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## Nute, Alice oral history interview

Marisa Burnham-Bestor

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## **Interview with Alice Nute by Marisa Burnham-Bestor**

*Summary Sheet and Transcript*

### **Interviewee**

Nute, Alice

### **Interviewer**

Burnham-Bestor, Marisa

### **Date**

February 5, 1999

### **Place**

Augusta, Maine

### **ID Number**

MOH 062

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### **Biographical Note**

Alice Nute was born July 25, 1915 in Houlton, Maine. Her father was a forester; her mother was a teacher who graduated from Bates. Nute went to Ricker Junior College and worked in the Kerry Library in Houlton. She moved to Augusta after college and worked in the state law library from November 15, 1943-May 12, 1978. When she retired, her title at the library was "Deputy Law Librarian." She married Floyd Thomas Nute, who was Muskie's press secretary around 1954 when Muskie was governor of Maine.

### **Scope and Content Note**

Interview includes discussions of: the Office of Price Stabilization; Muskie's first term as Governor; Muskie's 1956 Maine gubernatorial campaign; Muskie's second term as Governor; Muskie's 1958 U.S. Senate campaign; Muskie's 1968 Vice Presidential campaign; environmental protection; media; newspapers; finance and liquor scandals; the Maine State Law Library; and renovations to the State House;

### **Indexed Names**

Arnold, Joan  
Arnold, Lorin  
Barrows, Lewis O.  
Bowen, Elsie  
Burns, Bev  
Burns, Jeb  
Clauson, Clinton Amos, 1895-1959  
Coffin, Frank Morey  
Cohen, Leonard  
Crocker, Robert  
Cross, Burton  
Delahanty, Tom  
Ferzigow, John  
Fullam, Paul  
Haskell, Robert  
Humphrey, Hubert H. (Hubert Horatio), 1911-1978  
Hutchinson, Marjorie  
King, Angus  
Langzettel, David  
Manning, Joan  
McCarthy, Joseph, 1908-1957  
McPherson, Anne  
Mitchell, Jim  
Mitchell, Libby  
Muskie, Stephen O.  
Nicoll, Don  
Nute, Floyd  
Parkhurst, Frederick  
Payne, Fred  
Perry, Cort  
Reed, John  
Reynolds, Bill  
Sahagian, Herman  
Smith, Margaret Chase, 1897-1995  
Snowe, Olympia J. (Olympia Jean), 1947-  
Stolt, Bob  
Vahlsing, Frederick  
Williams, Maurice  
Williamson, Robert B.

## **Transcript**

**Marisa Burnham-Bestor:** We're here back in Augusta at the home of Alice Nute. Present are Alice and Marisa Burnham-Bestor, and this is our second interview with Alice. We did one before Christmas and now it's . . .

**Alice Nute:** It's February 5th.

**MB:** Wow, February 5<sup>th</sup>. Okay, so it's been a while. And at the end of our last interview, we had talked about some of the various people who you and Tom had interacted with when he was a newsman. You mentioned some social events leading up to Muskie's election, and you and Tom had followed those events and attended many of them together. So, when you and Tom were involved in the social events leading up to the election, what were these events like?

**AN:** Well, mostly it was, when Muskie was running for governor, it was meetings. He would, groups of people would get together and ask him to come and speak. I don't know whether, I don't know who originated it, but I know that we went. Well, we went to Ellsworth once, and, just for a, I think it was a supper, or dinner or supper meeting, and he spoke at that. And I think he probably, I don't know who set up the meeting, but it could have been the party, the Democratic Party, I'm not sure of that. But there were a lot of meetings like that. And different, other people running for office would be there, too. Tom Delahanty was one that was sometimes there. And then there was a professor at Colby, and I can't remember his name. But he, they persuaded different ones to go on the ticket, you know, for other offices. And the professor, funny I can't remember his name, but, from Colby, and he went on even though, on the ticket, even though it wasn't thought likely that he would win. Paul Fullam, that was his name. And he was a very nice, very, he would have been very acceptable.

**MB:** Do you know what office he was persuaded into running for?

**AN:** Well, I think maybe for the Senate, I'm not sure. This was for federal, not state. And I can't remember whether Tom Delahanty was, I don't know whether he ran or not, but he was very active in that time. But the meetings, you know, these supper or dinner meetings, were great. And I remember once that we went to one in, I think it was in, it was in Bar Harbor, I'm sure. And I know that we, Ed Muskie rode with us; he went down with us. And we have a, we had a convertible, and my husband was small, and I'm small. And I remember Ed sitting in the front seat and his head being right up against, practically against the top. But, oh, there were a lot of, they were wonderful meetings because you met such nifty people. And then another time, there was one in Camden I think it was. And I think Paul Fullam was at that one; I think I do remember that. And, well, they were in different places. And sometimes, one we went to was in a field, and it was during the day, in the daytime. And I can remember the benches and things that they brought forth, and it was down near Waldoboro. It wasn't Waldoboro but it was in that area, I can't remember the town. But they were all fun, you know. They were fun and interesting both.

**MB:** Was it only Democrats or was it sometimes like Republicans and Democrats?

**AN:** Well, at that time people were curious about Ed. They, I think a lot of people were curious. I know that we had a couple that were friends of ours, and they were, they were

really Republicans. But they came I think maybe more out of friendship than anything, maybe curiosity, too. Because I think when, Ed was known somewhat because before he was governor, when he was in law practice, he, I think he did something for the, was it the OPA [*sic* OPS], the Office of Price [Stabilization], whatever it was. And, so he was known. We knew him, I knew him before he was married or bef-, you know, just through the library, the State library, because he used to come in and work in the government section of the library. Not often, but now and then he did.

