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## Muskie, Ned oral history interview

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## **Interview with Ned Muskie by Don Nicoll**

*Summary Sheet and Transcript*

### **Interviewee**

Muskie, Ned

### **Interviewer**

Nicoll, Don

### **Date**

May 5, 1999

### **Place**

Washington, DC

### **ID Number**

MOH 100

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### **Biographical Note**

Edmund S. "Ned" Muskie, Jr. was born on July 4, 1961. He is the youngest of five children born to Edmund S. and Jane (Gray) Muskie. Ned is an avid golfer and often fished with his father. He attended Duke University, and is currently an international banker.

### **Scope and Content Note**

Interview includes discussions of: early recollections of Ed Muskie; fishing; impressions of Ned's grandparents; Ed Muskie's relationship with his family; Ed Muskie's thoughts about the environment; public policy vs. private behavior; Ed Muskie's feelings about Maine; Jane Muskie's thoughts about politics; Muskie's temper; golfing accomplishments; other sports; Ned Muskie's schooling; late years of Ed Muskie's life; and Ed Muskie's religious views.

### **Indexed Names**

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## **Transcript**

**Don Nicoll:** . . . Bank in Washington, D.C. in the offices of Edmund S. Muskie, Jr., Ned Muskie, the younger son of Senator and Mrs. Muskie. It is the 5th of May, 1999. The interviewer is Don Nicoll. Ned, what is your first recollection of your father?

**NM:** I suppose my first recollection was, oddly enough it was probably up at China Lake in Maine. And I must have been around, I was born in July 4th, 1961, and I believe we moved from our summer house in China Lake to Kennebunk in around 1965. So I must have been about four years old, if not younger. And I remember, it's funny, Martha and I were talking about this this morning. We all had very fond memories of Dad making sautéed onions to go with whatever we were eating, whether it was barbecued hamburgers or whatever. But he liked to cook, and so I guess that's my, probably my earliest memory. And we used to go from the China Lake house on our motorboat and, out to one of the islands in the lake, and having a picnic out there.

**DN:** Did he do the cooking on the island or at the camp?

**NM:** Yeah, I don't remember it specifically. I'm sure he, he loved to barbecue, throughout my life he loved, he always swore by Webber grills. And he always loved to cook steaks or hamburgers or whatever on the grill.

**DN:** And that was his job.

**NM:** Yeah. Even during the winter I remember him doing, you know, he always, as many husbands do, did the carving and did anything that dealt with meat. So- but I think he liked to cook.

**DN:** And you remember going on the lake in the motorboat out to the islands and picnicking.

**NM:** He was fairly active as a sportsman as I remember. I mean, we all know he loved to play golf, but he also loved to hunt and he loved to be on the water, he loved to fish. I don't think he knew how to sail, but he loved to fish, and he loved to use the boats that we had at China Lake and subsequently in Kennebunk.

**DN:** Did he take you fishing?

**NM:** Frequently. And he also took me hunting, and of course we spent most of our time playing golf together. But we played, or we fished until the last year of his life. But I think, I actually don't recall fishing up at China Lake. But I, once he became a member at Megantic up in western Maine on the Canadian border, he would take Steve and me on nearly annual trips up there for a week.

**DN:** This was salmon fishing and trout fishing?

**NM:** Trout fishing mainly. We did some fishing on the ocean once we lived in Kennebunk, but it was mainly fly fishing, trout fishing, for trout.

**DN:** Was he an easy fisher?

**NM:** What do you mean, "easy"?

**DN:** Was he relaxed about his fishing?

**NM:** Very. He, that's a good question. He wasn't intense at all, or he didn't show it. He just liked it, he just liked the challenge of it. And he was fun to be with and told, you know, amazing and funny stories throughout our trips. And one thing I loved about Dad so much was that he liked to share his knowledge and share his ideas and share his beliefs, if you will, all the time.

**DN:** What sorts of things was he sharing with you?

**NM:** Well, when we'd fish he'd share anything, just stories, he, whether it was stories about family, about how his parents came to this country, or stories about his mother or his father or stories about people he knew or people he fished with or, despite the fact that I think that I would categorize Dad as a fairly quiet guy. I've struggled to think about whether Dad was actually, whether you could term him an introvert or an extrovert. And I think that's really hard because I think he liked people, and he drew energy from being with other people. When I think of an introvert, they draw energy from themselves. And I think Dad liked to be with people and share his life experiences with them.

**DN:** You mentioned his telling you about your grandfather and grandmother. You never met them but what were your impressions, and do you have any vivid memories of what he told you?

**NM:** Well I never met his father who died, I believe, I believe shortly after Steve was born. Nana I knew very well until, well, not very well, but if I had to guess she probably passed away in '72 or '71 and I was already ten or eleven. And I have very fond memories of her. And she'd, I always looked forward to going with Dad, sometimes just the two of us, up to see Nana or see Aunt Lucy and Irene, or we'd go up as a family. It was a typical, you know, close relationship with his mother. And I think he talked to her frequently. And really, I think he would have categorized his relationship as being pretty close with his mom. In fact, he even named the campaign plane in 1972 after her. Her name was Josephine

**DN:** Do you . . .

**NM:** The plane in '68 rather.

**DN:** Well '68 was the Downeast Yankee.

**NM:** That's right. So when was the Josephine? In '72?

**DN:** Josephine would have been '72.

**NM:** Okay.

**DN:** Come Josephine in my flying machine. Do you remember any stories or observations your grandmother made about your dad growing up? Or about her life?

