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Weil, Gordon Lee oral history interview

Greg Beam

Interview with Gordon Lee Weil by Greg Beam

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee
Weil, Gordon Lee

Interviewer
Beam, Greg

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Place
Augusta, Maine

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Biographical Note

Gordon Lee Weil was born March 12, 1937 in Mineola, New York and grew up in Long Island. Sadye, his mother, worked for the Red Cross, and was chairman of nursing services in Nassau County and of the USO during World War II and served as state president of the National Council of Jewish women. Gordon attended Hempstead High School and Bowdoin College, as a history major with a concentration in government. He was on the Agriculture Committee of the 1956 pre-convention platform committee in Maine and served as a page at the 1956 Democratic National Convention, Chicago. He worked in Washington, DC with the European Common Market from 1963 to 1966. He also worked for the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal. He is the author of *The Long Shot*. He served as a George McGovern body man in 1971 and 1972, as a Democratic State Convention delegate in 1974. He was active in the George Mitchell 1974 gubernatorial election, and worked for Bill Clinton on his 1992 presidential campaign.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: Democratic National Committee; 1956 Maine gubernatorial campaign; 1964 Senate campaign; 1968 vice presidential campaign; 1969-1972 presidential campaign; his book, *Long Shot*; the Democratic National Convention in Miami; Muskie as Secretary of State; the Democratic Party in Maine; comparison of Muskie and McGovern;

recollections of World War II, 1944 Democratic National Convention from radio, media; 1936 presidential election; September voting in Maine; pre-convention platform committee: Frank Coffin and Don Nicoll; 1956 Democratic National Convention, Chicago; Democrats and Franco-Americans in Maine; being offered an opportunity to work on Senator Javits staff; being a ghost write for Muskie; serving as press secretary for George McGovern; Mitchell/McGovern/Muskie impressions and comparisons; Mitchell and Northern Ireland peace talks; McGovern Hatfield Amendment; and Bill Clinton as head of Texas McGovern campaign in 1972.

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Transcript

Greg Beam: This is Greg Beam, and I'm here with Gordon Weil- is that pronounced correctly? Weil, at his office at 150 Capitol Street in Augusta. The date is July 20th, 2000, and it's a little after ten a.m. To begin, could you please state your full name and spell it?

Gordon Weil: Gordon Lee Weil, W-E-I-L, G-O-R-D-O-N.

GB: And when and where were you born?

GW: I was born March 12th, 1937 in Mineola, M-I-N-E-O-L-A, New York.

GB: And did you grow up there?

GW: I grew up on Long Island, lived in various places on Long Island prior to coming to Maine to go to college.

GB: And what were your parents' names?

GW: My father's name was Irving Weil, and my mother's was Sadye, S-A-D-Y-E, Weil.

GB: And what were their occupations?

GW: My father was a district manager for the John Hancock Life Insurance Company, and my mother, who prior to marrying him had been a legal secretary, after he passed away, worked for the Planned Parenthood of Nassau County.

GB: I see, and do you recall how your parents were involved in the Long Island community as you were growing up?

GW: I don't think my father was very involved except professionally in terms of running an agency originally in on Long Island, and then for most of my childhood in Brooklyn, and he commuted to Brooklyn from Long Island. My mother was very active in the community in a number of ways. She was extremely active in the Red Cross and was the chairman of nursing services for the Nassau County Red Cross. Nassau County is very, is a county which today has a

population far greater than the state of Maine and probably at that time did have a population at least the size of the state, so it's a pretty significant area. She was active in the USO during WWII was as one of the leaders of the USO which was an organization for service people. We lived near an Army air base, be no Air Force at the time, and she spent a tremendous amount of time in that. She was active in the National Council of Jewish Women and became the state president of that organization. She was active on a volunteer basis with Planned Parenthood before she went to work there. She was very well known in Nassau County, a very active, visible person in the county, and I think very well thought of.

GB: Do you recall your parents' political beliefs or affiliations?

