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Interview with Dolores Stover by Don Nicoll

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee Stover, Dolores

Interviewer Nicoll, Don

Date September 20, 2002

Place Alexandria, Virginia

ID Number MOH 367

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Biographical Note

Dolores Stover was born in Manhattan, New York on December 19, 1924 and grew up there, the oldest of ten children. Stover attended parochial school and then joined the Marine Corps in 1945. She was a magistrate in Virginia for seven years and then became Edmund Muskie's secretary in 1972. Stover was later appointed Chief Clerk of the Post Office Committee. After that, she went to work for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC), and then later became the personal secretary to Edward "Ted" Kennedy.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: family and personal background; working with Edmund Muskie; responsibilities as Muskie's secretary; other members of Muskie's staff; Muskie's relationship with members of the Senate; Leslie Finn; jobs after working for Muskie; Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC); working for Ted Kennedy; and impressions of Edmund S. Muskie.

Indexed Names

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Transcript

Don Nicoll: It is Friday, the 20th of September, 2002. We are in the apartment of Dolores Stover in Alexandria, Virginia, and Don Nicoll is interviewing Ms. Stover. Dolores, would you give us your full name and spell it, and also give us your place and date of birth.

Dolores Stover: I will indeed. I'm Dolores Stover, Dolores Hinckley Stover. I was born December 19th, 1924, in Manhattan, in New York City. I'm the oldest of ten children, and was raised in New York City, and stayed there until I went into the Marine Corps.

DN: Now your first name is spelled?

DS: With an O, D-O-L-O-R-E-S, and my last name is S-T-O-V-E-R.

DN: Now, you have Hinckley ancestors from New England.

DS: I do indeed, I understand one was president of Harvard, so the stories go, and one was the first governor general of the Massachusetts Bay Colony [*Note: Thomas Hinckley was the last governor of Plymouth Colony, 1680-1692*]. In later years, they were in education, and one, a Louise Hinckley, apparently ran a private school for girls somewhere in Vermont. That's my New England ties.

DN: That's your New England side. And you were in a large family in New York.

DS: I was indeed. We were seven girls and three boys. We lost one sister; the rest are all still living and thriving, and we remain very close as do most large families.

DN: Now, what were your family, your parents' occupations?

DS: My father was with the Internal Revenue Service, and my mother, believe it or not, was a housewife.

DN: She worked at home.

DS: She did.

DN: And did you go to the schools of the city of New York?

DS: I went to parochial schools, we all went to parochial school in those days, and went to parochial high school, St. John the Baptist, St. Jean Baptist. My brothers all went to St. Ann's Academy, and the rest of the children all went to Catholic, local Catholic schools in New York. My brother graduated from Fordham, and all of my sisters went to college. I have three brothers who are attorneys now, and one sister who is a therapist. Most of them now live in Naples, Florida, so they've done well and are retired. I have four sisters living in Naples, Florida now.

DN: You decided to stay in the Washington, D.C. area.

DS: I did, I did. I was the only one in the family who was divorced, and I raised my three children alone. And they're here, and this is really where my, my career was here and my friends are here, and my children are here.

DN: Now, you said you joined the Marines.

DS: I did, I joined the Marine Corps in, I guess I was, 1945, in 1945. I did boot camp in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and was then sent to Norfolk, Virginia where I was based. I met my future husband in Norfolk, and he was from a small town in Florida, at least it was a small town then, Maitland, Florida. Today it's quite a large city.

But as happens during wartime, sometimes you meet people that ordinarily you wouldn't be close to, but during the war you meet people and get married and sometimes you just shouldn't do that. In my case it worked out, because I have three absolutely fabulous human beings for children.

DN: That's a wonderful experience when they grow up and they're friends.

DS: They like each other, and they like me, and the four of us get along very well; very well. And I wouldn't leave here. Of course I'm seventy-seven years old, and it wouldn't be any fun for me to move to Florida and have to visit them. I'm much better; I'm comfortable here in Alexandria.

DN: Now, you were in the Marine Corps, and then where did you go?

DS: Well, we married, we got married in Norfolk, and we were stationed in Pensacola, Florida, and then we went to Guam. I had my first child, Joanne, in Pensacola in 1947, and my second child was born on Guam, David, in 1950. And we came back from Guam, and my last child, the baby, was born in Miami Beach, that's Wayne. And it was 1959, I think, that I was divorced, and my husband moved back to Florida and I stayed here with the children. They're not children any more.

DN: And how did you come to seek outside employment, was that after the divorce?

DS: Well I, uh-hunh, and I had to raise the children and support them. And the first job I got in Alexandria was, I was office manager in the district attorney's office, commonwealth attorney we call it in Virginia. And I stayed there until one of the judges was elevated to the supreme court of Virginia, and he offered me a job as his law clerk. He now, he was the junior justice of course, he today is the chief justice of the Virginia supreme court, Judge Harry Carrico. And I stayed with Judge Carrico until my daughter was going to start college, and I realized I had to do something to make some money. I needed money, always needed money then. So I started my own business as a court reporter, and -

DN: Had you had any training as a stenographer?

DS: I was a stenographer, that's all, I had, did not have any professional training as a court reporter. I had taken some depositions in the course of my work in the commonwealth attorney's office, and so I could take shorthand, and had a lot of nerve, I don't know how I did it. But as time went on I expanded and I started to take trials using a tape recorder, and acting like everybody used tape recorders. I would walk into the courtroom and look for the plug, you know, and plug in the tape recorder. And I made pretty good, I was able to get my daughter through college, and made a pretty good living, you know, never had a lot of money.

But as a result of that job in the Supreme Court, and then going to court reporting, I of course met all the judges and I knew all of the attorneys in the local Bars, that was Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax. And I was offered a job by the chief judge in Alexandria as a magistrate. So for the next seven years I was a magistrate in Alexandria, and the difficult part of that was that it was shift work. And as I got older, changing shifts every seven days was very difficult for me.

DN: What were the responsibilities of a magistrate in that court.

DS: The magistrate determines probable cause for the issuance of a warrant. And sets bonds, you know, I had, took testimony and decided whether to issue warrants. It was a very responsible job, because it's the initial stage, it's the first stage. And the judge in the next court cannot try a case unless you down here issue that warrant. I was very tough. I established a reputation of being a very tough magistrate in this respect: I was tough insofar as the police were concerned. And the police didn't like me very much, and they had cartoons all over the roll call, because I would refuse to give warrants, justifiably really, people who were sick they would charge with being drunk.

