

Bates College

SCARAB

Edmund S. Muskie Oral History Collection

Muskie Archives and Special Collections Library

10-28-1998

Rocheleau, Bill oral history interview

Stuart O'Brien

Follow this and additional works at: https://scarab.bates.edu/muskie_oh

Recommended Citation

O'Brien, Stuart, "Rocheleau, Bill oral history interview" (1998). *Edmund S. Muskie Oral History Collection*. 344.

https://scarab.bates.edu/muskie_oh/344

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

Interview with Bill Rocheleau by Stuart O'Brien

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee

Rocheleau, Bill

Interviewer

O'Brien, Stuart

Date

October 28, 1998

Place

Lewiston, Maine

ID Number

MOH 054

Use Restrictions

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

Biographical Note

William "Bill" Rocheleau, Jr. was born in Lewiston, Maine, on May 31, 1925. His parents were both Canadian immigrants, and came to Lewiston to work in the mills. His father eventually became a supervisor at the Bates Mill. Bill left high school early to pursue duty in the Navy, doing underwater demolition. When he returned stateside, he went to Portland Junior College. He then went to the University of Maine at Orono, and graduated in 1951. He returned to the Navy to fight in the Korean War. When he finally left the Navy, he returned to Maine and became interested in law. He initially attended Boston University, but completed his law degree at the University of Maine School of Law. During law school, he owned and operated the Cavalier Inn in Lewiston. Following graduation, he practiced law and became active in politics. He became Corporation Counsel in Lewiston under Mayor Robert Couturier. In 1966, he became Mayor of Lewiston at the height of Model Cities. The Lewiston Central fire station was built while he was in office. He also secured the land for Lewiston High School. After he was Mayor, he led the Lewiston High School building committee. He eventually left public life to practice law in Lewiston.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: Lewiston in the 1930s; Rocheleau's Navy service; his

attendance at law school; helping Muskie run for Governor; confrontations with Louis Jalbert; not being supported in the primaries; Robert Couturier; Lewiston politics in the 1960s; running for Mayor; confrontations with Denny Blais; Democratic split in Lewiston; “Ruining” the Democratic party in Lewiston; running for District Attorney; George Call in Lewiston; Mayoral appointments; racial relations in Lewiston; urban renewal money problems; trying to get Federal money redirected to Lewiston; his relationship with Ken Curtis; Ken Curtis’ role in urban renewal; help securing project funds from a New York Secretary; securing the land for Lewiston High School; meeting Ed Muskie; serving for Ken Curtis; Independence in Maine politics; supporting Nixon in 1968; getting silenced by the Democratic Party; his later political career; and Muskie’s contribution to Maine.

Indexed Names

Blais, Denis
Clifford, William H.
Conant, Alanzo
Connally, John, Jr.
Deschenes, Joseph
Genest, Paul
Gervais, Joe
Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963
King, Angus
Longley, James, Sr.
Muskie, Edmund S., 1914-1996
Nixon, Richard M. (Richard Milhous), 1913-1994
Raymond, Larry
Reed, John
Robinson, Edward
Rocheleau, Bill
Roy, Robert
Simmons, Jack
Webber, Don

Transcript

Bill Rocheleau: Ready? My name is William Rocheleau, Jr. My last name is spelled R-O-C-H-E-L-E-A-U, but it is pronounced Rush, R-U-S-H, L-O-W, ‘Rushlow.’

Tuck O’Brien: Where and when were you born?

BR: I was born May 31st, 1925, which makes me seventy-three years old. I was born in Lewiston, Maine. My father and mother both came from Canada at a young age, and they met here, got married, and I was the first sibling out of three.

TO: So, you were born in Lewiston. What was Lewiston like when you were growing up, when you were young?

BR: More friendly. More family oriented. As you can see by the name, my parents spoke French, so it made it a little harder for us when we started to go to school because we had the French background which, we spoke French with our parents, but outside we spoke English. When I was young, I went to parochial school for a little while and, went there for four years, and then went back to public school. Then I graduated from the eighth grade, which was Jordan. Now the school is closed.

TO: An apartment building.

BR: Yeah. And, graduated from the eighth grade over there. I had a brother and a sister; my sister was in between, my brother was younger. My father and mother both worked in the mills and my father didn't have much of an education, but he was a well, savvy man. He raised to become a boss in the Bates Mill, which was something in those days. And my mother was a very good woman. We're Catholic; really doesn't matter to us but in the older days it was a little stronger, but today I am a Roman Catholic. I am married, married a girl from Montreal, she's a registered nurse.

Going back to my, after Jordan, I went to high school and I went to the freshman, sophomore, junior. Because of my age being very close, I was going to be drafted, so I enlisted in the Navy. I went to WWII and was shipped to Newport, R.I., from Newport, R.I. went to Oklahoma, Oklahoma to New Orleans, New Orleans to Port (*name*), California. I was attached to what we called the underwater demolition. Today I guess they would call them Seals or something, but in those days, they didn't have no Seals. I went over all the islands that you can think of from the (*name*), Mariana, every island in the Pacific. I came out of the Navy in the '40s, I can't remember now, and upon my release from . . . I was in California when I came in, Long Beach, they shipped me to, for thirty days leave. After my leave I reported back to the Fargo Building in Boston and because of my rate I was frozen. I was a Second Class petty officer, a yeoman, because of my typing ability, so I was frozen to help discharge the fellows.

And then after my discharge, it was in June or July, I came home and enlisted to junior college. I went to Portland Junior College. And the reason why I could not accept, they could not accept me as a full fledger because I had left my junior year, although I had finished courses while I was in the Navy. There were two subjects that they waive over here because, I could speak French, so I didn't have to take a language. And there was another one, I can't remember what now. But anyway, I couldn't get my diploma of high school because of that. Although you knew you still didn't have the marking that you had taken the course. So when I went to Portland Junior College, I took these two courses and graduated from Portland Junior College.

Upon my graduation, then I entered the University of Maine. At University of Maine I met some of my old friends from over here and so forth, and I graduated from Maine in 1951, I believe it was. And I was, you don't have fraternities at Bates, but we have at Maine, and I became a Kappa Sigma fraternity and I got to be secretary of them.