GW: They were registered members of the Republican Party, and Nassau County was then, may still be, a bit like Chicago is to the Democrats. You were either, and indeed probably the way Maine was, although there was a machine in Nassau County, which I don't think there was in Maine, you were Republican if you expected to transact business and operate there. That's not to say that I don't know they didn't vote Republican. I know, it's quite possible my father voted Republican, I really don't know that. He died when I was thirteen, and it wasn't a subject we discussed. I was very interested in politics. I, he, although it stands to reason they could have been Roosevelt supporters, and I assume my mother was. My mother, though, supported the Republican congressman, I know, Steven Derounian, and I think both of them probably voted not a straight party line at any time, but they were registered Republicans.

GB: And you said you were interested in politics. Were you, was that something just that you were always kind of interested in, or was there something in particular that propelled you into it?

GW: I don't know why, but as a pretty young kid I got interested in public events. The war, WWII was on and I followed the war even from, I used to, I was told that I knew all of the campaigns in North Africa. Well, North Africa was like '42, '43, which means I was six or seven years old at that time, which is surprising to me. I remember very clearly we were visiting cousins of ours in 1944 listening on the radio to the Democratic national convention, on the radio, you know, following as it went along. And at that time I was seven, eight years old, and I don't think many seven or eight year olds do that kind of thing, so I guess I got interested in politics at a pretty early age, but I don't know why.

GB: And that -

GW: It wasn't around the house, I mean, neither of my parents were active in the Republican Party.

GB: And I imagine that must have reflected in your academics; were you more oriented toward social studies in high school?

GW: Well, I guess so, I mean, I was the absolute raw material for liberal arts. I never knew exactly what it was I wanted to study. And I was good in math and other subjects as well, but I think I probably was more interested. I didn't think I was going to be a doctor or, you know, (*unintelligible word*) the chemistry and physics, which I took, I didn't think I was going to go

anywhere with, and so I think I probably was oriented toward the social studies.

GB: I see. And you said that you came to Maine for college, where was that?

GW: Bowdoin.

GB: Bowdoin. And what brought you to Bowdoin?

GW: Well, I went to, I had gone to a very large high school on Long Island, Hempstead High School, which had over two thousand students. There were five hundred and twenty-five people in my high school class, and I didn't like that. I was looking for someplace a lot smaller and, because it was kind of the regional high school. It wasn't that it was urban, it wasn't, but it drew people from a great area. And I didn't have any money at all, so I was interested in a small school that would give me a lot of scholarship assistance. And I only applied to small schools, I only applied to three schools, and I met the admissions director from Bowdoin, who came around to Hempstead, and took a real liking to him personally, and I think he did to me. I remained a friend of his even after I went to Bowdoin, and they made me a pretty good offer in terms of scholarship assistance. And I came to Maine for the first time in February 1954 to visit. This was before acceptances went out or so, and it was, and it was the middle of winter, and it was real winter as compared to what we have these days, and I really liked it, I mean, I thought it was a great place. I took an instant liking to it. And so when I was accepted, I, it was really not a difficult decision to come here.

GB: I see, and did you enjoy your time at Bowdoin?

GW: Yeah, I did, and it was and I believe still is an excellent school and with some very good teachers, and you know, I think I got a very good education. I was a very young freshman when I arrived at Bowdoin, and I think I, it helped me grow up, you know, in a relatively stress free way. I didn't have a lot of money to go home, and so I stayed around, you know, when other, spring, you know, breaks and so on people took off I stayed around, and it was a good way to kind of have time to develop.

GB: What did you study?

GW: Oh it was, you know, at that time there was a real distribution requirements, and so I studied a little bit of a lot of things. I was a history major, and if they had minors, which they didn't in those days, I would have been a government minor at Bowdoin. But I took art courses and science courses and math courses and so on.

GB: Now, did you participate in any activities that reflected your political interest?

GW: Yeah, I did. In fact I got involved in Maine politics while I was an undergraduate, and I did other things on campus but nothing that had a real political connection. I mean, Bowdoin was very isolated from the state of Maine; it was in Maine, but all the faculty lived really immediately around the college, unlike the way the world is today. And they, the students, except the Maine students, really didn't care about or weren't very interested in Maine. They'd

come to Bowdoin, not to Maine. A lot of them were from the Massachusetts area and commuted home every weekend, and so most of the stuff going on on campus had nothing to do with Maine; you could have been on Mars.