And, there's a very funny, very funny story, at least I thought it was. And, when he was inaugurated, the Secretary of State always, you know, announces everything. And so after he announced Muskie, he said, what was it, I can't think, "God save the state of Maine", or something like that. And Muskie, being a Democrat, and all of the, everyone around being Republicans, it was very funny. And there was a lot of laughter, you know, from everyone listening, when it was really a somber occasion in a way. But that was fun. I remember when he was inaugurated, his son, I can't think of his name, a little boy, the oldest one, Steve, and Steve and his sister were there and they were just tiny. And I can remember Steve calling out right in the midst of the swearing in, I think, you know, calling out to his father. That's kind of dear, people liked that. And it didn't matter whether they were Democrats or Republicans, they all, you know, warmed, and had great admiration for Ed.

**MB:** There were a lot of Republicans in Maine who supported Ed, weren't there?

**AN:** Well, I think so. I think that they did.

**MB:** When you went to the social gatherings, would many of the newsmen, the reporters attend all of them like you and Tom did?

**AN:** Well, not in the beginning. I think that nobody thought that Ed would win; it was just sort of a token thing, his running, you know, put up a name. But I think after, I don't remember when, I think we began to see, you began to see more of them. But I don't think there were that many in the beginning, I don't remember them. But I think that, I know Tom always thought he could win, from the beginning. Just, Don, well I, Don of course was, Frank Coffin was one that Don was most interested in at that time, I think, in the beginning, but I don't know. I think there were quite a few of the news people there. But in the beginning there weren't that many.

**MB:** At what point in Muskie's campaign do you think people really started to take a second look and say, "Hey, maybe this guy has a chance?"

**AN:** Well, I think people had lots of respect for him, even, you know, Republicans and Democrats alike. And of course his being in the legislature, serving a term there, helped. He was known, it wasn't an unknown person. But I don't, I just think that his presence demanded a lot of attention, you know, just his size and everything. And then when he started speaking, people were impressed by him. He was his own man, he wasn't, he wasn't being managed by the party or anything. And I think that came across.

**MB:** Did people not really see him as playing the political game so much as just being an honest note?

**AN:** Well, I really haven't any idea, but I think people liked [him]. I think his personality was a lot, you know, they, I think they admired him. And I think he was honest and he didn't make small talk that was meaningless. He, what he said, he believed in. I think. It always seemed that way.

**MB:** You had talked about how he would come in to the law library at times; was this when he was a lawyer, or when he was a . . . ?

**AN:** No, it was when he was working for the Office of Price Mana-, Price Management was it? The OPA [OPS]. This was the federal office, and he would come in to look up things, you know. I can remember waiting on him before I really knew him, when he was, this was long before he was running for any office, before he was in the legislature I think it was.

**MB:** Was he different then?

**AN:** No, he was just the way, I don't think anything ever changed him. He, of course I never knew him that well. But I, it seemed to me that he was hon-, always honest and just forthright and just that way. He didn't, well, he was just Ed, I guess.

**MB:** When he would come in and use the, you said the government section?

**AN:** Well, the state library at that time had, it was one, it was, the whole wing of the second floor of the State House was the library. And some years later it changed a lot, it was divided. But within the library was the law section. It became a separate, it became, came under the legislative council in later years, in about, I don't know, I think about 1971. But before that it was part of the state library, and it wasn't in a separate room or anything, it was all one area, had law materials. And it was the same with the state, the U.S. government section. And that was, it was in the U.S. government section that I remember Ed being, coming in and looking at OPA things. I don't know what it was or anything, but I know he was working for the OPA, doing something for them at that time. I don't remember what because that was when, it must have been, well I can't remember when, but in the forties I would think.

**MB:** When, you said that you would wait on him at times. What would he ask you for?

**AN:** Just where something was, not for any, not to look up anything for him but just where something was.

**MB:** Right, the layout of the library.

**AN:** Yes.

**MB:** I know that you and Tom did go to the events for the Democratic candidates. Did the Republicans have similar gatherings?

**AN:** Oh, yes, yes. Tom went to both because he was just covering, he was, you know, even though he was always Democrat, he covered both.

**MB:** Did you ever go with him to the Republican ones?

**AN:** No, I don't think, I don't remember that I ever did.

**MB:** So, did, do you remember when he said he was going to them, would they have them in fields and with dinners and were they similar events?

**AN:** I don't, I haven't, really haven't any idea I don't think.

**MB:** As far as the relationship amongst the reporters when Floyd was a newsman, how close were they socially, versus their professional relationships?

**AN:** Well, they were very, we had, they had parties, you know. We went, there were about, probably here in Augusta maybe five or six. Len Cohen and his family, his wife, and, what were the other ones? Bob, (this is awful, I knew them well and I can't seem to remember the names) but, the Burnses, Jeb and Bev Burns, they were. And often, once I remember Ed went to one of the parties, because they often liked to have, if they could. And Ed went I remember over to Jeb Burns' house once to a party, just, no, that wasn't Ed, that was later. That was John Reed that went; I remem-, always remember that. I don't think Ed went to any of the parties that I ever was familiar with, with the newsmen. He, these were men and women both, you know, husbands and wives went, but, yes, the newsmen did. Doc Arnold was another; he was one of the old-time newsmen. And then there was the Associated Press fellow from Portland, and he'd stay up here during the week. And I can't remember . . .

**MB:** Bob Crocker?

**AN:** Bill Langzetelle. And Bob Crocker was here in Augusta; he and his wife often had, you know, would have a party. Not a party, it was just a get-together. You know, we'd go and have something to eat and talk.

**MB:** What would the subject of the conversation be? Would it be political?

**AN:** Oh, it could be almost anything. You know, it was fun, it wasn't a, there was nothing very serious about the parties. I don't know, maybe the parties that were just men, I never knew any of those, if there were they probably were serious. But it was just fun, just a social was what it was, social occasion.