Upon my graduation I was interviewed by Pittsburgh Plate Glass as a trouble shooter, but unfortunately I couldn't go because I was recalled to active duty for the Korean War. I was then shipped to, from the Fargo I was shipped to, because of my background in the underwater, I was shipped to Newport, R.I., but transferred at Jamestown, which is the island to the entry of Newport, and there we were the harbor defense. I stayed there for a year and a half, I guess, and then was discharged because the Korean War was not that long.

Upon my discharge, I went to, I met this judge, name was Conant, municipal court judge, and because I was well known and so forth, he asked me if I would help him to run for district attorney. He was a Republican and I was a Democrat, so, you know, it was kind of hard for me to make up this mind. But the Democrats were not giving me any help at all, so I went. And he missed by nine hundred votes. That was unbelievable because in Lewiston, it used to be ninety percent Democrats, so a lot of Democrats had to vote for him. So I became quite a star in their eyes. Jesus, this kid is just a kid and look how many people he got him.

So anyway, my compensation for that was that I was to study law in his office, and that's what I did. But then eventually he came to me and he says, look, you can, he was a decent man, you can continue, but why don't you take your G.I. Bill again and get your law degree. Made sense, so I went to BU. I went there for two years, or a year, and then University of Maine at Portland opened up, so I transferred there because, you know, that was quite a jog.

In the meantime, I had bought a dine and dance place, it was named Cavalier Inn, it was over here on the Lisbon Road 196, a little further down they have a church in there now. A lot of Bates College people used to come; I ran a decent place and made good money. And got involved in politics, you know, a little there. And I had a big following because when I was a youngster I played semi-pro baseball. And my folks had a good reputation, so I had a pretty decent following. At that time, this is before your time, they had a hotel right across the City Hall, where is the Lewiston Sun-Journal now, but that used to be the DeWitt Hotel. And they had a big gathering there of Coffin and Muskie. That's when they were rebuilding the party, and I went there and that's where I met ...

TO: What year was this do you think?

BR: Gee, it's hard for me to, I must have been about twenty-seven, twenty-eight then.

TO: So you're thinking, end of Muskie's term as governor?

BR: Beginning, he was running for governor then.

TO: Oh, so it was '54.

BR: Okay, all right. He was running for governor then. And I helped him in this area. And of course in those days a Democrat was strictly Lewiston and Biddeford, nothing else. Well, you might have had a few in Brunswick, but the real power house was Lewiston and Biddeford. He got elected. Now, Frank Coffin was the chairman. Frank Coffin was a graduate from Bates College, too. And he was really the chairman of the Democratic Party. When Muskie got

elected for governor, that's when the party started to grow. And I had a, what they called a Young Democrats, but it was not affiliated with the real Young ---, but a group. We probably were about seventy-five to a hundred. And, but they were not, you know, they were paying attention to us, but not the way we liked it. In other words, they needed us for election, after that they'd forget about us. So I got kind of disillusioned with them. And then you had the old politician, Louis Jalbert, and I couldn't trust the guy, I couldn't stomach him at all, at all, at all. I didn't want anything to do with him, and he was always around. I hate the word sucking, but he was sucking around us, you know, always trying to give us advice. And like voting, you know, vote straight bullet for him. He was no good, as far as I was concerned. He used to call himself Mr. Democrat. And that's how I got started. And then I ran for offices and I never made it because I was what you call a maverick. The sheriff and all the old hags, you know, that, I was not, I was a challenge for them.

TO: What was the first office that you ran for?

BR: I think it was district attorney. Yeah. I could win an election, but I could not win in the primaries. My own party was killing me because I wasn't "one of the boys". I hated that "one of the boys" business. So, like I used to say, I went to college, I've got a brain, I don't need someone who knows less than I to tell me . . . Now, I don't mean that, a guy like Muskie or Coffin would have talked to me and so forth, sure, but sometimes you had some hackers downtown, you know, well you gotta wait your turn and all. Oh, I couldn't stomach that. So I stayed out of that.

So finally, this young kid [Robert L.] Couturier¹ was running for mayor. He was a very young kid, he graduated from Bates College. And he came to me and he said, could you help me, and all this and that. And then we used to have a French organization by the name of Vigilantes in Lewiston, that was a club. It was all businessmen and they had to be Franco background and I was the attorney for them. And they came to me and they said, "Bill, this kid Couturier is one of the members, we want you to help him out," and this and that. "Some day you might want to be a judge and you'll need us", you know, that kind of story. I says, "Oh, okay." Because the judge that I was affiliated with had died in the meantime and I was on my own. He died a young man, he was only forty something. And he had always told me not to get involved in local politics, so I was caught between two elements.

So I said, "All right, I'll go." So this Couturier kid was a very clean kid, you know, and he, when he got elected mayor he appointed me corporation counsel for the city of Lewiston. And we both were brought up practically about, you know, we were not wealthy but our parents worked hard and so forth. And I was his hatchet man. He was cleaning the City Hall and I was always the one that, pushing, because I was the attorney. So we didn't make too many friends with the party, but boy the people were with us one hundred percent. Have you got that in your list?

TO: Yup. Actually, you're just answering every question I have.

¹ Robert L. Couturier, mayor of Lewiston, 1965-1966; Lewiston attorney.

BR: So after that, you know, we had all kinds of, maybe today I'd say well, let's forget about it. But when you're a youngster like that . . . For example, this guy came to me and he says, "The police commissioner said to my ex-wife, if you sleep with me, you can get my son off", and all this and that. You know, that kind of stuff. And that infuriated Couturier and I, so we went to the Supreme Court with Judge Webber and we had both of them fired, those two commissioners.

And, give you an example, like, the firemen were having a couple of broods up in the attic there, you know, where they sleep, and raising hell. Somebody called us, we had to go there and clean that up. It got to a point that, Jesus, I was more of an investigator than I was a corporation counsel. And my wife said to me, "God, this is an awful job." I'd get a call at one-thirty or two-thirty in the morning, you know, "Bill, you gotta come down." This Couturier was not married, and he was pushing, pushing, but I was the hatchet man, you see, he didn't know how far he could go. So anyway, we did one hell of a job during those two years cleaning the city. So finally, when this is over, I got married in the meantime, and I have four children.

TO: What year were we talking here, do you think?

BR: Now? I got married in 195-, if my wife was here she'd kill me. I think it's '55.

TO: Okay, Couturier became mayor when?