Because of a member of the government department faculty with whom, oddly enough, I never took a course, who was Mainer, a man by the name of Clem Voss, who's now passed away many years ago, went to Wesleyan after he left Bowdoin. But Clem Voss got me involved in Maine, in the Maine Democratic Party and I'm not, I have no recollection of how that happened. He probably, it could have been, but I'm not sure, I did anything that paid. I didn't have any money when I went to college, and so anything that anybody offered work to do that produced dollars, I did it. And one of the things was, I wrote a paper for him on the September election in Maine, which we then still had, and he was involved in an effort to change, to get it moved to November. And I wrote a paper which was a scholarly paper, which was published by a little institute there was at Bowdoin at that time. But I'm quite sure, and I probably got paid for it and maybe that's when I got to know him, you know, because they advertised, does anybody want to write this paper? And that's a lot easier than washing pots, so I went for it. And I could have met him in that, and I'm sure that paper was actually commissioned so that it could be used as part of this effort to convince the legislature to change the election date.

And in any case, through him I got involved in the Maine Democratic Party, so I became involved in it probably in my junior year in college, or sophomore year in college, and that was a very small group of people that were in the Maine Democratic Party at that time. And so that was the political thing, and that got me out into the state, and for a kid who wasn't from Maine to get involved in Maine affairs at Bowdoin was, I was probably the only one. I mean it just didn't happen. There were certainly no other people from, I was it, I was the Bowdoin kid at the Democratic Party. There was no other people from Bowdoin there, and I don't remember them from any other college either.

GB: Now, this paper you wrote on switching the election from September to November, what was the rationale behind your argument?

GW: Gee, I have no recollection at all. It's the first published thing I ever wrote; I don't have a copy of it. It's probably at Bowdoin somewhere; it ought to be. It was called "As Maine Goes: The September Election in Maine" because there was, in, as you may recall the 1940 election, well, you don't recall, but you may have heard about, there was a phrase, '36 presidential election rather, 'as Maine goes, so goes Vermont'. I mean the, it used to be 'as Maine goes, so goes the nation'. Well in that election the only two states covered, carried by [Alfred] Landon were Maine and Vermont, and Maine voted in September. And it really was no longer necessary. It had been done because you couldn't get to voting places very easily in bad weather, and that wasn't justified any longer, and there, you know, the world had changed and that was just kind of an anachronism. But I don't recall what the argument was, it was as I recall, you know, a five or six page paper, and I don't have the slightest recollection what I said in it.

GB: Sure. Well, I'd love to find it if I could possibly track it down.

GW: I would too, if you ever find it let me know.

GB: I certainly will. Alright, now I understand that in 1956 you were a page at the state convention (*unintelligible word*)?

GW: Well, no, that was the, I was at the national convention.

GB: Oh, really?

GW: There was a, I became involved, and there was a state convention in '56, and before that they set up an operation to develop the platform for that, and that's when I first got involved. I started going to meetings of the political pre-convention platform committee, which I think was an invention of either Don Nicoll or Frank Coffin to get people involved in the issues. And I remember I went to a meeting, and it was either in Augusta or Lewiston, I don't remember where, both of which were, you know, totally new places to me at the time. I did that twice, so I must have done it in '58 as well as '56, and I got put on the agriculture committee. Now here's a kid from New York who knows little about Maine and little about agriculture, but it tells you how desperate they were for people. And as a result, and anyhow, they put together a delegation to go to Chicago in '56, and I heard probably from Don that there was such a thing as a page of the delegation, but they didn't have any money for it. So I said, "Well, if I pay my own way can I be page of the delegation?" And they said, "Sure," and they got me the credentials and everything, very nice about it. And it happened that my mother's family was from Chicago so that I had an aunt and uncle on whose living room floor I could sleep, so I had accommodations there. So all I had to do was get there, that's the only thing I had to do was pay myself. And I found out when you got there the convention had so much free food you didn't have to worry about paying for food, so it was a pretty good deal.

And I, so, and I went out to Chicago for the '56 convention, which turned out to be one of the most fascinating political experiences I had in my entire life, and it was really the first kind of big league political experience I had. And Muskie was chairman of the Maine delegation at that convention. He was completing his second year as governor. He had been elected governor about the same day or the day before I arrived back in September. He'd been elected in September '54 that I arrived to go on campus at Bowdoin, so he was elected governor and I arrived at about the same time. And then, but I didn't get to have any contact with him until this pre-convention platform process in '56, and he was obviously, the Democrats had very few members in the legislature at the time, he was clearly Mr. Democrat as far as the state party was concerned. He was chairman of the delegation.