**NM:** You know, my memory's just, I don't recall that well. But bear in mind I was, you know, very young. And when I think of when I was young, I wish I had had, I wish I had been older, certainly in the '70s and '80s, so that I could have learned even more from Dad and learned more about, or for me to take more of a personal interest in his beliefs and, his political beliefs and personal. I'm very jealous of my older siblings and of friends like you who probably knew Dad better than I did at a time when I'm sure it was fascinating to know him and to see why, you know, he was so, had such a great career. I mean, I saw him at home, and I have a lot of views to share with you on that, but going back to your question though, I don't remember a lot about what Nana said about Dad. I just, my clearest memories are of just being with her and seeing her with Dad and seeing her and how proud she was of him. That's probably the clearest memory I have of her. She was very proud of him and, you know, when we'd be with people outside the family, whether it's press or just colleagues or, you know, she didn't hesitate to talk about how proud she was of his career and what he was doing in the state of Maine and nationally.

**DN:** So you had the sense of a very strong relationship between your dad and your grandmother and his sisters?

**NM:** Yeah. But Dad is not the, or he never was the outwardly emotional person. I mean, people always talk about his temper. But he didn't, you know, he wasn't huggy-kissy, didn't say I love you all the time. You just knew he did. And that was true with his mother, and it was true with us. He was just reserved, I guess is the best way of saying it, but in a very, very warm way. I mean you, I never ever in my life felt intimidated by Dad, which I think, when I say the word

“reserved”, it almost implies that one might be intimidating. I think it was the contrary. He always cared about knowing about what you cared about. He always asked how your day was, he always took an interest in who your friends were and what you liked to do with them, and so.

**DN:** Did, when you went fishing with him . . .

**NM:** By the way, I didn’t answer it completely. You asked if he was close with his mother and sisters. I think he was based on the fact that it was usually him who would make the effort to go and see them. And, you know, occasionally they would come down in Kennebunk. But I think he often called them from the road or from the home or from Washington, from Kennebunk. So, despite the fact Dad wasn’t a telephone person, he was very good at staying in touch with them.

**DN:** He really made an effort to get in touch with his mother and sisters from your recollection.

**NM:** I think so, yes.

**DN:** When, and I’m assuming that you probably don’t remember much about stories about his father, or do you?

**NM:** No, not really.

**DN:** When you were on the fishing and hunting trips, did he talk much about the environment and why it was important to take care of it, or was that just a given?

**NM:** Yeah, I wish I could give you details but, I like to think I have a good memory, but I always wish that I could remember specific conversations with Dad. I remember back, and this, the Clean Air and Water legislation passed in what year?

**DN:** Well, it started in ‘63 with clean, the first Clean Air Act and then Water Pollution Control Act after that and continued on up.

**NM:** Until through the early ‘70s.

**DN:** Until the, into the ‘70s, the end of the ‘70s.

**NM:** Yeah, that’s what I remember. Some of the things I remember were celebrations when Dad would come home after a certain piece of legislation would pass that he carried about or anxiety before the vote. And, you know, he shared a little bit when that would happen, you know, telling me what the vote was about. Or, and when we were on the trips he talked about the accomplishment of those laws and, you know, would give me examples of some of the specifics that I would understand as a young boy, like the difference between leaded gas and unleaded. Why, I remember back in whenever the energy crisis was, ‘73 I think, talking about why, how the energy crisis happened and why it’s important to cut back and why... Because I always, (it’s kind of strange), I always wanted Dad to have a big car and to have, drive something like a Cadillac, because I always associated, you know, my friends’ fathers’ Cadillacs with success. And Dad was always a very frugal person, and, you know, would drive Plymouths or whatever.

And I remember very vividly Dad explaining some of the practicalities of not wanting big expensive cars and part of it was just the cost of running them and the cost of energy and the cost of, so.

We talked on trips a lot. I guess my memory's better later in life, when things like the hostage crisis were taking place or. I think I spent a lot of quality time with Dad when I was in high school since I was the only one living at home, and there was a lot going on. It was late in his Senate career but he was doing a lot with the Budget Committee and with all sorts of things. And then he went to the State Department and that was a great experience for me because I was finally of an age where I kind of read the newspaper and knew what was going on and was more interested. And Dad would, I wish he had almost forced more on me, like when we'd have lunch or dinner together I wish he would say, "Ned, you really should know more about this or that." But he didn't force things on any of the children, and that includes, you know, career preferences or courses that we took in college or, I guess that's my biggest regret is that I wish I had been older during that time.

**DN:** Do you think (other than the fact that you probably would have remembered a number of things that you don't now), do you think it would have been different for you if you had been older? That is, was he more explicit with Steve, say, about career choices than he was with you?