**MB:** Would the reporters ever disagree over issues? I mean, were most of the reporters,

would they put their opinions into what they were seeing and reporting on?

**AN:** Oh sure, when, at meetings like that they, you know, they let their hair down so to speak. Most of them were bald, but, yes, they didn't agree. They'd have arguments, and they agreed sometimes, but sometimes they didn't.

**MB:** Were most of the Democrats or were most of them Republicans?

**AN:** Oh they, you never could tell. No. No, even now, when I look back, I don't know whether Len Cohen was a Democrat or, I don't know whether any of them, what the others, what any of them were. And Tom never was until he went to work. I mean he, I don't mean he wasn't, he never was a Democrat, but he never let on what his politics were. And once I remember that he, I think it was after Margaret Chase Smith gave her speech on confidence, you know, and on, when Joe McCarthy was at his height. And Margaret Chase Smith, you know, stood up and made that speech in Congress. And Tom was impressed by that. And I, he never had been a supporter, I don't think; he never said what his politics were in the beginning. But he was a Democrat and he changed to a Republican just so he could vote in the primaries for Margaret Chase Smith. He got a lot of ribbing from the people that knew him, and he let on what he had done, but he changed as soon as that election was over. But people did do such things in those days. Probably still do.

**MB:** Do you think it was deliberate that the reporters didn't divulge their political opinions?

**AN:** Oh no, they talked about them, and you knew I suppose, you knew the way they were leaning. But I think that it wasn't wise, you weren't a good newsman if you did, and you'd steer clear of anyone, I think, that did. I think it wasn't considered good to have any, you know, to show your feelings. Or maybe they didn't, tried not to, they tried to be objective. I know that Tom tried to be objective and not to be influenced in writing otherwise. If you're reporting news, it's one thing, if you are promoting, you know, a candidate. But if you're just writing news, you try to be objective.

**MB:** Did Tom or any of them do, ever do editorials, or were they strictly . . . ?

**AN:** No, they didn't do editorials. The editorial writers on the, I never knew any of the editorial writers except, you know, to say "Hello" to them, but not . . .

**MB:** Do you know if there were any specific reporters that Tom was particularly close to, that he would, you know, discuss stories with or anything like that?

**AN:** Well, I don't know that, but I think maybe Bob Crocker and Jeb Byrne both were, they were friends. And I think that, although they didn't divulge their, maybe they did to Tom, I don't know, but it was hard, they never outwardly let on what their politics were.

**MB:** What were Bob Crocker and Jeb Byrne like as people?



**AN:** Oh, nifty. Bob Crocker is dead, he died a few years ago, he, fairly young. But he was the head of the Associated Press in Maine. And Jeb Byrne was, ran the United Press office. And then when Muskie, I'm trying to think, Clinton Clauson became governor after Muskie went to Washington, and Jeb Byrne left the United Press and became his press secretary. And at the end of that year, only, less than a year I guess, no, it was about a year that Clauson was governor, he dropped dead, and Jeb was without a job. Meaning, that kind of a job, and he worked for one of the departments for awhile. And then he went to Washington and he finally became the director of the Federal Register in Washington, which is . . . He'd had other jobs in the beginning but he, he was really a, and still is, they're friends. I talk with him every little bit. He's retired now but he was, he worked for the archives I think in Washington. And then he applied and got the job as director of the Federal Register, and that's one of the really good jobs there.

**MB:** So, I know we talked a little bit about this last time, but, once you become a press secretary, you can't go back to being a newsman, is that right?

**AN:** Oh yes, you could, but, I don't know. I think probably many people do. I don't think that has, I don't see why that would . . . I think that you can't work for a governor, you can't work for a governor as a newsman, and then go back to being a, you know, you can't be, nobody; you aren't objective. And this is what, I can't even, I have trouble thinking of names. Doc Arnold told Tom when they asked him to be Muskie's press secretary, and Doc Arnold told him he'd never get a chance on another, you know, as a reporter if he took that. And it certainly was proven true, I think. I think Tom never, well, I don't know whether he tried, but he wrote a weekly column for a news-, for weekly newspapers, he did that a lot, did a few things like that. But you can't have politics if you, you know, and be trusted.

**MB:** Wow, that must have been a pretty hard decision then, for Tom to decide.

**AN:** Well, it was. He held off on it, but we had some financial problems which made it, which he felt he needed to take the job.

**MB:** Was the press secretary job higher paying than his reporter job?

**AN:** Yes. You went at it differently.

**MB:** What was it like for Floyd after he began working for Muskie? As far as his relationship with the reporters, how did that change?

**AN:** Didn't change any.

**MB:** No?

**AN:** No, not with reporters.

**MB:** So, was he, he was able to maintain his friendships with them?

**AN:** Oh yes, (*unintelligible word*). You have to be careful once you have, because the newsmen will try and worm out stories from you, you know, to get ahead of another newsman. But, you know.

**MB:** Did he ever regret the decision to join Muskie's staff?

**AN:** I don't know.

**MB:** Because, I mean, it seems like, I did a little bit, I know a little bit about the responsibilities of the press secretary and so forth, and it seems like a very stressful job. Did he complain about frustration, about people nagging him?

**AN:** Well, he wasn't a complaining; he may have felt it inwardly. I imagine he probably did, but I think there are frustrations in that kind of a job.

**MB:** Did he mention the other people in the office? Marjorie Hutchinson, Maury Williams?

**AN:** Oh yes. He liked, Marjorie Hutchinson was a wonderful person, just wonderful. He was fond of her. And he and Maury Williams were good friends. They were before he was. Maury Williams worked in the finance office; I think he worked in finance, and Tom knew him then, before he became, or came into Muskie's office.

