I'll call Don.

EM: Yeah, I'm sure you can get. . . . Don and Hilda have got a nice house there in Portland.

DL: Are they on Woodford's, in Woodford's. . . .?

EM: I forget the name of the street but it's a huge old house, big. I was up there recently in connection with this Muskie school and they had dinner for the group at their house. I'd never been in the house before. It's huge, but then when you get inside it's very lovely, old-fashioned. . . .

DL: Is it on Highland Street, does that ring a bell with you, Highland?

EM: Yeah. . . .

DL: I think I know where that is because my grandfather lived there.

EM: If you were to call Carole, she would give you the street.

DL: Well that's a good one. No, there's so many potential sources for stuff on her, but, you know, you still wonder how much interest there is. I don't care too much, if I could get somebody interested in printing it.

EM: Yeah, but what you ought to have is her personality. Even publishers want that. Let's split this (*referring to bill*).

DL: This is, how often have I taken you to lunch? Ever?

EM: I don't know.

DL: I think I will today; I'd like to do that.

EM: I've got so many books that I bought in the last five years that I won't even read them if I live to be a hundred and fifty, you know? But what I notice about some of them, including the Lincoln book, you know, is the pictures. Photography was invented not long before Lincoln, and so there are a lot of great Lincoln pictures in there. And I think this book has a. . . . You know what I read in bed last night? Old Man and the Sea.

DL: Oh, that's a great old story; isn't it good? Yeah, yeah, it's a good one.

EM: It's a little edition about this thick.

DL: That wasn't a long book.

EM: No, it wasn't.

DL: Ernest Hemingway. . . .

EM: A hundred and twenty pages. It's so well written and. . . .

End of Side One
Side Two:

EM: But I'm finding that in books, you know like the No Ordinary Time book. . . . So I've been thinking about the title; I kind of like that one.

DL: You were, if you don't have any, you. . . . Of course you've had things published before, but if you don't have any special contacts you might ask Bill Cohen about this guy that he's dealt with. . . .

End of Interview