**NM:** I need to ask Steve and Ellen that because I always wanted, even though Mom and Dad have always been, I think, very diligent parents, I wish that, I always wished that Mom and Dad had sort of, you know... I went to a school called The Heights, that was a junior high and a high school that upon reflection, and even at the time, I didn't think was a great school. And I was the one to say that I wanted to go there. And I wish they had been, "forceful" is not the right word, but more forceful about, you know, what school I chose. But Dad just always was very, I don't think it was because I was the youngest, and I don't think they were tired of being parents after having four before me. Because they certainly were, Dad was always asking, you know, he was very vehement about my doing my homework and, you know, just the typical thing a father would say.

**DN:** You also indicated that on matters where private behavior and public policy coincided, he spent some time teaching you what the issues were. You mentioned the question of the size of car and the implications.

**NM:** It was in a fairly passive way.

**DN:** That is, if you said, "Why can't we have a big car?" Then he would tell you why?

**NM:** Maybe. But, no, what I meant by passive is more that he, he didn't go on and on about things. It was more almost anecdotal. But it's interesting, for example, here in the corporate world today diversity is a big issue. And I have very strong issues about, you know, equality for women and people of color within the work force and here at my company and all that. And people always say, "Oh you developed those ideas because of your father, because of your family being Democrats." And I'm sure, I guess I'd be naive if I said that wasn't true. But, for instance, Dad and I never, I don't think we ever talked about diversity as a subject, and I don't

recall ever talking about, you know, treating people of color, you know, equally. I think he showed it more by example. I never ever saw Dad being superior to any, or acting superior to anyone.

No, it's interesting because I think I said to you after Dad died that I would like to learn more about Dad's public career because I don't have a good feel for, you know, how he felt about a lot of important issues of the day. And I think it's because a combination of that I was young and maybe didn't care at the time, and that again Dad did not force these things on you. I think he wanted me to care about what a twelve-year-old would care about, whereas I wish he had been more of a teacher at the time about these things. Maybe it's unnatural for him to do what I just described.

**DN:** You may find on reflection and further conversation with people that he was more of a teacher than you realized.

**NM:** Yeah. No, I think that's right.

**DN:** And that he saw teaching you by example as being very important.

**NM:** Well, that's absolutely must have been the case.

**DN:** Rather than preaching to you.

**NM:** Yeah. I think good examples of that were that he was always active in my school life, whether it was me acting in a play, he certainly would come and see me in that play, or pitching in a baseball game. He would absolutely do that. The only time he ever missed a game that I pitched in was when President Carter had him down to Camp David. But after the game the Secret Service picked me up and took me down to Camp David to be with the Carters and Mom and Dad. And, I was the only kid there. So he included me even then when he didn't necessarily have to. So I think you're right, he did lead by example.

**DN:** Now we've leaped ahead a little bit. When you were young, your first recollection is of China Lake and then later going to Kennebunk. Did it seem very natural that your life was divided between the Washington, D.C. area and Maine?

**NM:** That's a good question. It absolutely seemed natural and that's, actually my earliest memories probably are even further than China Lake. It was always driving up to Maine for the summer and crowding into the station wagon with, you know, five kids. Well, I'm not sure if we ever, yeah I guess we did have five kids in the car, Martha and I would be in the very back, and we'd have a U-Haul. It did seem natural and I think that's why Maine, you know when people ask me where I'm from, despite the fact that I was born in Washington and went to school in Washington, I always say, "Maine." And then I say, "But I grew up in Washington."

**DN:** Do you have a sense of what your father's feeling was about Maine?

**NM:** Oh, for him it was home. It was where his passion was. It was where... No, Washington



was just a place he worked as far as I was concerned. When I think about how much travel he did up to Maine and how much time he spent up there, and how every day he'd read the *Portland Press Herald* even in Washington or the *Biddeford-Saco Journal*, whatever he had available. Yeah, Maine was his life. I, unlike me, I don't, if somebody said, "Where were you from?" He would, there wouldn't be a question, it would be Maine. Washington was just a detour in his professional career.

**DN:** What about your mother's attitude toward politics in the '60s, '70s as you remember it? There were some pretty stressful times for the family, starting particularly in '68, '69 and '70, through the '72 presidential campaign; a lot of pressure on the family.

**NM:** Asking a question like that brings back a lot of memories. Especially the way you asked it. As a kid, again I'm just giving you my perspective which is, it's probably the youngest perspective you'll get in this oral history. For me, campaigns were fun because I always, they weren't, I don't remember them as being stressful. I know as an adult now that they must have been stressful for Mom and Dad just because the logistics of campaign and all the time commitments and all the people and issues. And, for me it was always fun though, because I enjoyed having people like you and other members of the Muskie team over to the house. It was always energizing to me and all the people were always so much fun. I think for Mom, I think she thrived on it, but I'm sure that raising five kids with Dad in and out and all over the place was very stressful. I don't think as a result the stress necessarily showed up in the family fighting more, I just don't remember that. I think all of our family arguments were simply family arguments, typical things.

**DN:** All families have them.

**NM:** Yeah. I truly think that Mom, (I can't wait to hear her transcripts), but I really think that she was energized and loved being part of the whole thing, despite whatever mundane pressures there were.