**MB:** How did Tom know Maury? Through the finance office?

**AN:** Well, through working, you know, working in the State House. You know all of the departments if you work there as a news person. You know all of the department, you know departments, you should. And he knew him that way. And some people you take to; and he and Maury liked one another and . . .

**MB:** What about the secretaries: Joan Arnold, Elsie Bowen and Ann McPherson?

**AN:** Well, I think Tom liked them. I don't know . . .

**MB:** But the relationships with the other people in the office other than Marjorie and Maury were never particularly close, right?

**AN:** Well, just the same as any office. I think they all liked one another, I don't know that they didn't. Tom wasn't one to dislike people, and so I don't know how they felt.

**MB:** We also spent some time discussing some of the people you've known and been involved with at the State House, the Law library. You had mentioned specifically Judge Williamson and Cort Perry as two of your favorite people to wait on; is there anyone else that you can think of as far as lawyers and legislators who would come in frequently or

that would be fun to wait on?

**AN:** Oh, yes, there were ever so many lawyers. I still see them. I had, someone, driving down Chapel Street just not too long ago, and, it was in a pick-up truck. And he stopped and he jumped out and came over and it was one of these lawyers. I haven't seen him for years, you know, and it was great. I saw him again. He's someone I, he's an attorney here in Augusta and someone that I always liked a lot. And then recently I was downtown going along a street and this person coming in the other direction said, "Well, hello Alice." And I said, "Hi, Bob," and not, and if I'd stopped to think I wouldn't have known his name at all, but it was just spontaneous. And that was another fellow, Bob Stolt who worked in the State, he was an attorney in the State House. And there were a lot that, ever so many, you know, and I still see now and then.

**MB:** It was that familiar, they came in that frequently, that, I mean you would recognize them?

**AN:** Oh yes, in there many days, you know, some of them every day. And John Ferzigow, he's a, I think he's still there. Yes he is, I saw him not too long ago in one of the supermarkets. And he worked in the attorney general's office. A lot of the young fellows that were associated with the attorney general's office or worked there, you know, they'd be in the state, they'd be in the law library. The law library became separate from the state library in '71, and they, you know, all day long there'd be some of them there. And I remember when Angus King was, I think he was working, oh, what is the group he worked for, some, quite a number of years ago? Oh, they give legal service to people that haven't a lot of money. You know, it's right here on, isn't that, my stroke made me, bothered my memory somewhat. Anyway he, Angus King used to come in a lot and he worked for that group. Can't think of the name of it. Ordinary.

**MB:** It's for, the people who can't afford an attorney, one will be appointed to them?

**AN:** Well, they can get help. It's right around the corner. You can see the corner of the house from here. I don't know whether, I think they're, le-, it isn't a state office, you know, it's a, well, anyway.

**MB:** So, what would these people do in there all day long?

**AN:** Well, doing their work. They'd often bring their briefcase, they'd come with briefcases, and do their work. These are lawyers from outside and from the AG's office. They would come in with their folders or whatever and, looking up material. That was a place, you know, the place you would look up materials. You wanted to know what other states were doing on a particular thing, or if you wanted laws from the other, because all the laws of all the states are there. And so if they wanted to see if Alaska had a law on whatever, they would come in and look it up or ask someone to look it up for them.

**MB:** So it was research as well as they would do their work there, too?

**AN:** Oh yes.

**MB:** Were there, was there anyone who would come to you a lot for help, or anyone who was fun to wait on or difficult to wait on?

**AN:** I don't know, I don't remember anyone that was difficult to wait on. It's amazing, but it was fun. I enjoyed, you know, it was great. Some were maybe easier to wait on, they, I found, I always have found that the people, the attorneys that thought that you were bright didn't explain things. But those that, that weren't that bright themselves would, you know, they'd have difficulty, or I would have difficulty because they couldn't tell you what they wanted. But for the most part, I think that, I never had any, nobody that I remember that I minded waiting on. Lawyers are, to wait on that way, are easy. But it's much easier if they think you're bright and let you know what they're talking about. But, sometimes they have problems, I think.

**MB:** Was it, it seems like there's a lot of information in a law library, from what you've said.

**AN:** Oh, yes.

**MB:** Was it hard to keep it all straight? I mean, were you, you worked there every day so you were probably very familiar with it. But how much, how often did it change as the laws changed? Was there a constant flow of information coming in?

**AN:** Well I suppose there's always that. You keep up with things, you, but we had the laws of all of the states and all of the legislative history and that sort of thing. I think it, you know, I don't, I never found any problem that way. It wouldn't be for everyone, I think. Some librarians wouldn't, you know, be interested in the law part of the library.

**MB:** Were the books all bound, or were they . . . ?

**AN:** Oh yes, all of the states, all of the reports, the Maine reports. You should go in. I don't know now, it's changed a lot since I was there, a great deal. And, but just go in some time and look at it, just look at it. And you see, of course they've changed. I haven't been in for quite a while, but they have, I'm sure have changed a lot because of going online and all the computers. They were just, when I left, they were, they just, they'd begun to have computers. And so now it's entirely different; I wouldn't know my way around in it now.

**MB:** By 1978 when you retired from the law library, how had the way people used it changed? Are they still using it for similar things that they used to now?

**AN:** Well, it was so much, communication is so different now than it was then. Then, if you wanted law from Alaska and you didn't have it, or if you wanted, (we had all the laws of all the states) but if you wanted something current in Alaska, just taking that as an example, it wouldn't yet be on their books. Then you would write, or telephone if it

was that urgent, or write and ask, you know, if they had such and so forth. But now, they can just, I don't know because I don't understand any of the workings now. But they can just poke a few buttons and they have it right there. So that has changed. You have a, you can immediately get answers to things that in my day, you know, it was a different process altogether.