On the other hand, I was very tough on people who beat children. The detective bureau always waited for me to come on duty if they had a child abuse case, because I was very, very tough on people, in setting bonds and things, in domestic relations cases.

But anyway, the hours got very bad. But in the course of these jobs, in the supreme court and the magistrate's office, all of my friends at that time were reporters. They were with the *Post*, the *Star*, and at that time we had a *Washington Daily News*. And they were encouraging me to come over to the other side of the Potomac, and Shirley Elder had a friend, Hale Boggs, over on the House side, and she knew that Hale Boggs was looking for someone, and she set up an appointment for me to go over and talk to Hale Boggs' AA. I forget his name, but he was a very good looking, nice fellow. Anyway, that was the weekend, we were going to go on Monday, and that was the weekend that Hale Boggs was killed in Alaska. And I got over there that day and the AA said, "Well, as long as you're over here why don't you take a typing test." It was a little insulting to me, you know, I couldn't believe that I had to take a typing test. But Shirley encouraged me to do so, and I did, and didn't think any more of it. Left my resume there, and forgot about it really. But about two weeks later, I got a call from Leslie Finn in Senator Muskie's office, and I thought it was a joke. She said, "This is Leslie Finn in Senator Muskie's office," and I said, "Right, who is this?" So then she convinced me, and we set up an appointment and I went over there, and was interviewed by Leslie and Maynard the first time.

DN: Maynard Toll.

DS: Maynard Toll. And then I was sent away while I think they checked references and made some calls, because I started getting calls from friends in San Francisco saying that they had received a call. So I knew I was being checked. And then I received another call, and this one was to meet with the senator. And there were three of us, and believe it or not, all three of us were there in the waiting room at the same time, all sitting, looking at each other. And I was a nervous wreck because I didn't have any experience on Capitol Hill, and I really didn't understand, you know, knew nothing about the process. And I thought senators went to cocktail parties and that the staff did all the work.

But the three of us were interviewed that day, and I recall it vividly. The senator asked me some questions about dealing with family. And when I left I remember I said to him, "Senator, no matter what you decide, it's been a privilege meeting you, and I'm very happy to have had this opportunity." And I left. And it was maybe forty-eight hours later that I received a call from Maynard telling me that he had chosen me out of the three. So that's how I started with Senator Muskie.

DN: What was the approximate date of that?

DS: It was December, 1972. The salary was ten thousand dollars a year. Just awful.

DN: And did you ever find out how Leslie or the office learned about your interest in the Hill?

DS: Yes, I had left a resume at the employment office, when I went over, went to Hale Boggs. I had left my resume there. And that office handled the House, the Senate, and all resumes, so they would take orders. And they, I had heard this later, Don, I don't know it as a fact, Leslie told me, the senator had told her he wanted someone older. Apparently, his previous secretary was Linda, young, sweet girl, but he wanted someone older. I was forty-eight at the time. And for that reason, I believe, they pulled my resume out. Also, the senator was interested in the fact that I had been a magistrate for seven years.

And in the first interview I remember Leslie and Maynard asking me, I think they were, I was not politically astute, but I was a newspaper reader and I was a partisan politician, I was on the Democratic Committee in Alexandria. And they asked me if there were any Republicans that I would consider working for. I don't know if Maynard or Leslie asked me that. And I said, yes, I would consider Senator Mac Mathias, or Senator Javits, or John Lindsay, who was of course at that time mayor of New York. It was probably the right answer, because I think this is where they were determining if I was a liberal. And I think maybe because of my age, I think the other two ladies were my age also, so the senator did want someone older at that time.

DN: What kinds of questions did he ask you when you were -?

DS: He asked me how I felt about helping out with the family, with the staff. Funny thing later, because years later Kennedy asked me the same thing. And I told him I really, he asked

me if I had any experience doing that, and I said, no, actually, and I didn't ever have experience dealing with families in this, but that I was a people person and I knew how to get along with people, and I felt that that wouldn't be any challenge to me at all. He asked me if I could work long hours, you know, if I had responsibilities at home that would take me away. My youngest one was then in college, so I was pretty free at this stage of my life. And that was a good question, because as it turned out I put in, I never, never put in an eight-hour day.

DN: Now, you were his personal secretary. What was Leslie's responsibility at the time?

DS: Leslie was the office manager, and she kept the office moving. You know, she got the supplies, made sure the mail got out, she was in a supervisory capacity as far as I was concerned. Later on, you know, there was always talk about the senator's temper, and you hear a lot of people talking about his temper. And Don, I always told him, I would much rather the senator scream at me than have Maynard yell at me, because the senator never personalized his anger. You know, we were always trying to kill him, you trying to kill me by putting more stuff in my briefcase? You trying to kill me? Well, now you know, he knows I wasn't trying to kill him. But people misunderstood his temper, his personality with his temper, because he really was not, a lot of people swear he had a terrible temper. I've heard Jack Germond kid about his temper, at his birthday party, at that eightieth birthday party.

But there was Leslie, Maynard, Gayle and I in that first office with the senator, and Gayle was always very busy taking care of Jane. And Gayle didn't have any skills, Gayle didn't know how to type, she didn't know any shorthand, but she knew her way around, and she was very good with people. But Jane kept Gayle pretty busy.

DN: And Maynard was a foreign policy expert.

DS: Yes, Maynard was an intellectual really. He was a softie, though, and in that, there's a, I don't know how to explain, but there is a competitiveness over there, that if you're a softie, you're going to get killed. And it's very difficult if you get caught in one of those whirlpools, as Maynard did. It tore Maynard up when it first happened. He was, he didn't know what to do. And fortunately he had so much talent that, you know, all he had to do was pick up the phone and he had a marvelous job. It wasn't so with me. I was afraid, I didn't know where I was going to go over to his office one day during this period, to assure me, and he emphasized, that he had nothing to do with my, the position I found myself in at that time, which was Charlie Micoleau encouraging me to leave.

DN: This was when the -

DS: This was, well, it was the year, it was an election year because I left and went with Jim Sasser of Tennessee. So it would be '77, '76.