BR: After I came back from the Korean War. And I was running my Cavalier Inn and going to school, and boy that was a tough thing to do, you know. So finally they came to me after two years and they said, "Bill, you've got to continue this good work, you've got to run for mayor." I said, "Oh, God, I don't want to," I says. "I don't need that," I says, "I've got a good practice", and I was really making money, you know, in my law practice. Well, I don't know about you, but when they tell you you're God, you know, you start believing it even if you're not. And they're telling me I was the only one who could continue the good work and this and that. I don't care what they say, a little fluff like that works on people sometimes. So anyway, I ran for mayor. And of course the other party ...

TO: That was in '66?

BR: Yup. So the other party started to groom to get me out of there, they didn't want me there, you know. So they put three people against me and I beat all of them; I had a majority. I didn't have to have a runoff. I became mayor, and then I did not do what all the old mayors used to do, you know, all the Democrats and all this. I'd pick the best men.

TO: Before we talk about your time as mayor, I just want to ask you one question about, when you were nominated for county attorney in '65, the year before you ran for mayor ...

BR: Nominated, yeah ...

TO: By Gov. Reed, I think it was.

BR: Oh, okay, I'll go into that phase.

TO: Now this was before you were mayor, right?

BR: Yeah.

TO: Okay.

BR: I was corporation counsel. I was in New York at a convention, I receive a phone call from the mayor, Couturier, and he said, "Bill, George Malheaux," who was the probate judge, "has just resigned." He was forced to resign, he had a drinking problem and, poor guy was sick, you know. So Raymond, Larry Raymond, was district attorney and he wanted to be judge of probate. So I said, "I'll take either one of them." That was the biggest mistake the Democratic Party ever did. If they had given me the district attorney's job, they would have cemented the two factions. They weren't bright. So they told me that I should get to a fellow by the name of Blais ...

TO: Denny Blais.

BR: Who?

TO: Denny Blais?

BR: Yeah. He was a union man. And my father was a boss in a mill so he was using my father against me, because my father was a boss, was not a union man. So I called him, I couldn't reach him because he was at a convention at Poland Springs, with the Democratic Party, I guess. So I spoke with his wife, and I just told him, you know. Well, hold and behold, it came on the paper that I was sassy to his wife. Didn't make sense. If I wanted to be appointed, I'm not going to be sassy to the wife. He was on the governor's council, and he was with that faction of Louis Jalbert and all that, so they kept me away. Governor Reed appointed me, but I was not confirmed by my own party.

TO: And that was because of the split in the Lewiston Democrats between the old school style Democrats and the new school?

BR: That is correct. That's where they made the biggest mistake in the world. That's where I blamed, not Muskie but some of the higher up. They should have said, "Hey, listen you guys, Lewiston is a strong Democratic, don't break that faction, get them together." Because you know as well as I do that if I had been appointed, I would have owed them something. I don't mean payment, but I mean, you know. So they knocked me off.

TO: Who else was on your side of the faction? There was you and ...

BR: Couturier, oh, a lot of them, all young, you know? Well, enough so that we ruined the Democratic Party in Lewiston. So let me continue. So Reed called me and asked me if I would take the job and I said, "Yes", so he appointed me. Blais went out of his way to tell the other guys not to vote for me, so they wouldn't approve of the appointment.

So Governor Reed was a smarter man than these guys; he says, "Okay," he appointed, and he told me, he says, "see, they won't let." I says, "Okay." He says, "I'll show them." He appointed Berman. Now, Berman was known for his strong, you know, he was a Republican. Well, Jesus, they couldn't, to the public it would have been awful. Here's a little French boy, French descent, you know? Like in Boston, if you have an Italian group, you just don't go out and throw a Jewish boy against all the Italians. You know what would happen at the next election. So they threw Berman in. He nominated Berman. The council voted against him. The governor said, "Well I don't understand, are you saying that Mr. Rocheleau is not qualified?" Well, they couldn't say that because I was a, not to brag, but I was a pretty sharp trial lawyer. And Berman was, so they were sitting, that was strictly politics. And people were calling me and saying, "Keep fighting them, Bill, keep fighting them." The public was with me. So they knocked off Berman.

Reed called me and he says, "I'm going to renominate you, do you mind?" I says, "Hell, no." He renominated me. They wouldn't confirm me. Who had who by you know where? The governor. He kept saying, "Hey, I appointed one of their own, a Democrat, qualified, they won't name him. Now I name one of the . . . and they won't name him. What do they want out of me," he says, "I'm not going to nominate anyone." So they took Clifford, and every time there was a court hearing or a term, the judge would have to swear him in because he was the assistant D.A. at one time, with Raymond. And I wouldn't let go. So that went on. And this deteriorated the Democratic Party something awful. Something that was foolish of the Democrats to do, because Lewiston was such a strong Democratic place.

Let me give you an idea. Some of those people that were not too well educated, thought that if they became a Republican, they'd go to hell. And I'm not kidding you. So nobody won. So when the election came around, Clifford ran and I ran. Clifford ...

TO: That's for mayor?

BR: No, no, for district attorney, when the term expired. He beat me because he went door to door. He didn't work at all. His brothers, you know, were wi-, so he beat me. That was the biggest downfall for the Democratic Party. They didn't realize it. Before, in order for anyone to win in Lewiston, you had to be a Franco boy. So all of a sudden a Franco gets beat, so everybody else now is running. So that strong Democratic stronghold went *poof*. Then Couturier, you know, I was the corporation counsel and I was cleaning the city like it hasn't been cleaned before. People were really coming to me, you know, you're doing a good job. We cleaned up the police commission. Some of the policemen, they used to pick up some girls and put them in the car wash and have sex with them and then come back out. And, you know, all that stuff was going on. And people had never said anything but now they were calling us. And we were checking all these things and when we found out what was wrong, we'd clean up. So we were doing one heck of a job. Most politicians would not have cleaned it like we did, but we were young and enthusiastic and so forth, so that went on and on.

TO: Now, the Bates Mill was still open?

BR: Oh yeah, the Bates Mill was there.

TO: It was still doing well in '66? In the late '60s?

BR: Well, it was beginning to go down, you know. And my father was working over there. And of course when Blais, Blais was always, you know, saying that I was anti-labor and all that. Well, how can I be anti-labor? My father worked in the mill all his life. But he was just, didn't like me and, so he lost a lot of prestige.