**MB:** In the early years, legislators had much smaller staffs, right?

**AN:** Yes, well I don't know, probably. I don't think I know the staff now. The, it's changed since I was there. The whole legislative, well, can't think of the word I want to use, but now the legislative council, for instance, now the law library, which was part of the state library, included the law library. And now the law library is under the legislative council, under the legislature itself. And so that makes it quite different. It isn't, doesn't have any connection now with the state library, only as far as part of the state government.

**MB:** Why did the law library move, what was the reason for that?

**AN:** You mean, it didn't move physically.

**MB:** Why did the state, why did the state library move out of where the law library was?

**AN:** Well, they built the new library archives and museum building. And that was made for, you know, to give them room. And state government was spreading then, was increasing.

**MB:** Towards the end of your time working at the law library, were there a lot more people coming and using it, or did the numbers diminish as the years went on and communication changed?

**AN:** No, because I think now that probably commu-, I don't know anything about it now, I shouldn't say I think now, no. It was used all the time; there was never any, you know, quiet period or busy period. It was always very active. And I think from what I hear from one or two of the girls that work there now that they're very, very busy now with all of the new communications that they have. And they're, now they're renovating the State House; I think that that's making a big difference in how they work and so forth.

**MB:** Why are they renovating the State House?

**AN:** What?

**MB:** What are they doing to the State House?

**AN:** Well, they're renovating it. You, I haven't been in to see. But it's, everyth-, a lot

of it is blocked off and they're, and they're doing, the new office building is a big part of it. What they're, that's seven stories and it's going to be gutted. I guess already they've moved the departments out so that a lot of the departments are across the river in the old state hospital areas. And the main part of the State House, I don't know how much they're doing there but they're doing, where the law library is, I don't know. But I know one of the girls that works there told me that they had scaffolding up and were doing all kinds of things. But I haven't been in, so I don't know actually.

**MB:** Since you were in the State House, I imagine you probably got a feel for the way everyone was kind of reacting to the scandals of the times, or, you know, what was going on.

**AN:** Oh, yes.

**MB:** Do you remember any specific?

**AN:** Well, before I went, just a few years before, let me see, I was an apprentice. I went to the state library in 1942 and when I came to Augusta in 1940, it was in the midst of a scandal, and it was a state government scandal then. And I, and, the governor was Lewis Barrows at that time, I think, when the scandal broke, and it involved some of the departments. You can look that up if you are interested, because it was a big thing and this, I can't remember. Bill Reynolds was at the bottom or the top of the list, and I think he was a state controller, but I'm not sure of that. He was one of the state officials and, in the midst of it, and I can't remember because I was just coming here. But you could find it out if you were interested, and it would be very interesting to read something about it, because I think that in the midst of it all, and the investigations, I think that Mr. Reynolds committed suicide. And it was a, you know, it was a dreadful time in state government. That must have been about 1940, but I'm not sure of that. But it was right about then, sometime then.

**MB:** What was the scandal related to?

**AN:** It was finances. And I can't remember, I don't remember enough about it, but it was a real scandal. And the other one was a liquor, it was known as a liquor scandal. And that came in, I think when Governor Payne, when Payne was governor. And that's, the person in that was a, his name was Sahagian, lived in, and he had a winery Gardiner. And I don't remember enough about it. But that's something else; I don't know that you want it for your work, but it would be interesting. I hadn't thought about that for a long time. There were two scandals, the only two I. . . .

**MB:** How did the State House, the atmosphere, how did it react to these incidents?

**AN:** Well, with the first I don't know because I wasn't working there, with the Bill Reynolds. Everyone knew it, it was, you know, you listened and, I remember my mother was here at the time and she had a very dear friend whose husband was somehow brought into it. I think he was exonerated, but sort of questionably so. But I remember it affected

the whole city as well as the state. It did, you know, the people in the city here. But . . . .

*End of Side One*

*Side Two*

**MB:** When Muskie ran for the U.S. Senate, how did the public and the people in the State House react to his decision to run for Senate? He had been a representative prior to that.

**AN:** I think that they were, I think that a lot of people didn't think he could win, but they thought he was a peach of a fellow. I can remember that, people saying he was a peach but he couldn't win. I think that they felt that the Republicans were so settled in that, you know, a Democrat, no matter how good he was, couldn't win. Though there'd been, well, there hadn't been any Democrats I think. Before Muskie, Governor Brann was the last Democrat, Democratic governor. And before Brann I don't know, but Parkhurst was another one. But there couldn't have been more than four or five or six, in this century, Democrats as governor, I don't believe. One would have to look it up to see. But I think, but I think that it didn't seem possible that, people thought that it, you know. But I think after, in the beginning that was the way they felt, but I think that after he was governor, then they knew that he could go on to, everyone didn't have any question that he would beat Fred Payne. Was it Fred Payne he ran against for Senate? And I don't think anyone doubted that he would win that.

**MB:** Was the public, did they seem happy that he decided to run for U.S. Senate?

**AN:** Oh, I think so. I think people had, you know, thought he was wonderful as governor. There's a very funny story, I think I've told Don this story once. But when, nobody thought Ed Muskie could beat Governor Cross, and he, when he did, it was a surprise, big surprise. Well, just a few days, and of course Governor Cross didn't expect to be defeated, and just a few days after Ed was in office, Governor Cross came by and went in to see him. And he, Ed, as he left Ed thanked him, said, thanked him for dropping by, dropping in. And Ed, and Governor Cross said, "I never meant to drop out." It was a wonderful, but I thought that was a wonderful story. Tom happened to be there when it happened, that's the only way we knew. I don't suppose that either of them would ever have told that. But anyway, people were, I don't think they ever doubted that Ed would win the Senate race.