DN: Seventy-seven, the year after the '76 election, following that. So you were with the senator approximately five years, '72 to '77. Your job was officially personal secretary.

DS: Yes.

DN: What was your real job?

DS: Well, my real job was, was personal secretary. Although, you know, Gayle really was more personal in the, if we're going to talk about family. But the senator dictated, you know, as most offices do, he would call me in for dictation. If he had a meeting with Secretary Kissinger, for example, I remember during Vietnam and Kissinger was reporting to him on the Vietnam situation, I was looking for that last night, I was going to give it to you but I couldn't find it, and as soon as Kissinger would leave I would go in and, while it was still fresh in his mind, and he would dictate to me. Because he and Kissinger of course did not want staff, this was on a one-to-one meeting. The senator would dictate it to me in detail, what they had discussed, what Kissinger said, what he now said, what, and then he'd put some questions that were on his mind at the end of it. I would only show that to Maynard, and nobody else in the office had access to those memos. I did, and Maynard, Maynard had access to everything that I did, and Maynard, you know, made that very clear to me and I was very content with that situation.

So, you know, I had to pick him up at the airport, these are things I didn't like to do because driving him is, you know, go around this way, stop, don't stop for this one, go around this guy. But there is the story that the staff tells that, I didn't know whether to laugh or cry, Don, I, it was during the period when I was still intimidated by him and he was coming back from somewhere, I think Union College in New York, and he came off the airplane, and he saw me, and I did the stupidest thing that any secretary could do, I went (*waves*). And he looked.

DN: You waved at him, a little wave.

DS: Can you imagine him going like this? He looked and pretended he didn't see me, you know, he turned around. Now, always, I have to tell you this, always when I met the senator at the airport, which was frequently, he would hand me his briefcase and go to the bathroom. That was always what happened. I would take the briefcase, and he'd say, "I'm going to the john", and I would walk out to the car. Usually it would be to take him back to the office. But sometimes it was at night, you know, nine or ten o'clock at night, where I would drive his car, the Chrysler out there, and then I would take a cab and come home, and he would drive the Chrysler.

So this one night I came out, he came out, and he was surrounded by people, on both sides of him as he walked toward me. You know, he never acknowledged me, he would not say, "Hi Dolores," or, "What a great trip," or anything. But he knew I was there, and I knew he knew. And he walked up to me, and I held my, believe me, I would say there must have been twenty-five people around him, and he handed me the briefcase. I held my hand out, and he said, "Where's the car?" And I said, in front of the whole world, "Don't you have to go to the bathroom?" And he said, "No, I don't have to go to the bathroom." I remember, I called Gayle, I said, I was crying, I said, Gayle, I got in that cab, I couldn't believe what I had done. I cried, and I came home and I told my children, Wayne was sitting, he says, "I can't believe you said that, Mom, I can't believe you said that." But I did. And that was, as I say, during the time that I was still intimidated by him.

Other times I'd meet him at the airport and I'd give him his schedule and he'd say, "You expect me to go in there now and be an expert on this, you shove this in my face and you think I'm going to be an expert." And I'd say, "Yes, I do, and you will be." So I had gotten over, you see, I can see myself now, I had gotten over that being frightened of him at the airport. And he'd smile; he would smile when I would say that, so I had gotten to the point where I could make him smile.

DN: You mentioned the dictation after the Kissinger visits. Was that a common practice for him with major meetings?

DS: Yes, yes. And when I was thinking of you last night coming, and I was thinking of getting a little snack for us, it came to mind, George Bush at that time, George the father, was head of CIA, and he and the senator were having a one-on-one with no staff. And he was coming early, like eight-thirty. So I decided, I came home and I got out some pretty cups and saucers, you know, and I had a pretty silver tray, and I stopped on the way and bought a Sara Lee pound cake. And when I got there he was there, and he saw me. He saw me open the pound cake and he saw me slice it and put it on this tray. And George Bush later came, the staff was being pushed out the door, and I had poured the coffee, and George Bush looked up at me and said, "This is absolutely delicious, did you make this?" And I said, "Yes, I did." And Muskie looked at me, because he had seen me.

So that memory just came to my head last night because I had a pound cake out there and I thought, that's when I met George the elder. But he would never say, Senator Muskie would never say anything about those things, but he took them all in and, you know, he was able to get rid of them also because I don't think he absorbed trivia, he was not capable of that sort of thing. And those people are difficult, you know. I would imagine you go home at night and Jane wants to talk about what the kids did in school today, and he's thinking about what's happening in Israel. So I know that it's a difficult life for the spouses of men like Ed Muskie.

DN: Did he make a practice of dictating notes after sessions with his colleagues? Or were those more with staff?

DS: No, I never did, it's funny you ask that because I did that with Kennedy. Kennedy did that. I don't recall any with his colleagues. You know why, Don? I would have kept them, if there were any of those. I always would make a copy for myself. And, now with the George Bush, frequently the senator would call me in and say to the person he was talking to, and there was one time it was George Bush, "My secretary is on the line because I have asked her to take notes." And he would advise the person he was talking to that I was in there listening, and I would sit and take notes in shorthand.

DN: These were on phone conversations.

DS: Uh-hunh, then I would type them up for him and he would go over them, and I would show them only to Maynard.

DN: You were his personal secretary, and you have mentioned Gayle who had a personal

relationship and responsibilities with the family. Did that lead to any kinds of tensions between you and Gayle?

DS: It did. It did, and I'm very happy to say we were able to resolve it. It did because I was always concerned about the senator and his comfort, and his comfort level. And Gayle was tremendously concerned about Jane Muskie. She had a good relationship with the Muskie children. And there were times that, I don't know whether you know that Jane demanded that when the senator walked out of the office, that she be called. Did you know that? She had to be called the minute he walked out of the office. Well, that was Gayle's job. And Gayle of course never, never, never forgot. She went right to the phone. Now when Gayle wasn't there, or if Gayle was home sick, that became my job. And I've always forgotten. I could, see, it was not my job and it never occurred to me. I would forget, I would forget until I got home that night and I'd be in bed and I'd think, oh, my God. And then he would come in the next morning and I realized that there had been trouble, because she hadn't received her call.

So of course I would be in trouble, because Gayle never forgot, I was the one who forgot. And that caused trouble between, Gayle and I had some words on that. But as I say, we decided early in our relationship, pretty early in the relationship, that we would not let any problems that the Muskie's were having interfere with our friendship, and we never did. And until Gayle died, we were very good friends.