**DN:** You also had the Secret Service a great deal starting in '68.

**NM:** Again, for me it was, it was like having another group of friends. They were never intrusive, always polite, always interesting, always like part of the family after a while. They are clearly a well-trained profession because they, they, you know, when I think about them in the trailer off Albia Road, it would have been very easy for them to be intrusive. And to, maybe to a teenager, maybe Melinda and Martha will have different views, but for me it was just having a bunch of guys, mainly guys, I don't remember too many female agents. But it was just fun. It was fun to drive around with a car following you to protect you. It never inhibited Mom and Dad from doing things with us as far as I remember.

**DN:** When, do you have any vivid memories of the campaigns?

**NM:** Again, they're the views of a kid. There was a lot of travel. I remember going places like Wisconsin for the primary or to New Hampshire or to Miami for the convention. I remember Dad would often let me sit in on meetings he'd have with people like, whoever, Leon or

Maynard or the senior staff, or. And I loved listening and watching and seeing these people interact. I loved watching Dad operate and react to things. He, I remember him very much being in control, not in a domineering, well, somewhat domineering way. But it was just fun to watch his mind work, even if I didn't know about the issues or whatever. It was just fun watching his reactions.

**DN:** Can you describe how his mind worked, from your point of view?

**NM:** I think Dad was a very thoughtful person. He didn't typically react immediately to things. And I'm, you know, I'm trying to separate my observations of him later in life versus back then. But I just remember people always looking up to him. Not because he was tall but because he was just fascinating and had, and he, sometimes I describe him as a contrarian. And, you know, often times he would have a completely different view of something than you expect him to have, and I think that threw people off. And I think that's what, part of what kept people on edge and, you know, prompting him for reactions. I also do remember, you know, he didn't suffer fools gladly. And he hated stupid, you know, poorly thought-out questions or discussions. And even with me, I mean, he wouldn't do it in a nasty way, but you'd know if you said something stupid or inane.

**DN:** And did you find him teaching you how to think?

**NM:** Clearly not well enough. I absolutely think, especially now, I'm not sure I would have said this before I started my career, that every day I think that many of the characteristics that I exhibit are from Dad, and not purposely. And it's funny because, you know, in golf if you want to play like a good player, you try to mimic his swing. I've never purposely tried to mimic Dad. I mean, I've always respected virtually everything I can think about Dad. But I've ended up, I think, evaluating things, I think, like him, although that's something I'd love to talk to him today about.

**DN:** Do you . . . ?

**NM:** By the way, the, the one thing I clearly inherited from him that my whole family would agree upon is temper. I don't know if it's a similar temper or not but it flares up like Dad's did.

**DN:** Can you give me some examples of how your temper flares up?

**NM:** How embarrassing. No.

**DN:** What sorts of . . . ?

**NM:** I don't think I suffer fools gladly either. I have high standards; I expect other people to have high standards. Before I came in here to chat with you I was talking to my assistant about my frustration with the staff. I tell people, I think this is very much true of Dad, I tell people exactly what's on my mind. I can't keep things in. I don't know if that's your view of Dad, but that's how I remember Dad. He would tell you exactly what he was thinking. Although I think I'm a lot less quiet than Dad was, a lot; I am definitely more extroverted than he was.

**DN:** When you talk about losing your temper, is it losing it or using it?

**NM:** I often hear that Dad's was a matter of using it. I think I lose it more than he did. And I, yeah, that's an easy one to answer; I think I lose it more. I think he, I don't know if more often, but I don't use my temper wisely. In fact, you know, many people say that when I'm angry everything I'm saying is exactly right, but it's the way I'm saying it that is the biggest turn-off, so, I don't view that as using it. I view that as almost abusing it.

**DN:** The, I'll comment later about my perception. This is your chance to talk. The lessons that you learned from him, you've indicated some of them. I'd like to go back to a lighter item before we return to the political and professional world. When was it that you and he started playing golf together?

**NM:** I was, I think it was the summer that I turned seven that he got me interested in taking lessons with the golf pro at Webb Hannett, Bill Burns, who he developed a very good and close friendship with. And Bill Burns also took a great interest in me and was like a, like having a father on the golf course. And also I think he thought I had some talent so he enjoyed seeing me accomplish things on the golf course, and seeing me win the William Burns Junior Trophy three times, and then the club championship. But Dad and I played, spent a lot of time on the golf course ever since I was seven until, until probably he was seventy-five.

We watched golf on the TV together and we, even on, when campaigns would be going on or whatever, he often interrupted, or inserted a golf game with me in, and, yeah, various people, whether it was politicians or staff members or, you know. It was, golf was a great vehicle for Dad and me to be together. I was very fortunate. I, you know, I'm sure Steve had different ways of being with Dad. He, Steve was able to actually work during campaigns and things as a photographer. And, but I always felt that golf, that Dad and I had that special hobby to share together.

**DN:** How much of your time when you were golfing was spent talking golf and how much of it talking about other things?

**NM:** Good question. It was probably mixed. I mean, when you play golf, I mean he was very competitive, and I certainly was very competitive and you focus on your golf. And we often would play with people, with friends like Dick Hildreth or with Bill Burns up in Maine. Or, so you'd often talk about just things, whether it's sports or whether it's the actual, you know, Dad and I talked about technique and things. But you'd often times, especially when we were playing with other people, they would ask Dad about politics or about... So there would often be great conversations about people, about whoever the President was at the time or about various senators or, so, it was mixed. I mean, that's the beauty of golf is that you can talk about anything, or talk about nothing. But Dad did, you know, some golfers get wrapped up a lot in their golf, and he did. And he'd, you know, be upset if he had a bad day on the golf course or, but he really enjoyed the camaraderie.