**MB:** Did Tom stay involved as his press secretary through the campaign for U.S. Senate?

**AN:** No. Tom retired from, or left the job I think, well I can't remember.

**MB:** Was it before?

**AN:** I think before Ed ran for the Senate. Yes, I'm sure it was before he ran for the Senate.

**MB:** Why did he leave?

**AN:** Well, he wanted to, he thought that he could get back into writing, and that's what he wanted to do. He was never comfortable really as press secretary. So that's why he did that.

**MB:** Do you know who replaced him when he left?

**AN:** Well, I can't remember his name, but, I can't remember his name. And we knew them, he and his wife, fairly well. He was nice. And he went to, he went to Washington with Ed, I think, but didn't stay with him long. Once he got to Washington, he moved into something, was a person that moved around a lot, and I can't remember his name. He came and he took, he took, he took Tom's, when Tom left Muskie, this fellow came and I think, (I might be wrong there) but I think so, and became his press secretary just the last of his, not for very long, the last of Ed's being here. I think, but I could be wrong on that.

**MB:** Did you and Tom stay involved with Muskie and with the campaign and what was going on with him even though Tom wasn't working for him any more?

**AN:** Well, I don't know. We at that time had, had we bought this house? I think, no; we bought this house in '57 or '8.

**MB:** Then it, yeah, it would be around that time.

**AN:** We may have been so taken up with that, I don't re-, I don't remember really.

**MB:** So you said that you got the impression that the campaign for senator was relatively easy for Muskie, that it wasn't . . . ?

**AN:** I don't know that, but I would think so. I remember thinking, I think another reason we didn't do much at that time. I think too that it seemed such a sure thing that, to us, now maybe not, maybe it didn't to other people, but it has always been my memory that one felt sure that Ed would win.

**MB:** What kind of contact did you and Tom have with Muskie after he went to Washington?

**AN:** None. We, well, you know, sending cards and that sort of thing back and forth and once in a while Ed would write. Well he must have asked me to look up some things for him, in the state, that he couldn't find in Washington. Because I found some letters, a letter or two the other day from him, I was trying to figure out a few things. And they were thanking me for information that I'd sent to him. So once in a while he wrote, if it was something on some subject, I can't remember what. There were two or three times he did. And he didn't write to the office, to the State House; he wrote to me, you know,



personally. And, to look those, it was two or three things and they didn't, they weren't legal matters. They were, one was, they were historical things more than anything I think, but maybe relating in the legal field but historical. I can't remember now. I just found one the other day. But he often did. Frank Coffin often did, too. I think that, knowing somebody in an office, it wasn't because I had any great brain, but it was because, you know, they were familiar with me and I think that's why they did.

**MB:** How did the State House change when Muskie left?

**AN:** Well, I don't . . .

**MB:** He was, the next governor was a Republican, right?

**AN:** Yes, well, Clauson, no that, I can't think now. Yes, Clauson came in, because . . . Bob Haskell was governor for just overnight practically, and then Clinton Clauson, didn't he follow? Yes, yes he did. And then following Clauson was, because Clauson died, and John Reed was the President of the Senate. And he automatically became governor after Clauson died. And then he went on and won another seat, I mean, another seat, another term on his own. Then he was followed by Curtis. I can't remember but I think it was sort of that way.

**MB:** Throughout the time, from '43 to '78 that you worked at the law library, what were the hardest times and the most prosperous times for Maine government within that span of time?

**AN:** Well, I think the times of the scandals were the low point in the state. So, I think that, now when Muskie came in, that was the beginning; to me it seemed that way. But I think one's prejudiced, you know, if you've liked someone, or liked them as a governor. And I think, I don't know, I think that, Clauson I think was a good man. But I don't think, of course he didn't have time to show, only a year, and so we wouldn't know. But I think he was a good person but I don't think he was strong as some were. But, and they all brought something different.

I felt, feel as though when Curtis came in, I always felt there was a change then, that he brought in a lot of outside people, you know, that, outside of Maine that came. One of them I think, one would have to look this up to be sure, would be Jim Mitchell, Libby Mitchell, Elizabeth Mitchell's husband. And I think he was one of the young ones that, I'm not sure of that but I, yes, I'm quite sure that he was one that Curtis brought in. There was another one that became head, and I can't remember his name, he became head of the PUC, Public Utilities. And they came in, he brought them in to state government. And I think in many instances that was good.

I certainly think the Mitchells have contributed a lot; they're very nice. Do you know? Well, Libby Mitchell, you know, she's a, was the Speaker of the House, and her son is now in the legislature. And Jim Mitchell is a peach of a fellow, and he's an attorney here. And there were three or four people that came in, and they changed a lot of things.

They began the change; they didn't change them, they started changes.

**MB:** What states were they from?

**AN:** What?

**MB:** You said they came from other states?

**AN:** Yes.

**MB:** Where did they come from?

**AN:** Oh, I don't remember where each one . . . I, the Mitchells, Libby Mitchell comes from the South. I can't remember whether it's one of the Carolinas or, she's a southerner. And I think maybe, I don't know whether Jim Mitchell came from there or not, I'm not sure of that. But I do know that Libby came from a southern state. Might have been Virginia, I can't remember.

**MB:** Was the mood of the legislators, the people who were using the law library and so forth, different in the State House as the governors changed? Was there noticeable changes in the people working for them?