DN: Now you came into the office in December of '72. This was not that long after the election and after the nomination. What was the senator's mood, from your perspective, at that point?

DS: Pensive. I happened to be there when Segretti came in to apologize, which was I guess several months after that, I had been there awhile when Segretti came in. But I remember, I remember he was, I remember walking into the office after Segretti left, he was in there very briefly, by the way, he wasn't in there five minutes. So he wasn't being entertained or chatted up in there. I think he said he wanted to apologize, and the senator said, your apology is accepted, and he left.

And then I went in, I was going to bring him a cup of coffee or something, and he was just pensive, you know, he was thinking. I think he was thinking of what could have been, as we all were. And he wasn't bitter, I didn't, I always looked for some bitterness. I never saw it. Now, maybe other people did, but this was, I was there very shortly after he had been badly hurt, and I never noticed any bitterness.

DN: How did he seem to be approaching his senatorial duties in the wake of the '72 debacle?

DS: With vigor, I mean my, certainly there was never any let up or any easing or any, he was a hard worker. He complained about it constantly, but he was the hardest working man I ever knew, really. Up until that point I had never known anyone. Later I did, I met other people on the Hill who worked like him, because it's part of that, the nature of that work over there. But I don't think there was any, I don't know how he was prior to 1972, so when I met him he was the same, he was always the same insofar as his work habits were concerned.

DN: Tell us something about the senator's relationship with different members of the staff.

DS: You know, he didn't have a lot close relationships. I know the senator liked Maynard, and the one thing that was hurtful to me was that the senator didn't come to Maynard's defense during this period of the coup, nor to mine. And I think that's part, his theory was to let the AA make those decisions and not to interfere. When the day finally came when I left, when I accepted a job with Jim Sasser of Tennessee, I went in to tell him, I felt I had to do that, I'd put it off a long time. And I was crying, and I could cry now just thinking about that day. But he looked up at me and said, "Is it too late?" As if it was the first time it had occurred to him. And I said, "Yes, it's too late." But I don't think he had really given it any thought. And he should have. I was a very loyal, hard working servant to him. And Charlie had gone to him and told him that he wanted someone else. Charlie was AA, and you know, AAs want their own people there.

DN: Now, Maynard had left earlier.

DS: Maynard left, and he left me. And he knew he was leaving me, he knew it was difficult for me, he knew it was going to be difficult. I didn't know, I was not familiar with that sort of environment. I had never worked on Capitol Hill and I didn't know about how they operated over there. But Charlie was determined to get me out of there, even more than he was determined to get someone else in because the woman they hired to replace me I think was there two weeks, and she either attempted or committed suicide. And so that my first replacement.

Of course Carole Parmelee he brought in then, and Carole was working back in the legislative section at the time. Carole and I never really worked together, so I never really knew Carole very well. Jenny Wood, I must tell you, she was the, the receptionist. She, at that time Susie Nicholas, as you know, was another person I disliked who was that Charlie Micoleau group. And Jenny Wood was the receptionist, and when the senator went to State and I was invited to the party at the White House, Jenny Wood and I went together and she said to me, now promise, when we go through the receiving line, taht you will say to the senator, "This is Jenny Wood, she was our receptionist." And I said, "I will, I will."

When we got to the White House she said, "Now don't forget, Dolores, when we go through the receiving line." I said, "No, I won't forget." So when we came to the receiving line, Jane was there first and I spoke to Jane, you know, briefly, Jenny was right next to me. And then she got to Jane, and Jane said something to her like, "Are you with Dolores?" And then I got to the senator and I held his hand and I said, "Oh Senator, I am so proud of you." And he leaned down and kissed me on the ear, on the side of the face. Well, of course I never thought of Jenny Wood. I just walked on, and she was so angry with me. Because when she got to the senator he said to her, "And are you Dolores' daughter?" She was really mad at me then, but it was quite a night.

But his relationship with Leslie, he was very fond of Leslie. He was fooled by Susie Nicholas, because later he called Leslie in after Susie had started a lot of trouble in the office, I forget what, but he was disturbed about it. And he called Leslie in, and I remember Leslie telling me that he said, "Well, has Susie changed, has something happened to her?" And Leslie said,

"Senator, she was always a trouble-maker." So, he had no idea because Susie was so cute, and a very sexy girl, and Susie knew how to treat men, and men liked her. And the senator liked her. But she was trouble.

DN: What were the stated reasons for the moves against Maynard that coup d'état?

DS: You know, Don, I'm not sure. And I'm not even sure I knew then. It was something about the way he was running the office that they didn't like. And I don't think I was smart enough in those days to understand what he was doing, or why. Because he and McEvoy, McEvoy had previously been the senator's AA, you know. He came with Leslie from Joe Tydings, and they had had a good relationship. But something happened that they didn't like. At that time the Budget Committee was just in its infancy, and there were some problems regarding the Budget Committee. But the senator, those were the senator's problems as far as I was concerned, because both John and Doug wanted to be staff director.

So I'm not really sure what Maynard did, or how we found out. But it surprised me that Maynard always remained friendly with Charlie Micoleau. And when I saw him at the senator's birthday party, he said, Charlie wasn't there, Maynard was there, and Maynard looked very affluent. You know, he's now at First Boston, he's probably a billionaire by now. And he looked very good and he was very happy. But the bitterness that there was at time, he certainly didn't take with him. I mean, he was friendly with people like McEvoy and Bennett, and Charlie Micoleau. Where I never could feel comfortable with Charlie Micoleau.

DN: Now, the principal staff people outside the office during that period were Bennett and McEvoy, and Leon Billings.

DS: Al From.

DN: And Al From. How did they interact with you and the staff, the personal staff?

DS: Well, just like any, they liked some people and they didn't like some people. As I say, I never stopped to think about it in those days, about whether people liked me. I didn't have time for that. But I got along with all of them. Chris Matthews, that's a good example. Chris Matthews was on the Budget Committee at the time, and he's done pretty good money-wise with his life. But they had no use for him on the Budget Committee, and John fired him. I liked Chris Matthews and I, because I felt sorry for him, and I used to try to sneak him in to see the senator if he wanted to talk to him.