Then some people came to me and they wanted to get out of the union. I got them out. We went to court. I beat them so hard they, you know, they brought an attorney from Portland from the union and all that. And it was judge ahh, from Bath, Jewish fellow, nice guy, very straight. He said to the attorney, "Are you telling me that these people are bonded for life? They're not slaves," he said, "slavery went away." Oh, God, did he turn on him. And he says, "It says right here that once you sign a contract it's good, but the contract is ended now, you don't have any contract." So I won very easily. I charged them a dollar each just to show them that, about fifteen of them left the union.

Well, Blais was being given, you know, by his superiors, too. I don't know how true it was but this guy called me and he says, "Bill, I'd like to see you." And I saw him, the mayor and I. And he says, "Be careful, you're living where you live," he says, "it's a dirt road," he says, "they might be trying to get hold of you." Now this sounds farfetched, you know. I said, "I'll mow 'em down", like, I was never scared, you know, having been in the Navy and having shown how to chop a man up. It didn't scare me, I don't care how big they were. One on one, I could handle myself. But he told me that he had had a meeting, with Blais being involved, and all that, and they were talking about maybe beating me up or something. I don't know how true it is, you know. But I was warned.

So anyway, election came around and all of a sudden Republicans started to be appointed and elected. George Caul, the Republican councilman in town, he got elected. Somebody must have said, "Holy God, what's happening here in Lewiston?" A Republican didn't stand a chance. There was probably ten percent. Now they do, because we started to make them understand that Republican was not a bad thing and it was not, they're not going to go to hell and all that stuff. I felt that if there's a monkey and a decent Republican, I'm not going to vote for a monkey just because he's Democrat. And over there, it was blind. Straight Democrat and all that old . . . I didn't believe in that. That was my philosophy.

TO: Now you said that this major break in the late '60s in the Democratic Party in Lewiston, that pretty much destroyed the Democrat stronghold in Lewiston until now.

BR: Have you seen, isn't that what you see?

TO: Yeah, and it's pretty open. And so there was never a resurrection, it was never resolidified?

BR: We never kissed and made up.

TO: No, that's interesting. So it's 1966 - why did you run for mayor.

BR: I became mayor.

TO: Why'd you run?

BR: I just told you. They flattered me so much that, everybody has his price, I guess. I mean, that sounds like, but, you know, you've just got to, you just gotta keep on going. And it wasn't just Couturier, it was a real good, so when I got elected, look what I appointed. Men of caliber, not these guys that could get you ten votes and all that. Let me give you an example. I put in a guy on corporation counsel, I put in Jack [H.] Simmons, you know? First year. Good trial lawyer. I put in a guy like, on the board of education, they weren't politicians, they were good business people. Robert Roy, who owns half the mills in town, and he said, "I don't want . . ." I says, "Listen, you don't want to take that job? Don't ever come to me and say that taxes are too high or you're too busy, because if you're too busy and the taxes go high, I'll say, 'well I'm too busy'. You have a duty to do, and you're going to do it, but otherwise I don't want to hear your word." I shamed them. Took the job. This guy owned half the city. He needed this like a, so he made a motion when he was on the water finance, that we should all give our money back, you know, we didn't have to get paid. Well, some of them didn't like that from the other board, they didn't want that. I had quality men.

My second year, I was elected; I could have been elected forever, put Robinson, Republican, corporation counsel. Not because I was trying to get back to them, but he was a good individual. He became the liquor judge. Why? That was so good for me to do this because the Republicans said, gee, this guy is decent, you know? And on the board of education, I would put qualification, men who knew something. Joe Gervais was a CPA, I put him in on the board of finance.

TO: What were the big issues that came up when you were mayor, big political issues? What were, what was . . . ?

BR: Poland Springs. Remember they had all the black girls coming up there?

TO: No.

BR: They had a school. That's when Johnson I believe it was had opened up, there was a, you know, they were trying to educate poverty, and they were taking them out of the gutters and sending them to Poland Springs for school, so all the girls were going up there. They'd come to Lewiston and they'd go into a store and they'd talk and the other one would steal and, you know, so it got to a point that it was, you know. And it was always mother f____, and mother f____, and, the language was bad and it was getting out of hand. And then they came in a parade and confronted the city of Lewiston while I was mayor, you know?

TO: Why, because they were being discriminated against?

BR: Well, no, you've been in Lewiston long enough. I don't think they're smart enough to know discrimination. And I don't mean this to say that I approve discrimination. I believe that everybody should be treated the same and all that. The only discrimination that I have is that I would not want my daughter to marry a black fellow, not because, you know, I don't like the black guy. It's just because it's going to be a stigma, and, you know, there'll always be problem. Marriage is tough enough without having to start with problems, and that's the only thing that I would be against. Other than that, they should get paid the same amount of money, they should hold position, and they could live next door to me, I don't care about that. One of my daughters here, her best friend was a black girl, you know?

TO: What did, why did they march on City Hall?

BR: Well, they were used to doing this in their city, you know. In other words, they wanted us to do this, and do this, and do that in their favor, and I said no. So I'd be getting calls from the big reporters of New York and Wall Street, asking this and that, you know. And I said, "Hey, we don't have any blacks over here, so there's no discrimination." So I said to the, "Close that place, I'm having enough problem." So within a matter of time they closed it. I don't know if it was just me, but. And then the model city was coming into play, and I was really moving it. I went to Hawaii and, this one, you gotta really believe this one, it's true. I'm sitting there and I'm listening. Now the urban renewal guy was a black fellow, I can't remember his name, nice guy. And when I say black, I always say black because I don't, I think they don't like when they say colored, you know ...

TO: Yeah, black is fine, black is fine.

BR: ... refer to black. And I'm sitting in, in Hawaii, in a convention, and this guy is saying how urban renewal is not spending the money and we're doing this, and you're not spending the money. And after a while I got fed up with this and when the thing was all done, I got up and I went in front to see him. And I said, "Mr. Secretary, I'm going to be very outspoken," I says, "because I believe in what you just said, and I believe in what you're saying, but," I says, "I'm going to tell you my phase of it." I says, "I come from a city of a population of roughly from forty to fifty thousand people," and I said, "there's a city across, Auburn, which there probably is another thirty, so we're in an average of about seventy-five thousand people in the area." And I says, "It's mostly eighty to eighty-five percent Democrats. We've had nothing from you people, nothing." I says, "Urban renewal doesn't mean anything to me any more, because you go to New York to speak to some of your people there and you're just being dangled on a string. I'm an attorney, I don't have to be dangled by a string, I don't need any of your money, I can earn my own money. But", I says, "the people there are voting Democrats all the time, and then you tell us over here that we're not spending enough money. We're not spending enough money because your bureaucrats are holding us up."