**AN:** Well, of course there always are changes, you know, but they all have the same questions and the same things to learn. You really get a feel for the legislators. I think, when I look back, I think you admire those who came in to look up something and admitted they didn't know or know how. It was quite a difference. When I look back, I see people who come in and ask all kinds of . . . I'll tell you one is Olympia Snowe who is, you know, she's in Washington. And she always came in and, her husband was killed in a snowstorm coming to, he was in the legislature and he was on his way to work or going home, I don't know which. And he was killed in an auto accident. And she served, then she took over and served in the legislature, filled out his term; and she was excellent. And I see it, I see her on television, listen to her quite often. And she always, I'm not surprised that she has gotten, you know, to where she has because she would come in and ask questions. And she wanted to know exactly, she didn't, it wasn't just surface, it was really depth to her, you know, the things she wanted to know. And you did find that. And then you found others who just were surface interests, which is very interesting I think.

**MB:** Was there anyone who stands out in your mind as being similar to Muskie, or being very different from him as far as how they were governor?

**AN:** No, I think he stood out. I think he was an unusual, you know, I don't think his kind come along too often. That's the way I feel about it.

**MB:** Do you think after he went down to Washington, that he did a good job as Senator, that people were happy with . . .?

**AN:** Well, I think so. I think one, you know, admired the different things that, the environmental things that, well, that's speaking personally I suppose, I don't know. But I certainly think that, you know, his interest in the environment and that sort of thing was, I think he stood out that way.

**MB:** That was a new thing for Maine, wasn't it? To have someone, they didn't really have any governmental policy on the environment here until that?

**AN:** Well, not particularly, no. I think that, from time to time people tried to do, but everything has changed so. It's very hard to look back and remember, I think. It just, there's been a lot that's been done and not, more people, not just Muskie but many people, you know, that . . . Well, like the Kennebec River right here, they're cleaning it up. Now we're going to have the dam removed, it will be removed. And that's going to clean it up even more, I suppose, and maybe let the fish that have not been in the river back.

**MB:** Why is the dam there now?

**AN:** What?

**MB:** What's the function of the dam serving?

**AN:** Well, the dam was built in the beginning. I think the Central Maine Power Company was, I don't mean they built it but back, they benefited from it, from electricity and that. And now of course they, the city, and the state I suppose, but in particular the city, is divided on removal of the dam. But they will be, it will be removed. I think they start right, well, don't they expect it to be done by next fall? Could it be that? Well, anyway, quite soon. And that was a big environmental thing.

**MB:** In 1968, how did you feel about the Humphrey-Muskie campaign for vice presidency and presidency?

**AN:** Well, we watched all of it, the campaigning and all. And I don't think, I don't know, I don't think I do know. I think that people, friends of mine anyway, didn't think that they would win. I don't know why, I don't remember that. I just remember nothing, not negative, but just not feeling that they were going to win. This is the way, and I remember listening, being up all night listening to the returns. And that was, weren't there great fights in Chicago or at Chicago? And, oh, I don't know.

**MB:** How do you think the campaign could have been more successful? I mean, you said you watched it.

**AN:** I don't know. I just remember it, just thinking I was glad I wasn't in that city at that time. It was so wild. And that's my remembrance of it, is just how dreadful the throngs of people, remember? And they, trying to keep order and, I don't even remember

now why.

**MB:** How did Muskie react to it?

**AN:** I don't, I haven't any idea. I can't remember.

**MB:** Oh, really? He wasn't there, was he? I mean, he wasn't . . .

**AN:** Oh, yes, at the, sure, in Chicago. And there was a big, well, I can't remember it really. Yes, he and Humphrey were, there were fights in the streets and it was, it was frightening as I recall. I'm afraid I'm not very good remembering that.

**MB:** What did, after Floyd [Tom] resigned from Muskie's staff, was he still interested in politics, or did he want to change?

**AN:** Oh, he was interested, yes, always interested.

**MB:** He said, you said that he looked for a newsman's job but that . . .

**AN:** Well, he didn't really go out and look, that he just wanted to write and he wrote and wrote and wrote.

**MB:** For what?

**AN:** What?

**MB:** What did he write for?

**AN:** For himself. He didn't . . .

**MB:** Oh, really?

**AN:** Yeah. And he did a lot for, he did relative to a, as a job, he followed the legislature for different companies outside of Maine. You know, that's going and, each day, and finding whether, the various bills. Some companies he worked for would want a certain bill followed. And, you know, he kept books with the, (*unintelligible word*) with the different places. It wasn't anything that he liked to do, but it was, you know, work.

**MB:** So Doc Arnold was right. He didn't get another newsman's job again?

**AN:** No, and I don't know, because he tried. He used to write a column for the weekly papers and he tried doing that, that's what he wanted to go back to doing. And that was where Doc Arnold was right because he had been associated with a Democrat. It wouldn't have mattered if it had been with either party. He couldn't spin a thread that way, and he'd been so sure he could.

**MB:** When did he retire from the work that he did with the companies? When did he retire altogether from working?

**AN:** Well, he was sick. He had emphysema and he had to stop.

**MB:** Lung cancer emphysema, or . . . ?

**AN:** Emphysema, it's a chest, probably from smoking. And so he wasn't able to do very much.

**MB:** What year was that, that he . . . ?

**AN:** Oh, heavens, he had it a long time. He lived a long time with it.

**MB:** Really?

**AN:** If you can call it living. I guess it was. I don't, I can't remember, I don't really remember. We had a, we ran a gift shop here in the evenings and Joan Manning, who lives in half of the house, and she and I . . . And Tom would open it for us before we'd get home from work. Joan Manning was a friend from quite long ago. And we thought it would be fun because we didn't, Tom and I didn't go out a lot socially, he wasn't well really. And so we thought evenings it would be fun to do something at home, so we decided to have a gift shop. We didn't have this house then, this was in '58 and, '57 I guess. And so we started it, we started a small gift shop in the fish market, in one room of the fish market. And all of the things that one read said, "Never have a gift shop near a fish market," or, I've forgotten what else. And so we opened it there, but we did very well. John Reed was our first customer, when he was governor. It was very funny. Or when he was in the Senate, maybe that was it. But anyway we, and we did well, so we bought this house and moved in here. We moved in and Joan had the back of, in the back there, over the garage, and then Tom and I had the top floors, two floors. And we had it for fifteen years. And it was fun but awful wearing, too, because we would get out of, Tom would open it for us at five, and I would get out of work, I got out of work at five, and get home and we would open it from six until nine.