**DN:** And I suspect he took a great deal of pride in your accomplishments as a golfer?

**NM:** He really did, I think. I think he was always really sad, when I finally did win the club championship, he was in China. And he called that night I remember to see how I did, and he was thrilled. And it was sad not having Dad or Bill Burns there, Bill Burns had passed away before that. But yeah, he always talked about his son being a scratch golfer, he, you know, at every occasion whenever he introduced me to people he'd say that.

**DN:** And you mentioned earlier that he took great pride in your baseball playing.

**NM:** Well I guess he had to because I wasn't a star student so he had to take pride in my sports accomplishments. But he loved sports, so he and I would, you know, talk baseball or talk basketball or whatever was going on. Frequently, oh we went to all the Redskin home games. He loved sports. He read the sports page first, like I do, and he paid attention to it. He, you know, would say, "Did you notice?" you know, "the Celtics won again and Bird had, you know, forty points" or whatever. So he loved, like most people, sports is a nice diversion from the stresses of life.

**DN:** Did he ever talk about his own involvements in sports as a boy and a young man?

**NM:** Yeah. I remember I was telling somebody this story the other day, that when I was up at the board meeting at the University of Maine, Southern Maine, I was talking to someone, a state senator about the fact that she was from Rumford. And I told her that one of my clearest memories was of Dad talking about when he was young, and he loved to ski. And in fact he loved to ski jump, and in his back yard there was a very steep hill that went way up to the next block, and it was all grass. And he built a ski jump at the bottom of the hill that went into the, their driveway. And, I mean when I, my memories of it are that, God, it was a very steep hill, and it must have been crazy to go flying down that hill and off a ski jump, especially on skis that I think were either homemade or very basic skis, if not probably wooden skis.

**DN:** In those days they had a strap across the instep, that was it.

**NM:** Right, yeah, and compared to today's skis, I'm sure it's a pretty frightening prospect. So he liked to ski. This isn't a sport, but he often talked or described when he used to be a debater, he loved that. In fact, I said to Leon Billings recently that I always found it amazing that Dad loved debating. And Leon's take was that Dad did it because he had to. He knew that if he was going to learn, or become more extrovert with his thoughts, he should learn to debate. But he loved it, and I'm sure partly because he was very good at it. And all of us that know Dad know that he was a great debator just in private conversation.

Other sports, well he always talked about, he loved fishing, and he played basketball in, I think it was in high school. And now that I mention basketball, I remember that he was pretty good actually, because when he fir-, he put up the first basketball net in our back yard in Washington on Albia Road. And we didn't have a very big area to play in, but he would come out and play with me one on one. By that time he was, I don't know, in his sixties or, yeah I guess mid-sixties, but I had forgotten that until just now. He really did enjoy it.

**DN:** And you say he was pretty good, good shot?

**NM:** He had a great shot. He wasn't very quick on his feet as I remember, but he used to come out in his slippers, so who could, you know. And he was in his mid-sixties, and I was a teenager, so it was easy for me to run around him. But he enjoyed it a lot, and when he'd make four or five in a row he'd take great pleasure in that.

**DN:** Ned, I'm going to change the tape now.

*End of Side One, Tape One*

*Side Two, Tape One*

**DN:** . . . second side of the first tape interviewing Ned Muskie on May 5th, 1999. Ned, you were talking about your dad and sports and how he played basketball with you, shooting baskets at your home in Bethesda. In those days, did your dad encourage you in any particular reading of books that he thought you should read?

**NM:** That's a sore subject. When I first went to the Heights, which is, I think I went there from seventh to twelfth grade, they had a summer reading list, required every summer. And I, I loathed it; I hated reading back then, had no interest, which today I find very ironic because I read enormous amounts, sadly not a lot of novels, but I do a lot of reading on current affairs and world issues. And, he very much, (*unintelligible word*), we often talked about reading and I always wanted to change the conversation, but he always talked how beneficial, how much he enjoyed it, how beneficial it was to him, how useful it was for him to get a perspective. He talked about the value of understanding history, and, he was always a member of the Book of the Month Club and always ordered, well, I was going to say more books than he could read. But he, he, he was an author and really a prolific reader. He could read very quickly and read at night before bed. In fact, I think when he died he was reading a book on Moa. He loved history; he loved reading about all sorts of things. I don't recall all the things he read, but it was mainly about history and current affairs. I don't think he ever read things like Robert Ludlum, you know, mystery novels or things; I don't remember that. And when you look at our bookshelves, you don't see books like that.

**DN:** Did he, did he talk much about his heritage? We talked briefly about his parents, but did he talk much to you or family about his heritage from Poland, or your mother's heritage?