Well, I must have made quite an impression. He called one of his secretaries and he says, "Take this man's name, and I want to send the undersecretary to Lewiston to move this," he says, "I like this attitude." And boy, he really made me feel as if I was a king. So I says, "Well, it's okay, Mr. Secretary," with a smirk, as if saying, you're putting on a good show. I didn't say that, but that's what it meant, you know. He says, "I promise you they'll be there." I said,

“Once they come in, sir, I’ll be the first one to thank you.” We left.

I stopped in California for a week with, I had brought my family at my expense. My friend in California graduated from University of Maine with me, and he was a fraternity brother of mine, and they had a bakery right across the post office, it was a little bakery there, Draper’s. And while I was there, I would call Lewiston to find out if anything urgent was coming up. This fellow gets on the phone and he says, “Mr. Mayor, you won’t believe it.” I says, “Oh yes I will.” He says, “They’re coming down.” I says, “Who?” He says, “God,” he says, “we’ve been getting calls from Washington”, he says, “it’s unbelievable.”

Well, to make a story short, it seemed that this secretary, this black secretary of HUD and all that, had really put the kabosh on somebody because the under secretary was coming down to see me, they wanted an appointment. Well, they couldn’t give an appointment because they didn’t know, you know, so I told them when I’d be back and so forth. Well, everything was jumping in town over here, well, I didn’t know, you know, what was happening. So anyway, when I came back from California a week, I took an extra week of my time. Gee, everybody over here, you know, thought it had just happened, they didn’t know it had transpired over there.

All of a sudden, we got a call. They had flown in to Portland and they were coming in by caravan through the turnpike. I called the chief of police, I said, “Send two police cars up to the entrance. They want to play their game, I can play their game, too.” So I sent two police cars to the turnpike entrance and as they came in and they brought them in. Well, to you maybe this wouldn’t mean anything, but to those guys, you know, use every angle you could. What the heck, they’re going to use gas patrolling there, doing this or doing that. So anyway, they brought the whole crew down.

The guy that was in New York that was always giving me a hard time was with them. It’s not that he was giving me a hard time, you know, but he was, well, you gotta have this and you gotta have that and you gotta have this. I had gone up there before and I had said that I wanted something done. Well, you gotta have this, you gotta have the okay from the governor, you gotta have this. “Wait a minute”, I said. I’ve always been told you want something, you’ve got to make yourself known, otherwise you’re yes sir, no sir, you get nothing. I says, “One moment, may I have your phone?” He says, “What are you doing?” “I’m calling the governor.” Well, the governor was Ken Curtis. Ken Curtis and I had been roommates, I mean, we had gone to college. Oh, wait a minute, wait a minute. I says, “What?” “Well,” he says, I says, “personal friend of mine.” I said, “Do you want me to call Muskie?” Jesus, these guys opened their eyes, “Who the hell is this guy, you know?” So things were moving faster.

And then, this is a real, you’re going to laugh at this. I always believed that you can get things done if you cater to the small people, too. So every time I’d go to New York to see those guys with my entourage of board of finance and all that, the secretaries, I’d always be polite to them and so forth. There was this black woman there, she was probably in her, fifty-five, sixty, and the most ugly looking woman you ever saw. And I don’t mean this to be, because she was black; she was ugly, that’s all, there’s no way I can, but I was nice to her. So one day she said, “You know, you’ve been so nice to me,” and I’m talking like her but I don’t mean to be fresh or anything, she says, “you’ve been so nice to me,” she said, “may I give you one bit of advice?” I

said, "Hey, advice has never hurt anyone, go right ahead, ma'am. Except one thing, don't tell me I'm ugly," you know, kidding, mind you. She was laughing and she said, "You know, you are bucking your head against something." She says, "You're going for a library but there's no money in the funds for it, so why don't you go where the money is? Follow the money," she says. She makes sense. I says, "How would I know that?" I says, "I'll tell you what I'll do. You call me collect when I'm wrong, just say it's May and I'll know it's you and I'll get right on the phone." She used to tip me off all the time, so I knew where the money was.

TO: Where did she work?

BR: New York.

TO: Oh, I see.

BR: She was a secretary for one of these guys, so I was getting all the information. It was not illegal, but if I would say I want to put in a petition to bring in a new library, they would say, okay put it in, but there was no funds, you know. They'd put it there and wait; that's no good. But if I wanted a new police station or a new fire station, that was when urban renewal was in full.

And my philosophy was this: I had a, Judge Call was a Republican and he was all anti this stuff. I says, "Listen George, if there was a guy on Main Street dishing out dollar bills, would you take it?" "Hell yes, except it's illegal?" "No, no, it's legal. The guy's got all his marbles, he's not crazy, he's just dishing out, would you get in line?" He says, "Yeah." "Well," I says, "Uncle Sam is not crazy and that's what they're doing. If I don't get in line and get it, another city will get it, so you might as well take it while it's going." And I says, "Remember, there's only a certain time. After a while they're going to see the light and there won't be any more money coming in, and you'll say, 'oh, I should have done that.' Too late. You gotta do it when you're supposed to do it." Well, I sort of convinced him, so, that's what I would do.

So this woman would call me and say, 'Mr. Mayor, this is May,' you know? "Well, how are you dear?" And all that, you know, I was, and I was not using her. I was in a way, but I mean I was not using, I was really, liked it the way she, and she'd tell me, look, they got money for this or for that, you know Fire station, good, so instead of applying, I'd come in to the council and I wouldn't say a word. "We're going to forget about the library fellas, there's a reason. I know it's blind but I can't reveal it, you just take my word for it." So we'd go for fire station, we'd get the money, fire station would go up. That's how we got that new fire station. Oh, I was a conniving so-and-so, but that's the way it works. Then I'd say, that school, they turned it into a school but it used to be, on Birch Street there, you know, the center there? They call it Longley School now. That was another deal. In other words, I went where the money was, that's the only way to, it's just like in the stock market. If you go into a company that's losing money, you're going to lose it. So that's how I used to do it.