**MB:** What sort of gifts did it sell?

**AN:** Oh, we had wonderful things, just wonderful. And we did wonderfully well with it. Unfortunately we did so well that people everywhere came and bought, and we would gift wrap for nothing for them and mail for them and do all this. So one would be up, you know, I would be up until midnight. But we on-, we were only open, we were open Tuesday through Saturday evenings. But it, or Saturdays all day. But Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and Friday, we were open just, you know, from, but we always did, we did very well. We had some elegant things, really wonderful. We use them now at Christmas. We get out all of our wonderful wood carvings, just beautiful, Italian and, oh, lovely, lovely wood carvings. Well, and loads of things, just loads of things. And we had the gift shop in, this room and that room were the gift shop, and we

had lots of people, people that came for the summer and they'd buy their Christmas gifts. So we did very well.

**MB:** You mentioned John Reed. Did other of the people who, governor and people who worked at the State House use, purchase at the gift shop, too?

**AN:** Oh, yes, we had loads of people, yeah. And people still, you know, I'll see people on the street, and that was, we gave it up in '73. I didn't want to do it any longer, and we had some family illness, and so we gave it up. I was relieved. Fifteen years of doing it was enough.

**MB:** Yeah, in addition to your work at the State House, too.

**AN:** Yeah, and I loved the State House. I had to stop, give up something. And my father was ill and was living with us, and so it seemed a good time to stop.

**MB:** What have you been doing since your retirement in '78? Was there a reason you retired?

**AN:** No, I, age more than anything; I was sixty-two. And so I thought, you know, it was time to retire and do a few things that I wanted to on my own. And so I had, I also had a place over in South Casco, and I think I told you folks that before. So I had a lot to put in, to do and put in to that. So I've been busy ever since.

**MB:** What year did Tom pass away?

**AN:** Nineteen eighty-nine.

**MB:** And how long was he ill for with emphysema?

**AN:** Oh, he was, he had it for ten or twelve years, but the last of it was, you know, the last few years. But we still did, we took trips in the fall to Nova Scotia, every fall. And, but he was miserable. He never let on, you know, he never said anything except his breathing, you could hear him.

**MB:** Did he have to go on oxygen, toward the end?

**AN:** No, but he couldn't have oxygen unless he was in the hospital. I can't remember why. I did know, and it wasn't called emphysema, it was a step beyond emphysema, something one has. It was, I can't remember the name but it's something beyond em-, beyond, it's the next step. And I know that he, when he was, he'd have to go to the hospital quite a number of times. And he could have it but just briefly there; he couldn't have it all the time or anything.

**MB:** My grandmother, actually she just passed away a few months ago of emphysema and lung cancer complications, and she was on oxygen all day. She would walk around

with tubes, and there would just be a long connected hose.

**AN:** Well, I know people that are, but he couldn't have it. I have it somewhere written down, the name. And it's, all it is is just a, emphysema but with something, complications or something.

**MB:** In your opinion, what was one goal or change that Muskie most wanted to make through politics?

**AN:** Wanted what change?

**MB:** Goal or change that he had?

**AN:** Oh, goal or change. I, well I think he al-, it's just my idea that he always wanted to do something good for Maine, and I think the environment was one of the things.

**MB:** How do you think he dealt with the paper mills, and all the paper companies that were in Maine, and that were basically doing the pollution?

**AN:** Well I don't know, I haven't really any idea. But I know that he was concerned about it, I know that. And I think one thing that was, and I can't remember enough about it, one could look it up. But the Vahlsing, I don't know whether you know of Vahlsing, who, Fred I think his name was, in, up in Aroostook. He came up to Aroostook and he, I can't remember enough about it, and I think that, somehow . . . I guess I'd better not say any more because I can't really remember, but he contributed to the pollution, but I can't remember how. And I can't remember how he kept coming to the state for, well, I can't remember what. I just can't. It might be something you could look up in the library sometime, Vahlsing, V-A-H-L- I think, S-I-N-G; something like that. He's well-known in Aroo-, he was in Aroostook. He was not liked.

**MB:** And he was involved with the paper companies?

**AN:** No, no he wasn't, it was something else and I can't remember what. I wasn't thinking of paper companies, when I said that I was thinking, well, the only person in polluting the area that I could think of. And I don't know what kind of pollution, but I know that it was in Aroostook. And I don't know whether Muskie was, liked or disliked him, I can't remember that.

**MB:** Did cleaning up the environment and stopping the paper companies from polluting, did that hurt the, Maine's economy at all?

**AN:** I don't know.

**MB:** No?

**AN:** I have, really I can't . . .

**MB:** I don't know either.

**AN:** I think that it's all a matter of the way one feels, in a way. You can think, I think that the pollution is terrible, and the paper companies and all. But on the other hand you can see that it provides jobs for people. So you have to play it off against one another I suppose.

**MB:** But you think that Muskie's major contribution was the . . . ?

**AN:** Well, I don't really know but I, that would be one of the things I would think.

**MB:** Yeah, many people seem to think that that was his . . .

**AN:** Big thing.

**MB:** Yeah.

**AN:** Yes.

**MB:** Is there anything else that you want to add that we haven't really touched on or discussed?

**AN:** Well, I can't think of anything.

*End of Interview*