**NM:** I think we talked a lot throughout Dad's life and, about his roots in Poland. In fact he, he was very proud when I went to Poland on business. Yeah, he often talked about how the name was shortened at Ellis Island from Marciszewski to Muskie, and talked about, you know, the, my grandparents' early life in the United States, which I believe was at the end of the nineteenth century and very early, no, it was probably in the early 1900s I suspect, and going from Buffalo to Maine. He was very proud of the, his Polish heritage. Again, that's something I'd love to talk to him more now that I know a little bit more about Polish history. I certainly, we talked enough that I knew the town, Bialystok, or, it's near Bialystok, it's called something like (*name*), something like that. Because I, on my next trip to Poland I'm going to try to go and meet any of

our relatives there. I know they exist. One recently sent me a letter, so I'd like to learn more about them.

**DN:** This brings me to a subject involving you directly, and that is your migration into banking and ultimately into international banking. How did that start?

**NM:** Well, I think unlike Dad, I wasn't a very focused student. And I'm sure that drove him crazy because he was always a straight A student and I was probably an under achiever in school. But I'd do well on tests like the SATs and, so, when I went to Duke, he, and he was very influential in that decision. There were a lot of other colleges that I got into that, but he really liked Duke, so went with me on college tour to, to visit various schools out west and in the South. And I'm glad, it's probably the most force-, not forceful, but he really wanted me to go to Duke. And as it turned out, I loved it. It was a very big part of my life and when I was at Duke I studied, you know, the typical liberal arts, education. I majored in political science and economics.

And for a long time I thought I was just naturally going to go to law school. And then I decided it really wasn't for me. I took a year off after Duke and worked for a law firm in London, and that surprised Dad. I got that job completely on my own and it really surprised him that I wanted to do that. I think he liked the fact that I wanted to go live overseas for a year. And when I came back after that experience, I realized I didn't want to be a lawyer and I had a friend in banking and it sounded interesting. And so I went to work at *(name)* Bank. I didn't, I thought about going to New York or to Boston but after being at Duke for a few years and then in London for a year, I wanted, you know, Dad was at that time in his late sixties and had a heart attack and I wanted to be in D.C. and be near home. And so I went and talked to *(unintelligible phrase)*, somebody he knew *(unintelligible phrase)* and then my *(unintelligible phrase)* add towards international banking and some of it was influenced by the fact that my girlfriend at the time was British and, I think Dad's influence on me, that's part of why I like to think I'm an internationalist. I've always loved traveling and learning about different cultures. And, you know, I know that Dad had an influence on that because we would talk about different cultures and different historical events that shaped history, and talked about China.

One of my most favorite memories actually is that, Dad was a very avid photographer and on his trips would take lots of photographs. And then we would have a family, lots of regular family slide trips of the trips and around. And, Dad was terr-, a good photographer, terrible with the projector. He always ended up yelling at it and saying, goddamit, but he would show us photos of trips to China and Cambodia, rather long. And so now in my job of traveling all over the world, it's particularly interesting to go back to places where Dad went. I just went to Panama and went through the Panama Canal *(long unintelligible speeded section re travels) . . . (next section lugubriously slow - picks up and repeats from . . . favorite memories actually . . .)* which he did back in 1970, so that was back when Carter signed the *(unintelligible phrase)* and I remember very vividly

*(transcription of Side B, tape one stops here due to unintelligibility)*

*Side One, Tape Two*

**DN:** We're interviewing Ned Muskie on the 5th of May, 1999 at his office in the First Union Bank in Washington, D.C. This is the second tape picking up where we had a break on the second side of the first tape. Ned, I was starting to ask you about your Dad and the slides that he would bring back from his foreign trips, and whether he simply showed them as a tourist might showing you where he'd been, or whether he was talking about what he'd learned while in the country.

**NM:** It's very clear to me that Dad never showed us his slides like a tourist. It was always like a college professor would show, I guess, photos of a country. And often times the photos were of important people or important activities that they were doing in a country. So, no, I think the slides were always incredibly educational and I can't help but believe that they shaped my interest in, in the world around us. I'm the only one of the five children who has really traveled a lot overseas. In fact, when Julia and I got married in 1989 and the family came over for the wedding, to the U.K., several of them had never been out of the country. And still, that's been their only trip abroad. And yet, it seems so natural for me to just hop on a plane and go somewhere, not just because of my job, but even before that I would go on vacations with college friends abroad, go to Paris or... And Mom and Dad were always very supportive of that, since they were financing those trips.

But I'm glad I remembered those, the slide shows, because they were a really big part of our life. And it wasn't just overseas trips. Dad would take photos all over the place, up in Maine or, and lots of them going back to way before I was born, whether it was in the Blaine House in Maine or his going ice fishing with Steve before, I think, I was born or very young. And it was always fun to see the family at very young ages and have a good laugh. I regret that we didn't do that later in life much, but we were all so dispersed it was very unusual for all five kids to be together after, you know, the mid-seventies. In fact, that was one of the great things about the campaigns because it was an assembling mechanism that would get the family together up in Maine or, so, which is kind of ironic. You would think campaigns would almost separate families, but I recall them being almost a way of getting us together.

**DN:** Did your parents, was it your impression that your parents were intent on having you around at the time of the campaign?