So, but this guy was giving me a hard times, you know, so I hadn't had that girl, so anyway, they come in to Lewiston. I didn't know this guy. He's sitting at the head, I had a big conference table as the mayor, he's sitting at one end and I'm sitting at the other end and we're eyeing each

other. He's probably saying, "Who's this little wise son-of-a-bitch," or whatever you want to call him. In other words, if your boss tells you to go into a city like this, you'd be a little, say to yourself, "What has he got, this guy, you know?" So he says, and then the guy from New York is there but who the heck is he now, he's just a little peon, this is the big honcho. He says, "Well, Mr. Mayor," he says, "I understand that you're not too satisfied with us.' Now most people would have said, "Oh, no," you know. I says, "You're right." Jesus, everybody, I can still see it on his, I couldn't believe it myself. "Well," he said, "what is it that we're doing wrong?" I says, "Well, I go to a conference to Hawaii, costing the city a lot of money to send me over there. I brought my family but I paid for it, I can afford it. The secretary's giving us hell because we're not spending the money, but then I go to New York to see this guy, and he's sitting there, and what does he do? He tells me I gotta have the governor, I gotta have this, I'm fed up up to here with these guys." I says, "You wonder why they call them bureaucrats? That's the reason." I said, "In two years I'm out of here, I'm limited. You'll never know who I am and I'll never know who you guys are and I should care less. But," I says, "while I'm here I'll do what I can. Now, I'm willing to do a lot and spend some of this money that this guy said that we should spend, but every time I go there, and by the time I get the governor to sign this and I get this and I get that, I'm out of office."

"Well," he says, "I'll tell you what I'll do. Why don't you and I get in the car, in your car, we'll drive around town, and I want you to show me these places." Well, excuse the language, but all the suck ass are around, they all want to get in the car. This guy says, "No, no, just the mayor and I. Don't like that." He got in my car, I'm making good money, I was driving a Cadillac, we're driving around. I took him, where the new high school is, that was a field, but everybody knew where we were going so they all congregated there. I turned around and I showed him, I says, "You see those buildings there?" Have you ever noticed if you go up on Bartlett Street, all those buildings that are going down there, looks dilapidated and sickening ...

End of Side One

Side Two

BR: ... I says, "That's where most of your people are living. They're working in the mill. This is a city that's over a hundred years old, the fire stations are dilapidated," and I go on and on and on, you know.

(Pause while Tuck checks tape.)

TO: Right, so you're at the future site of the high school.

BR: Yeah, where that new high school is.

TO: With the undersecretary of HUD.

BR: And I'm showing him this building. Then I says, "Let's take a ride." I took him down on Lincoln Street where those buildings are so crowded together, you know? Little Canada, they called it. And then I said, "School, if parochial schools close tomorrow, we'd have a problem here." I says, "Fifty percent of the kids go to parochial school, and look at the schooling and so

forth.” He turned around and he said to me, and I’ll always remember, the guy came from Nebraska. He says, “Mr. Mayor, I’ve been all over; I’ve never met a dynamic individual who was criticizing me, but I like it.” You know, how can you, when you’re telling the truth, ...

TO: Yeah, well, the mill was still open at this point.

BR: Huh?

TO: The mill was still open.

BR: Oh, yeah. But it was kind of going down, you know. I don’t think it was Bates Mill, it was, I think the Japanese people owned it then. And so anyway, he turned around and he shook my hand. He says, “Mr. Mayor, if you don’t get any action at all from these fellas,” and he called them over, he says, “when this guy goes to New York, you better listen to him. Here’s my phone number, call me personal. I’ll move things if things don’t move.” In all my life I had never had such, you know, but I had always been brought up, you can’t go wrong with the truth. And he says, “You know what I’m going to advise you to do? Go for the model city.” And we did get the model city.

So I started, I was all enthused, you know? So I took this fellow who was the, he was supposed to bring industries in, you know. And I went to him and I said, “I’m going to tell you something. I’ve never had a problem with people. You want a raise, we gave you a raise, I want some action. I don’t want no fluffing off. I catch you fluffing off,” I says, “you’re fired, and don’t think that you can go to Tom, Dick and Harry. When I say you’re fired, you’ll be fired. I know you’ve been fluffing off; I want some action. I want this model city, do you understand?” “Yes, Mr. Mayor.” And he, I used to get a kick, because he always used to click his heels like this, you know, as if I was German, or, I don’t mean, but you know how (*unintelligible phrase*). I said, “No, no, no, put the day’s work, but I want that model city.” We got it.

Money started to pour in here like you never saw it. Where the high school is, that used to be known as Franklin Pasture. That’s before you, you couldn’t touch this, this land was like God. The opponent wanted the high school to be built on Sabattus, up, you know. And my theory was if we do that, the poor people in Lewiston won’t be sending their kids to school because they’ll say, “Well, I gotta take the bus,” and, you know? So I said, “Let’s not give them any excuse.” I said, “We’re going to build it in Franklin Pasture.” They were laughing at me. Franklin Pasture was just like God’s country. I says, “I’ll take it by eminent domain.” I called Washington, my friend here, and I told him. He says, “Go for it.”

So, I called local talent here that knew the Franklin Pasture, the woman said, “Well, there’s nothing . . .” I says, “Who is the top man?” She says, “He’s a banker from Boston.” “You got his phone number?” “Yup.” I called him up. This is the honest to God truth, Mr. Harry whatever his name, I can’t remember now, “This is the mayor of Lewiston.” You know, when a mayor calls, a lot of people laugh but there’s a lot of power still behind a mayor.

I got him on the phone and I says, ‘Mr. So-and-so,’ I says, ‘this is Mayor Rocheleau.’ ‘Yes, Mr. Mayor, how’s everything,’ and, you know. I said, “Well, I don’t know if you’re going to like it

or not but," I says, "you know that land you've got in Lewiston there in the Franklin Pasture?" He says, "Yeah, oh yeah, that's very valuable land." I said, "Well, I'd like to buy it." "Oh, you can't buy that, it's not for sale and it's this and it's that." "Well," I says, "how much is it worth?" He gave me some fantastic figure that . . . I said, "That's strange," I said, "I looked at the tax structure, and you're only taxed for so much." Hey, man, I was going to have to raise the taxes. I says, "I won't have to, I'll put the true value. What did you say it was worth again?" God, did he change his tune. You can see why, too, wouldn't you? I caught him there. He said, "Well now Mr. Mayor, now let's see now Mr. Mayor." I said, "No. Let's be a gentleman to gentleman talk. You're not talking to the former mayors around here." We used to have some whoppers before, gate tenders and stuff like that. I says, "I'm an attorney and I know damn well that this land is worth a certain price and I am full warning you right now, I'm going to be taking it by eminent domain." "Well, you can't do this, and you can't." I says, "Federal government told me I could." We got the land. Took it by eminent domain. And that's where your high school is.