There were some people like a guy named Bob Radcliffe, who's now at *Time* magazine, I believe. Nice men, you know, really nice people. But all of them, I think all of us always knew that we worked for a man of great integrity, and there were certain things you could do maybe and get away with, and certain things that would not be tolerated by this man.

And one of them I think worked to my detriment, you know, the senator would not interfere with an AA who was in charge of something. He felt he had to work with him. If Charlie Micoleau wanted Maynard and me to go, then we were going to go. Which is sort of a disappointment, you know. I don't mean that I've carried that around with me, I've long forgotten it. But I was very fond of most people on the staff, and there were some people that I just didn't care for at all.

DN: How did the senator relate to Al From?

DS: I always wondered about that, you know. I think that, Al From was a very bright, young guy, very ambitious. And I found Al From very easy to get along with, but a very focused individual. There was probably a little competition between Leon and Al, but that was for the senator's time, you know, that's not a very serious sort of competition, both wanting to get on the schedule to talk to him. And as I say, my own opinion was that the senator was very fond of Leon. But I'm not sure how fond he was Al From. Because Al wanted to be staff director of I guess it was governmental affairs, wasn't it?

DN: He was staff director of intergovernmental relations, wasn't it?

DS: Subcommittee of governmental relations.

DN: Subcommittee, yeah.

DS: And he wanted something else that he didn't get. Oh, I know, I think he wanted the Budget Committee, and he wasn't even considered for the Budget Committee. So he didn't get what he wanted. But he didn't pout, that I recall. And, you know, I probably was not as observant about those things and didn't think about them until later. It never was anything that was called to my attention, there was never any bad words, never any bad feeling. The senator yelled at Leon as much as he yelled at Al and at me. Every time you'd, see, we gave him a briefcase to take home every night. Isn't that terrible, that was his homework. He had to go home and do this work and have it done before coming in in the morning. So when we tried to squeeze something else in, you know, he'd say, "Buy me an expandable briefcase." And that's when we'd be accused of trying to kill him. Gayle used to laugh when he'd say to us, "Oh, I have to do what you want me to, not what I want to do." And Gayle would say, "You know, it's what we want him to do, like go to a Public Works meeting." Gayle was very funny. I don't, I never saw the senator really very close to Gayle, either. And I know he was, you know, I know he depended on her a great deal. Because I think Gayle managed their finances.

DN: Yes.

DS: Which was a terrible, terrible job in those days. And she had it rough, I mean she really had it rough trying to take care of those credit cards and those telephone calls. So I know he depended on her, and I know that he was fond of her.

And she, he had a birthday party one time, and I had decided to give him a little gift, but I didn't want to give it to him in front of anyone. And we were in a Senate room over there, there were a lot of people around him. And I waited until I saw him alone and I walked over. And I had it in a little box, one of those little boxes that looks like a cufflinks box, which it wasn't cufflinks. And I walked over to him and I caught him alone for a moment, and I said, "Senator, this is just a little birthday gift I want you to have, but stick it in your pocket and open it later." And you

know what, he did just that. I thought that was so funny, that you could say something and he would obey you like that. You know, it was sort of a mother thing I think.

So that night, Jimmy Carter had invited them all to dinner, and they were going to have dinner with Jimmy Carter and Gayle was with that crowd, she was with Jane. The next morning, Gayle came over to me and said, "Did you give the senator a birthday gift?" And I said, "Yes, I did." And she said, 'Was it cufflinks?" Which struck me very funny, so I said, "No it wasn't cufflinks, but how do you know that?" She said, because he got up and showed it to Jimmy Carter. She said, he walked down the table and opened it, and showed it to. Well, I was just pleased, can you imagine how pleased I was? Because you know what it was, Don? It was an old, it was a very old political button from Maine, I forgot it was, but it was something that -

End of Side A Side B

DN: This is the second side of the interview with Dolores Stover on the 20th of September, 2002. Dolores, you were just talking about the birthday gift you had given to the senator, that he showed to President Carter.

DS: Made me very happy.

DN: And you also went and got out a gift you decided not to give him.

DS: Right, right, it's a 'Remember the Maine', and it's Cambridge glass, and I loved the color and I thought he would like it. But other people decided that it was not appropriate. So I kept it, and it's just a memory of him now.

DN: Now, you talked about his relationship with staff members. What about his relationships with his Senate colleagues, people he worked with?

DS: Well, I think, I hope you explore his relationship with Phil Hart, because if ever there's something that should be saved for posterity, it's Senator Muskie's speech at Phil Hart's party, birthday party I believe it was, that I just went hysterical. I cried so hard, and every time I read it I cried. Senator Muskie was an eloquent man, and he was eloquent without, without making an effort, you know, it came effortlessly to him. But there were times that he would put an effort in, if there was something very special. And this was very special to him. And I think maybe Bernie Asbell touched on that in his book. But you might, you should read that, it's absolutely beautiful. He was very close to Phil Hart. The senator and, I was with the senator during this period of the Clean Air Act where we saw a lot of Nelson Rockefeller. His relationship with Nelson Rockefeller was warm and cordial, but hardly close. I think that he really loved Phil Hart. And Adlai Stevenson, he was very, very fond of Adlai Stevenson.

DN: This is the younger.

DS: Young Adlai.

DN: Talk a little bit about Phil Hart.

DS: Well, Phil Hart was just one of life's beautiful people. I adored him. And I was lucky enough to have opportunities to talk to Phil because I used to have to go to the Hideaway. I'm surprised I remember what we called these, you know, we're talking about thirty years ago. But I would go over to fix the Hideaway for the senator's lunch. And if he and Phil Hart were going to have lunch together I would get over there, and of course Phil Hart would be there and the senator was always late. And there we were, Phil Hart and I, alone in the Hideaway, while I was pouring some sherry or something.

So we got to have conversations, I was, he'd ask me about my past, you know, and my duty as a magistrate, and what, whether the system worked and how well it worked. He was such a wonderful, wonderful man, that you felt he was really interested, you know. That's a gift. He'd ask you questions, and you felt he really was interested in your answers. So I got to know him well, and I thought that he was just one of life's beautiful people, and I think Senator Muskie did, too.