**NM:** I, yeah, it was obvious to me then, and it is still obvious that Mom and Dad were, family was always number one, always. And they would have us at places where you, we wouldn't have had to be there. You know, even when they had dinner parties and had, you know, important friends and senators and their wives and everything over for dinner, we'd be around goofing off while, in the dining room while they ate. And, you know, we weren't sent out with our friends or off to a movie or, we were always part of it. And I think that's one reason why we're very close with a lot of Mom and Dad's friends now. Julie and I often have people over to our house who were really contemporaries of Mom's and Dad's. You know, we've had Leon and Cherry Billings over with Mom recently, and Carole Parmelee and Ken. And, I think that's slightly unusual, the more I think about it, that they were very much a part of our life. And Mom, it's because Mom and Dad got us involved in being at events, being, you know, going down to the Senate and having lunch with Dad. Or, I just remember spending a lot of time in Dad's Senate

office at very young ages. I don't know if that's unusual or not. I've, and I consider it a very valuable part of my memory.

**DN:** What interested you in the Senate office when you were there?

**NM:** Well again, it was another playground for me as a young kid. And Dad had fun memorabilia; he'd have, you know, carved elephants from Kenya or he'd have carved, or, I always coveted his stuffed sailfish on his wall that I think was in the Senate and later in his Senate office in Waterville. He had lots of fun toys for a kid, or whether it was sitting at, I remember loving to sit at his desk chair and put my hands up on the desk and act like I was senator. He always had magnificent offices and great views out the windows. And, you know, we got access to him when his staff, I'm sure, you know, was craving to have five minutes with the senator to talk business. And we'd just stroll in there and run around the halls and goof around with the staff. I don't know if they enjoyed it, but they faked it well if they didn't enjoy it. I mean, a lot of the staff like Gayle and many others were very much a part of the family. Even today Janie O'Conner still drives Mom's car up to Maine, which I'm sure she does not because she loves to drive but because it's almost habit. It's part of staying connected with our family. And I remember always stealing pads of Senate paper that I could use at school and, you know, show off my senate paper. So it was fun.

**DN:** Did you learn things from the staff, or was it simply that they were part of the family?

**NM:** I think I learned quite a bit from the staff, but it, in kind of a different way than I think you're asking the question. They were always helpful whenever I'd have to do a school paper, and they'd almost help me research it. It was in the days way before you had the internet, and, you know, when I would do a paper on, oh God, I don't even know what I did a paper on. But Gayle would always get involved and, you know, send for information from the archives or from, you know, whatever. I wish I could have gotten them to write the papers, but, yeah, I think we learned a lot from the staff. I wish I could remember a good example, but, I remember certain issues like the Indian land claims case was certainly something that I was fascinated by at the time, and the nuclear power plants up in Seabrook, I think. So yeah, I think we learned from them and I remember having a lot of fun with people like Bob Strauss, who I think did media and PR stuff.

**DN:** Bob Squier.

**NM:** Bob Squier. And I always enjoyed watching him do his job, partly because it often involved famous people. But, so.

**DN:** In the later years of your dad's life after the Secretary of State stint and he was practicing law here and you and Julia were here during that period, did you have more chance to talk with him about his reflections on what was going on in the world, and also his own career?

**NM:** I, we did see a lot of Dad. We lived in the area from '92 until he died in '96, and we would often go over and see him and Mom and have dinner with them or watch golf, and would often talk about issues if we were watching the news and something happened. He would, I'd



ask his views on whatever it was, and then he'd often reflect back to his career. You know, we often talked about the deficit, and he had very strong views that the deficit didn't just happen, that the Republicans, you know, presidencies and policies had caused a lot of it. And he was very passionate about that issue.

So, yeah, he reflected a lot on his career. He loved to talk about issues, but he also loved to talk in general about campaigning in Maine and all that that entailed. And he was always very proud of the fact that he probably is the one person in Maine who could drive throughout the state without using a map. He knew the roads, he knew the towns. I think he loved to talk about these things because I'm absolutely sure that he missed being in the fray. And, but I know he loved being called upon for his counsel when, you know, whether it was the President or whether it was working on different issues like the Tower Commission or Cambodia. We frequently talked about the Khmer Rouge and the situation in Cambodia. So yeah, I mean, it, Dad, he was just very engaging. He liked to talk even though he could be almost combative.

He, you know, after he left the State Department and was at home, his health wasn't excellent, and he wouldn't get out of the house as much as I would have liked him to. He was much more stuck at home was the way I viewed it, and so what stimulated him was, you know, what was going on in the newspaper and in the news. But I could tell he was like a caged animal, for lack of a better analogy, and didn't like it. And he grew to be a little bit more ornery, although still very pleasant. But I didn't, I, he didn't like growing older at all. And whether it was his health or whether it was just getting older and his hearing not working as well or, it frustrated him.

**DN:** Did he talk much about his involvements in the legal assistance program in Maine?

**NM:** He was very proud of that and did talk about that and the value of it and why it was important for the indigent to have good legal counsel. We didn't talk a lot about his work as a lawyer. We did talk about his overseas offices and what they did in places like Delhi and other places. But the, that work in Maine was something that he frequently talked about. It, now I understand why, and yet I don't understand why that was particularly important to him versus all the other valuable issues, but it was.