Now, you're an outsider, you take a look. Isn't that the best location that the high school could have been put in? Right in the center of town where the kids can walk to the school. Otherwise, they would have been having to go take a bus to Sabattus and all that. What was there? I don't think that there was any deal, but they were shopping around so that they could get a little, by buying some land closer to Sabattus, and . . . We got that land, we built the high school, and I says, I got to make sure that this high school is built. I named myself the chairman of the high school because it took nine, eight or nine years to build the thing. I says, "If I don't put myself there, somebody else is going to just fluff it off." So that's how I built that. And the first year I was mayor, I built McMann, I put twenty-five thousand in all the old schools. I spent a lot of money, but it was money that had to be spent. That new high school cost us nine million. What do you think it would cost today?

TO: A lot more than that.

BR: I was, so people used to come to me and say, "You going to run for governor?" You know, because I was doing so much. I says, "No, my father told me if ever you do a job, do it good or don't do it at all," and that was my ambition. Oh, I was approached to run for governor and all that, but I wasn't interested.

So in the meantime, Ken Curtis comes down with his limousine to see me and we go to the Bates College game and I'm with him all the time, people are beginning to talk, you know. Well, he's my friend, for crying out loud, he used to sleep here with Polly, his wife, and the two daughters he had. If someone had told me this in my class at University of Maine Law School, there was about fifteen in our class, one of you guys is going to be governor, I would have had to pick myself. And I'm not saying that to think I'm better than anybody else, but Ken was not, you know, a dynam-, he did not, you know, he was really, and I, believe me I love the guy, now, I'm not trying to knock him, but he was so quiet and, you know, he had no color, see. See how wrong you are sometimes?

TO: I interviewed him a couple months ago and ...

BR: Don't you agree?

TO: Well, he's got plenty of color now, it seems.

BR: Well, he's been governor and he's with the Kennedy and all that, but I knew him very well. But when he first started, Jesus. And I was the only group, when he ran for governor, to help him over here with Couturier, and he got Lewiston. So, what else do you want from me?

TO: When you first met Ed Muskie, ...

BR: Oh, I met him at the Hotel DeWitt when he was running for governor, and, very quiet fella. I liked him. Came from a hard working background, he was coming through good as a speaker. And every time I talked to some people, you know, some of them tried to go against him and all that, I said, "Well, you're not giving him a chance." And he was not too close with some of these Lewiston, like the Louis Jalbert faction and so forth. So I went all out for him, I worked my fanny off, and he won. But he had to, that's the way I believe it, he had to be very careful not to be close to me either, not to turn the other group against him.

So I never, the only time after that that I really, is when I ran for mayor and I won, I had said I would be knocking in Washington to get model cities and these things. I met him in Augusta, I was over there at a governors' conference because I was appointed by Curtis for a committee to reorganize the state of Maine, different departments and so forth. And I met him up there, and he said to me, "Well, here's the guy that's going to knock on my door," or something, in a jovial way, you know, and so we had a little talk there. And that's about all, you know, I mean, I could not say to you that I was a buddy so close that he would call me and this and that, but he knew who I was and I knew who he was and so forth.

TO: Why do you think he was so successful in Maine politics?

BR: Down to earth. The trouble with a lot of these politicians is that, he had not been a mayor and he had not been any little, he went straight to the big job and he was humble. He could talk to a janitor just as well as he could talk to a lawyer. And he seemed very sincere. The trouble with some of these fellas, and I think that's how Angus King is doing it, you know? But you take some of the other guys that have run for governor and (*unintelligible word*), is that they take, they're too high, they lose that, was it, what's that singer that Godfrey had said that he had lost his humility or, you know? They seem to, huh, what is he, a janitor or? He had not lost that.

TO: What do you think his weaknesses were?

BR: You're asking me what I never thought about. I really don't know, to be honest with you. I would have thought that maybe he should have been more dynamic to the point of, I'm giving you just my . . . When he saw the faction breaking up over here, you know, in Lewiston, he should have been able to call us all in and sort of patch our heads together, you know. But he was a type of a guy that didn't like to maybe get involved in this and that's why he stayed out. But ever since this, the party has never been the same.

TO: So as a person who has been very involved in Maine politics, what do you think has happened to Maine politics since the '50s and '60s?

BR: People have become more independent. People resent, you don't have the old fashioned politicians like you used to. In the old days, you know, like Senator, uh, who was the only senator from Lewiston over here in Augusta, [Jean Charles] Boucher. Or Louis Jalbert, that element, that's gone, there's no more of that, you know, people don't care about that. Best example in the world, when they put the black mayor in Lewiston.

TO: John Jenkins.

BR: My friend in California said, "Bill, I don't believe it. I don't believe it." I says, "That's how they've become independent, that's how they put Jim Longley, that's how they put Angus King. People are fed up with this political machine." Which is a good thing. If I did anything in this world, at least I broke those political machine.

TO: Now, did you, I read somewhere that you supported Nixon in the 1972 election, over ...

BR: Yes, yes, over Muskie.

TO: Over Muskie. Why was that?

BR: It wasn't over Muskie, *per se*. We went to the convention ...

TO: This is the '68 convention in Chicago?

BR: In Augusta.

TO: Oh, in Augusta, the Maine convention.

BR: How'd you find out about Nixon?

TO: I read it in the papers.

BR: I was at the convention with Couturier and our group. I was the city Democratic chairman. I was refused to speak at the convention, it was all a put up job. I was so infuriated, I walked out, and my group walked out. And my answer was, if I can't talk at my own party, then I don't deserve to vote for that party. In the meantime, I got a call from Boston, from the mayor over there, and he was going for Nixon and he asked me to go to Texas at the [John Bowden] Connally's² conference, there? Connally was going for Nixon, too.

² John Bowden Connally, Jr. (1917-1993), governor of Texas (Jan. 15, 1963-Jan. 21, 1969). Connally was hit by a bullet in the Kennedy motorcade in Dallas, TX in 1963, recovered, became an advisor to Lyndon B. Johnson, and later became U.S. Secretary of the Treasury under Richard M. Nixon.

TO: You were all Democrats?