Now, legislatively, you know, he worked with other senators. For example, he worked with Senator Javits on the War Powers Act, which I think about now, you know, in the situation we're in today. And got along well with Senator Javits, but I think there were only a few he was very close to. But I remember one time when I thought he showed me he was a really sensitive man. There was a Florida senator who was in trouble, I think his name was Gurney, or Guernsey, I forget.

DN: Oh, yes.

DS: Remember? He was a Florida Republican.

DN: Gurney.

DS: Gurney, and he was in trouble. And they were passing around, the Democrats were passing around some sort of petition that would have hurt this man in some way, I don't remember the details. But I remember Al From coming in with it, and I was sitting with the senator in his office, and Al brought it in and asked the senator if he wanted to sign it. And I remember Senator Muskie saying, "Hey, he's already in trouble, he's got enough to worry about. We can't do anything more to hurt him." He was reluctant to join in anything that would hurt the man any more than he was already being hurt. And I can remember why that guy was in trouble. I wonder what he did.

DN: It was -

DS: I think he beat George Smathers originally, but I don't remember. Do you?

DN: I don't remember the details, it was something outside the Senate, it didn't have to do with the Senate, I didn't think. Interestingly enough, he had a Maine family connection.

DS: That's right, that's right, I'd forgotten that.

DN: And the senator had a staff member in Maine, a young woman, who had married into that family.

DS: Oh really, really.

DN: But there was never any connection there that would have added to his sensitivity.

DS: There was Estelle Lavoie, now she came later. Have you met her?

DN: Oh yes, I know Estelle.

DS: Estelle was a great staff member, hard worker, bright girl, nice girl.

DN: I'd like to take you back to Estelle, not to Estelle, but to Leslie Finn, who came in with John McEvoy.

DS: She did, yeah.

DN: And continued in the office. And there have been references in other interviews to John's inter-staff relationships being rather difficult. What about Leslie? She seemed from your description to have almost floated above that.

DS: Well, I think, I was looking at some of my diaries back there, and I think the first weeks I was there I had some negative thoughts about Leslie. And that quickly changed as soon as I proved myself to Leslie. When I, when she saw that I was capable and that I was going to work out all right, Leslie and I formed a good relationship. I went out there for dinner to her house, and we chatted. And we stayed close long after I left the Muskie office. But Leslie, not everyone got along with Leslie, but she was in a position where one would expect, you know, she was in a supervisory position where she had to see that the wheels were turning, and you're going to get some people angry. She got me angry sometimes. She did have one idiosyncrasy which, which of course I nurtured, didn't bother me. But you were not allowed to speak to her in the morning. Did you know that?

DN: No.

DS: When she came in, you know, you wouldn't say, "Good morning, Leslie." If she was alone there, she was having her doughnut or her coffee or something, and you were not to speak to her. And she told us that, and of course, what do you do, you just don't speak to her. But sometimes people would forget and they'd speak to her. She'd just look. But Leslie was not that difficult a person. She was actually reasonable.

You know, if you did, for example, she gave Susie Nicholas, she was very easy on Susie Nicholas, who was a complainer. And she said to me, "Dolores, when you're answering that telephone and, you know, your nerves can get shot, that's a difficult job." I didn't think

answering the telephone was difficult, but Leslie did, and she would give her two breaks instead of one break that most people would get. So I found her reasonable.

Now, she was very close to McEvoy because, you know, they came from Joe Tydings, and she was fond of John. I guess John was married at that time. And Terry, Leslie's husband, also was with Joe Tydings, so he was part of that team. He did not come over to the Hill, he went with NASA afterward. But -

DN: Now you referred in a conversation we had before we started the formal interview to Leslie intervening when you apparently caused some problems with the back room staff.

DS: Yeah, Leslie wanted me to take time out to chat with the people in the back room, because they had remarked to her that I would go back and sort of give orders, perhaps, you know. And maybe that's just exactly what I was doing was giving orders, you know, "Take this to the dry cleaners, tell the dry cleaner I want this back at two o'clock" or something. And she felt that those people, because of their status on the staff, deserved a little bit more consideration than I was giving. And when I told her that, "Leslie, I am so busy I don't have time to chat with Margie Buckland back there," Leslie suggested I take time. And I did.

After that, I would go back and I'd try to say a kind word, or tell a funny story or something. But I appreciated her sensitivity to those people who were otherwise ignored in the back room. So I find that, you know, a very good quality in a supervisor, and I have used that myself in other, in jobs where I have been in a supervisory capacity. Because it is true, those people, they never see the senator and, you know, the senator never sees them. He had his own door, so he didn't walk through the office. And I would venture to say people came to work every day and never laid eyes on Senator Muskie, except those of us, four of us in the -

DN: You came on the staff from this area. How did you deal with relating to people in Maine, was that through other-?

DS: Not well, not well. And I don't know why, and I don't have an answer to that. But I just went to Maine once and I found people were very cold to me. I couldn't relate to anyone, I couldn't get anyone to, this was Lewiston, there were hearings in Lewiston. And I think Estelle was from Lewiston if I'm not mistaken. And she had given me the names of some people to talk to. The senator wanted to make sure I got to Maine once. I hadn't been to Maine since I'd been working for him. And of all places to go, I'll tell you, Lewiston wasn't the place. That was my one trip on the staff.

But the people in Maine, I mean people like Shep Lee and George Mitchell, I had only brief contact with, because those people always dealt with Gayle, and Gayle had, you know, Gayle had all her Maine contacts. So I really didn't have, people I met, I mean, I was just crazy about George Mitchell from the very beginning, and I still am today in love with George Mitchell. But I don't know how to answer that, Don.

DN: You answered it in terms of how the office operated, which was essentially Gayle, Estelle, other staff members like that dealt with the Maine side, and staff members not from Maine

tended not to.

DS: But there were other things, other times. For example, one time James Farley called the office, and there wasn't anyone sitting in that office who knew who he was. And I took the phone and I chatted with him for a while, he was calling about something that was coming up in committee that day, and I said, my father is going to be so happy when I tell him about this. So in that respect, you know, of course he wasn't from Maine, but I could handle some people because of my age, I guess, that others couldn't. That was a real thrill for me.

DN: Yes, Farley was a name for people of our vintage.

DS: And my father, you know, my father was, we were Catholics first, then Democrats in my house. My father was one of these Democrats that we went around putting the poles, pounding poles in. My parents were both very partisan.