**DN:** When, did he talk much about Campobello?

**NM:** Probably as much as anything that I can remember. We always went on trips up to Campobello. He cared enormously about it for lots of reasons, the historical perspective. I think he was a great fan of FDR. I think of two presidents. I would pick out Lincoln as being his favorite and then maybe FDR second. And he loved being on the commission, involved the family frequently. I don't know how many trips I took up there but it must have been ten trips. [He] loved being on the commission and always told people about Campobello because most people don't unders-, or know of it. And when we would be up at Campobello he would always talk about how FDR got polio and he would take us around the island and we'd go for walks on the beaches. And he'd talk about FDR as a president and what it was like back in the Depression. So yeah, that's a great example of the type of thing Dad would like to talk about. He liked to be there, he liked to talk about the significance of it, he liked to share it with us. He liked to impart his, not views, but historical perspectives with us.

**DN:** As you think about your dad, what do you think for him were the most important, two questions really, what were the most important accomplishments in his career? And, what was he most passionate about in public policy or in terms of private life?

**NM:** There's no doubt in my mind that, well, I guess the thing, two things he was most proud of in his life were clearly his service to the state of Maine. And I say specifically "Maine" instead of saying "to the country." Maine was his, his home in lots of different ways. And he loved it when people would call him Governor Muskie. And the second thing that he was proud of was a lot of the legislation that he got involved in. I mean he loved, I'm sure, being called "Mr. Clean" because that was a piece of legislation that really had a tangible effect on people's lives throughout the country and was long-lasting, and ground-breaking I suppose. But it was really his long career as, his public service. I think it was his, the notion of his public service that was, made him proud rather than titles or power or committee chairmanships or even being Secretary of State. That was a great way to finish his career, but it was so short that it wasn't nearly as momentous to him as being a senator from Maine. What was the second question?

**DN:** The second question was what was he most passionate about, public life and private life?

**NM:** Again that's two questions. In public life, well I think I've just said, it's the public service, it's nothing in particular. It's the service, it's the working on, he was stimulated by issues and about problems and about finding solutions. I think he was also passionate about knowledge. I'm not sure why I say that, but I remember back to, it may have been in 1972 when he was running for president, but it was sometime in the early '70s. We were at home and he was being interviewed for something, and he was talking about defense. And at the time I didn't think of defense as being something that he knew a lot about. But he clearly was well-prepared and was rattling off numbers about, you know, different types of missiles and military capabilities. And I was, I, to the, clearly it's stayed with me for over twenty years. I was fascinated that he would have as much knowledge about that as he did. So, he just loved to soak up knowledge and would prepare for things very conscientiously. He would frequently after dinner go up and write, you know, start writing a speech. I mean, he wrote a lot of his own speeches, and. So I think he was passionate about being good at his job. But I'm, in my perspective he wasn't passionate about power or anything like that. I think he was a very selfless person when it came to that.

And then passion in his private life, clearly family. I think I've gone on and on about that, but he loved his family. He loved his grandkids, he loved being a grandfather and was good at it. He was good with children. He was good with me when I was a kid. Every night when he'd come home I'd go and sit on his knee, and he'd bounce me on his knee. I guess every father does that. But I'd go and get his slippers and we'd, I'd bring them down and take off his shoes and always make a joke about the smell of his feet. It was just a, you know, when I have kids I hope that I have rituals like that. It's a very fond memory thinking back to when Dad would get home. And it's interesting because when I get home, I'm stressed as heck, and I'm sure he was, given his job and all the issues. And yet, you know, he wouldn't come home and kick the dog or kick us, or whatever. He'd always be very pleasant from the minute he got home. So, I think he was extremely passionate about his family. And lots of other things, but all those other things he

included his family in whether it was golf or photography or travel or going places of historical importance like Williamsburg or, so.

**DN:** We haven't talked at all about religious beliefs, religious practice. What was your father's religious, we know he was a Roman Catholic, but how deeply devoted was he to his faith?

**NM:** Actually I'm glad you said that because I would add that to his passions. He was an extremely devoted Catholic in a very, again, very quiet way and a very personal way. He always went to church and he, it was a very important part of his life. And as was typical with everything else, he wouldn't make us go to church if we didn't want to. Or, but we did because, well, I always just felt it was important, partly because I guess because he did. And we went to Catholic schools. And, but he'd always go to church, even if we were in Maine on vacation or if he was on the campaign trail in, you know, wherever it was, he'd go to church. He loved to sing in church. He always had great relationships with the priests. I would say that was as important as any other part of his life, up there with family. He didn't talk a lot about it. You know, I guess right now I can't think of it.

Any time when we talked a whole lot about the value of it... And today it's one of the, if I had a laundry list of a hundred topics I'd like to talk to him about, you know, I'd love to talk about various religious topics, or even topics like abortion or controversial topics. He was also, related to that, very proud when Pope John Paul II was named pope because he's the first Polish pope, and they had a good relationship. And I'm sure he'd met several popes; I can think of several photos. And that was important to him to take advantage of those opportunities. But again, he did in a very private way, and it was just a natural part of his life. Whereas when I go to church sometimes I consider it a chore, I think for him it was just a, an important part of his everyday life.

**DN:** Thank you very much, Ned. We'll continue this conversation sometime, both with you and with your brother and sisters.

**NM:** Good. Thanks, Don. It's fun to do this.

*End of Interview*