BR: Yeah. Connally was a Democrat, he was a governor of Texas, and this guy was the mayor of Boston, I can't remember his name now, he was the one who called me here. And then, I'm in my office, and I got a call directly from the White House. It wasn't Nixon, but. Now, when we went in Augusta to the convention, the Kennedy crowd was there and they were pumping me to go with them, and, but then I couldn't talk. Chairman, oh, Jalbert was running that like a, I says, "Well, if that's the way you feel," you know, they were all there, some of them were ashamed to look at me right in the face. Paul Genest, the register of probate. I says, "Well, I can't talk, I'll talk, but," I says, "you're all going to pay for this, that I promise you," I says.

TO: So it wasn't against Muskie *per se*, it was more ...

BR: Oh, no, no, no it wasn't Muskie, *per se*.

TO: At all.

BR: It just happened to be that, the only thing is Muskie should have said, hey fellas, you know, or his men. They should have interfered.

TO: He seemed to have taken, in the 1972, he seems to have thrust himself in the spotlight and then just ...

BR: Yeah, no leadership.

TO: He just didn't concern himself.

BR: And I don't mean this to hurt the guy. Look, he's a hell of nice guy. Maybe he was too nice a guy, you know? But, Jesus, here I am a Democrat, I'm mayor of the second largest city in the state, I can't even talk at my own convention. Well, listen baby, I'll show you.

TO: Sure.

BR: Do you see what I mean? And at least thirty percent in the convention walked out with me. Well, you know, they were so used to controlling these guys that, excuse the language but, half, they thought, well hey, I didn't go to college for nothing.

TO: So after you were done being mayor, just didn't run again or whatever, your term was up, you ran for the senate in '68 and then you sought the county attorney's post in 1970.

BR: I never got to be county attorney.

TO: But didn't you, weren't you nominated again in 1970 for county attorney and didn't get elected again?

BR: No, I never had any other office.

TO: But you ran for the senate in ...

BR: Oh yeah, I got defeated.

TO: Why do you think you lost?

BR: Why did I lose? I don't know. I hadn't been mayor then. I was never successful with my own party in the primaries, you know? In an election, that's why they couldn't stop me as mayor. Oh, they would have loved to stop me as mayor. They couldn't, because you see, in the primaries, you only have your real politician voting, the people very seldom vote. So that's why I couldn't make it, because I was not a Democrat politician. I took Louis Jalbert by the throat, put him against the wall, I says, "Just give me one reason why I shouldn't put my fist through your mouth."

TO: You actually did that?

BR: You're damn right. I says, "You lying so-and-so," I said, "you're no f___ good, you never will be, and you've ruined the Franco Americans over here." I says, "Lewiston is dead because of you, that damn bridge, you went and put it in Auburn," I says, "and then you call yourself Mr. Democrat." Oh, what I didn't call that man is unbelievable.

TO: When was this? Was this after you were mayor?

BR: I was mayor.

TO: Oh, it was during when you were mayor. One last question. Well, actually, I have a couple more questions. First of all, what do you think is wrong with Lewiston now? What do you think needs to happen for Lewiston to get back ...?

BR: The people who have, are not the one in charge, they're letting every Tom, Dick and Harry do it. Don't quote me on this, but that's what it is. Would you hire any of those people there? Maybe one. You're getting secondary. The same thing we used to have. Don't, I don't want you for one minute to believe that because I'm a lawyer I'm smart and nobody is smart. No, no, no. But for awhile you had a lot of other people who were able to run the city, you know? I don't know if you know Paul Couture? He was an alderman, he's been there for years and years and years. He was asked this question by a former mayor: "Paul," he's with the, he's an attorney, Dionne. "Paul, who was the best mayor that you've ever known?" He said, let me know next week. He said, "I can tell you right now." He says, "I didn't like him at first, but", he says, "when you asked him a question you get an answer and he'd tell you why, that's more than anyone has ever done with me." And he named me. I know it sounds like I'm waving my flag. I was not a politician, I was a doer. They came to me and they said, "We need to fix the high school." I says, "I'll take a day off and I'll go with you." Deschesne, superintendent of schools, I went with him, went through, I said, "This school is dilapidated." And he said, "Well yes, but we're so used to talking to a mayor that, well, patch it up, patch it up." I says, "You need a new

school.” He says, “Are you kidding?” I says, “No.” I said, “I’ll get you a committee and we’ll get it moving.”

You want to talk to some of these people that will tell you, the one that used to be chief of police, he marks those lines in the roads now, he’s always got a cigar. He come to me and he said, “Mr. Mayor,” he says, “I’d like to have a machine,” he says, “but, you know, they come to you but they’re afraid.” I says, “Why do you need a machine?” He says, “To mark the lines, you know, in the roads.” I says, “Yeah?” He says, “If we use that machine,” he said, “you don’t have to put posts to stop the traffic, it dries right away.” I said, “How much does that cost?” “Oh,” he says, it’s either nine hundred or nine thousand, I’m not sure now, you know? I says, “Go ahead.” He says, “You can’t do that.” I said, “What do you mean ‘you can’t do that’.” “Well,” he says, “you gotta go.” I says, “I’ll get it through, plan on it.” Wouldn’t ya know a couple of weeks I had it, boom, boom, and he had it. Every time he’d see me, here’s a cigar, you know? Don’t get me wrong, it was needed, it wasn’t because I knew him better than the other one. If somebody would have come up and said, we need a new dancing pavilion outside, no. They had an answer right away, you know? But that’s not how politicians do. Oh yes, I’ll see what I can do and all this and that, and you keep on pumping and, oh, I hated that. I hated that. Some of my worst enemies liked me because they said, at least we know where he stands.

TO: One last question. What do you think was Ed Muskie’s biggest contribution to the state of Maine?

BR: To the city of Lewiston?

TO: State of Maine.

BR: I think, he came up with this environment, you know? I think that was his, he picked it up somewhere and But you gotta also to give him credit for this - he was in enemy territory all the time, he couldn’t be like I was, I mean, you know, tough like this, because he would have been voted down all the time. Here was this little Democrat with all these Republicans around, so he was breaking new grounds all the time. I got to give him credit for that. And he was a likeable, you couldn’t hate the guy because he could say “no” to you, but in a nice way, you know? He was very humble, that’s the best one I can tell you.

TO: Excellent, thank you very much.

End of interview.

MOH# 054_102898.int