DN: Was there a lot of political talk around the kitchen table?

DS: There was because, because they belonged to a club, you know, the Tanawanga Club or something that every, all of us Irish Catholics belonged to. And they got the jobs. And after the Depression, my father got the Internal Revenue Service job, where he stayed for the rest of his life, through that club. So but it was mostly local, you know, mostly the congressmen and, certainly not on the national level. Although we all loved and idolized FDR, because my parents did, so.

DN: I'd like to talk a little bit about your experience on Capitol Hill and around government subsequent to your time with Senator Muskie. You went first with Senator Sasser?

DS: I did, I did, and that job resulted in me being appointed chief clerk of the Post Office Committee, which turned out to be the most satisfying job I had. I was the chief clerk, and we had a staff of maybe fifteen people, and it was a wonderful job, and I was the boss, and I had two secretaries. And I know that I know how to use authority, you know, because all of those people to this day I'm in touch with, and have always had nice things said. But having worked for Senator Muskie was always a plus, you know, when people knew I worked with Senator Muskie it, right away you're considered, well, she must be pretty good if she worked for Muskie. So I stayed with that job seven years, until the Democrats lost control of the Senate. And when we lost control of the Senate, we were all out of work, we all got fired. And Ted Stevens, I was so naive that I thought maybe Ted Stevens would keep me on because I was chief clerk to the whole committee. And that was naive, I'm telling you. Ted Stevens had his little group that he was ready to put into my job, because at that time I was making a lot more money than I had started out.

So we lost our job, and I got, I went to the DCCC, and then Harriman's. No, I know what happened, I got a call from Averell Harriman's office. They had called Mondale's office, and Mondale's office, Jenny Wood answered, my old friend from Muskie's office. And they told Jenny that they were looking for this sort of person, and they described, and Jenny said, I know exactly the person, and she called me. And at that time I was in Nag's Head, just like I was

leaving for Nag's Head. So when I got back from Nag's Head, I was interviewed by Pamela and her secretary, and then I was sent up to be interviewed by Averell Harriman, and I've got to tell you this story.

At that time I was making thirty thousand dollars a year on the Hill, when I left the Hill. And when the Harrimans asked me, Pamela and Janet Howard, how much money I wanted, I said, "Well, I would like at least what I was making on the Hill," you know, I didn't want to take any, I had to take a little less, but I really didn't want to go any further than that. And they said, "All right, but if the governor asks you how much money you want, you tell him you want ten thousand dollars a year." Well, you know, Don, it bothered me because I was holding Harriman in such regard that, they were asking me to lie, and I was very uncomfortable having to lie to this icon, you know. So, they chatted, they asked me a lot of questions about politics, Pamela did, you know, about secretaries of state and, it was a good interview. And anyway, when I went up there he had on his smoking jacket, poor man was getting senile at the time. But he said to me, when we got around, he was a great man for money, talking money, and he said, "And how much money are you asking for?" And I gulped, and I said, "Ten thousand dollars a year." And he jumped up, he said, "Ten thousand dollars a year, absolutely not, no, what are you talking about, ten thousand." And he went on and on about this ten thousand dollars a year, so I, I was astounded, but I got up and went downstairs, I said, "Forget it, I said, "he doesn't want to even pay ten thousand." They said, "Don't pay any attention to him, don't mind him." So I said, "Look, I'm telling you, he doesn't want me. He has told me he doesn't want me, and he's not willing to pay ten thousand dollars." They said, "Just don't pay any attention to him." Well I did pay attention to him, and I came home.

And when I got home, somebody sent me flowers, and it was Pamela. It was my birthday, and I had forgotten, it was December 19th. And she said that she had talked to the governor and he decided he really did want me. Now, you can imagine what went on in that conversation, and that they would send a limo for me to take me to Middleburg, they'd gone down to Middleburg, just to confirm it because he was very anxious for me to get started. And this is the junk that is, when I write my book. So anyway, that's how I started with the Harrimans. And that lasted, you know, the governor really needed a nurse more than a secretary, that lasted about a year and I just didn't like those people at all, not at all, and I got a job at the DCCC and I loved it, just loved it.

DN: Let me take you back briefly to the Harriman period. Did he ever talk about Senator Muskie, knowing that you had worked for him?

DS: Yeah, he said that I should have paid Senator Muskie to work for him. That he doesn't know why I deserved a salary, that to work for Senator Muskie you should be willing to pay him. I mean, that's the way he talked. He dictated to me all the time.

And he was interesting, one of his, I wouldn't say it was an idiosyncrasy, but never used the word 'very'. I find that interesting, and you know, I never do. Like, I'm very happy to see you, or I was very upset about this. He didn't like the word 'very'. And he dictated a lot, and it was their way of keeping him alive, really, keeping him busy, that he had something to do when he woke up in the morning. And I felt I was playing house.

But most of my job was reading him the *New York Times*. And I would read to him and then I'd say, "Well, do you want to read what's happening, do you want to know what's happening in Ireland?" And he'd say, "No, I don't want to know what's happening in Ireland." And, he didn't like the Irish, and I told him that my cousin was the commissioner of police in New York, and had graduated from Harvard. And he said, "Where did he get the money to go to Harvard?" So you see, I think Governor Harriman thought that all Irish policemen were on the take.

DN: Now, you went to the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and had a marvelous time, you said.

DS: I just loved it. Now, there was where I met another man who worked like, you know, unbelievable, was Tony Coelho. I was in the finance section of that, made a lot of friends, great people, I loved being around that crowd. We had a lot of fun. And at the end of the campaign that year, they offered me a job to stay on on the DCCC, to stay on on the permanent staff, and I had to refuse because I had no retirement, and they were not institutionalized so there was no retirement there. And I wanted very much to stay there, because I enjoyed the people, I enjoyed the work; it was just a good place to work.

But, I, you know, I was getting on in years and I didn't have any retirement, I didn't have that much time on the Hill. And I had been in the Marine Corps, so I had a little bit of time in the Marine Corps, and a little bit of time on the Hill, which has not turned out to be sufficient in my retirement, you know, it's certainly not adequate. But I have three children who are all, all have very good jobs who are supporting their mother. But I left there reluctantly, and went to work for, who?

DN: You worked for Kennedy at one point?

DS: I went to work for Ted Kennedy. And that was, you know, I love Ted Kennedy, I love the Kennedys, but that staff I think never accepted me. It's a very insular staff, and Fran Miller, who was with me in Muskie's office, you know Fran?

DN: Oh, yes.

DS: Well, Fran and I were so close. And when she, she was working for Kennedy, and she called me one day, when I left the DCCC I went with a young congressman from Tennessee named Jim Cooper, fourth district of Tennessee, and she called me over there and she said, "How would like my job?" And I said, "I would love it." She said, "Well, you can have it because I'm leaving, and I'll get it for you." So she set up an appointment with Larry Horowitz, who was Kennedy's AA, he's now a filmmaker out in Hollywood; he was also a doctor. And the next day, Larry Horowitz called, we set up an appointment, I went over there, he interviewed me and asked me if I would come the next day to meet with Ted, and the next day I went over and had the meeting with Senator Kennedy. And Fran knew what she was doing, she got in and out, she knew it was time to get out. That's a job you know, you have a feeling.

DN: Now, what was the job specifically?

DS: Personal secretary.

DN: Personal secretary, yeah.

DS: But I went over, and Senator Kennedy was really from the same sort of family I was from, except they were rich. And I was the oldest of ten children, so he had, you know, I think that was a plus for me. He knows that if you're the oldest of ten children you have some responsibility. And he hired me immediately, you know, I was very surprised. There was none of this, come back tomorrow. He hired me, and I started work that week, and never, never could get that staff, to get any bonding with the staff. In fact, I felt sabotaged in some way, that they would do things that would hurt me with the senator. And I was getting older, Don, and it was getting more difficult for me to go to work every morning. It was tough work. Senator Kennedy is also, you know, a great legislator, well respected man. He used to tell Muskie stories, too. He was very fond of Senator Muskie. But there was a feeling in that staff that they were above everybody else, you know? They had, they looked down at other people's staffs. They were, I don't know how to describe it except to give you an example.

The senator was going to South America, and he wanted to take his sisters with him, Jean Smith and one of the other, maybe Eunice, I don't remember, but one or two of his sisters. And they were very concerned about security, because one of those countries, maybe it was Brazil, where they were concerned about the senator's security. So they decided to hire private security people to go with them. And one of them was an old friend of the senator's, and he came into the Senate that day with his gun, loaded. Now, the police stopped him, you know, and, when he, they had that idea, that, I'm going to Ted Kennedy, so I will do what I want. There's a certain arrogance about it, you know. And I said, well, he shouldn't have done that, and like I seemed to be the only voice of reason there. And they were saying stupid things like, should I call Marion Barry. Marion Barry? Now, anyone who read the newspapers knew that Marion Barry did not get along with Joe DeGenoa, who was the district attorney, hated each other. And they'd say, yeah, call Joe DeGenoa. And I'm saying, don't call Joe DeGenoa, but they did, and the senator got into a terrible argument with him on the phone, because he didn't want this gup prosecuted. And Joe DeGenoa, of course, is saying, oh, it's a Kennedy, you know, he was a Republican, too. So, but there was an arrogance about a lot of those people.

And on the other hand there were some wonderful people. Greg Craig, you know, who got Hinckley off later for shooting Reagan, was on our staff then. Nancy Soderberg, who's now in the UN, was on our staff. There were some really nice people, but I didn't like it. So I stayed a year, and retired.

And then I came here and took over as manager of this. This is the greatest job I ever had in my life, came over here and took over as manager of the subsidized units. There were thirty-eight subsidized units, and you know, I'd lie in bed in the morning and somebody would call and say, my garbage disposal is broken, and I'd call downstairs and say, garbage disposal. I said, do you know, they're paying me thirty thousand dollars a year, and I never get out of bed. And my friends said, I knew someone who had a job like that one. So I had that job for five years, then I went over to the *Post*.

Before that, I went to the *Washington Post* and I had a little job as an editor in the advertising department, and I worked there part time for a while. And then after ARHA, ARHA stands for Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, I kept that job for five years. Best money I ever made. And after that, my son was getting out of law school and I went to work for him, and that's what I do now.

DN: That's what you're doing now. As you look back at your time with Senator Muskie, and the other perspectives you gained in other offices, what's your assessment of him as a legislator and public servant, and also as someone working with, relating to other people?

DS: Well, I think he's probably, in my opinion, I just can't imagine anyone thinking he was anything other than a marvelous legislator. I don't know the things about whether he was a good strategist, you know, things that are important in that regard. But he surrounded himself with staff. One staff member we haven't mentioned that he was very fond of, by the way, was Bob Rose. The senator had a good relationship with Bob Rose, you know, he was press secretary. He liked him very much. So I think he surrounded himself with people.

But he was also, he also made his own decisions, you know, he would listen to staff and then make his own decisions. And sometimes the senator would have a staff meeting where he would tell us, like it would be a day he hated Detroit, let's say, you know, the things, how difficult it had been for him to get anything out of Detroit. And when he finished talking, you would be so proud to be associated with this man, you know, he gave you such a good feeling, it made it all worthwhile. So, as a legislator I just think he was marvelous.

And I think he was well respected by other senators. There was a joke, I don't know if you want me to tell you the joke, in the elevator when, what was that marvelous senator's name, Tom Eagleton, and a lot of senators, Eagleton was in the back, Jesse Helms was in the elevator, it was a lot of senators, Senator Muskie. And one senator, who I forget right now, it'll come to me, said to somebody, maybe Jesse Helms said it, "I want to tell you a Polish joke, I just heard a good Polish joke." And Ed, Senator Muskie said, "Careful, I'm here." And Tom Eagleton said, "All right then, I'll tell it slowly." And that joke went around the Senate. So he, they kidded him.

But when I was there, you know, it was really Adlai Stevenson and Phil Hart that he was closest to. And I do hope you read that, I hate to call it a speech, it wasn't a speech, it was a testimonial actually to Phil Hart that he read shortly before he died.

DN: Thank you very much Gloria.

DS: Dolores.

DN: Dolores. I don't know why I keep saying Gloria. I think, I know a Gloria Stover, that's it, it's a friend in Maine. And one of those things, it just sort of clicks in. But we thank Dolores.

DS: You're welcome. I just don't know, don't know what, how it'll help.

DN: A great deal.

DS: You think so?

DN: Yes.

End of Interview