And I was page of the delegation, and a guy by the name of Dick Dubord from Waterville, who's also since passed away, was the effective guy who ran the delegation. And so I had a lot of contact with them at that time, I mean, I really did the administrative stuff for that delegation when I was there. Dubord would say do this, do that, whatever, and it was my job. But I sat on the floor of the convention right in back of the chairman of the Maine delegation who for most of the time was Ed Muskie, although he left during the convention interestingly, and right in front of the chairman of the South Carolina delegation because Maine didn't have very many delegates, we only got a part of two rows. So right in back of me was Strom Thurmond, who

was at that time a Democrat. That was quite an experience to be there. And, it was a small delegation, and so I got to know, you know, the people pretty well. At that time Louis Jalbert was a member of it I remember, and I don't remember some of the others. May Craig was obviously not there as a member, but she was there as a reporter to cover it. And I remember other people.

And Muskie left, I remember, after a couple of days, he did not stay for the whole convention because he was up for reelection again in September and thought that people at home would not understand his being away from Maine as long as the whole convention. So he came and put in an appearance, and he was not around when the balloting took place for president or vice president; he left by that time. Which I thought was interesting and really made an impression on me, that somebody would actually leave because he thought it was politically unwise to be there. Anyhow, the convention was interesting because the, I, I don't remember the substance of what happened at delegation meetings, but I would always participate in them, and I'll never forget there was a demonstration for something, and Dubord said, "Well, you take the Maine thing and take it around in the aisle." So I carried the Maine standard around in the aisle, and a lot of the delegation was a little shy about doing things like that.

The most fascinating part of it though was, it had nothing to do with Maine really, was at the convention I ran into another Bowdoin student who was about a year ahead of me whose name was Vince Villard, and he came from the Villard family of New York, which is an extremely wealthy family from the nineteenth century robber barons. His father [Oswald Garrison Villard] or grandfather [Henry Villard] was one of the so called robber barons. And surprisingly they were Democrats, and he was very well connected. He had gone to prep school with Adlai Stevenson's son and, John Fell Stevenson, and during the course of the convention, after Stevenson got the nomination, which was not unexpected because he had had it four years earlier, the question was who his running mate was going to be and he ultimately decided to throw it as a, in the open, let the convention choose among potential candidates.

And I ran into Villard and he said, "Stevenson's having a party tonight; you want to come to it?" This was not when, national conventions are nothing but parties now. So we went up to Stevenson's hotel suite in some, in downtown Chicago, and got in because Villard got in and knew Stevenson's sister, who was his host. Stevenson was divorced, and his sister was a [Elizabeth Stevenson] Mrs. Ives, and told her that he was a friend of John Fell's, and John Fell wasn't even there. And she said, "Well, come on in to the party," and so there. And I got kind of dragged in as well to this party. And at the party was Stevenson, was forty people maybe, or thirty people, not a lot of people. All the big wheels of the Democratic Party, Stevenson, Kennedy, [Estes] Kefauver, [W. Averell] Harriman, I mean, I was the only person nobody ever heard of in the room; everybody else had a name that you knew. And I got to meet all these people, or most of them, that evening by kind of circulating around, and that was '56. That was the summer of 1956, so that was between my sophomore and junior years in college, so it was a heck of an experience. So, you know, I always remember that, you know, as having been a great break.

So anyhow, he throws the convention over the next day, and this is before anything electronic existed and so what happens is delegations start announcing their votes, and I'm trying to keep a

tally so we'll kind of know where we are. I'm pretty sure the Maine delegation was not unanimous but probably was significantly for Kennedy. And then delegations started changing their votes. Well, you know, it was ten votes for Kennedy and three for Kefauver, and now we're going to change it to five votes for Kennedy and, and I'm trying to keep track of this. And I suddenly look up, and I realize that I have four delegations looking over my shoulder as to what the tally is because there's nobody, no other way to know it. I mean, the only person that knows it is presumably the secretary of the convention, Thurmond and I think somebody from Massachusetts and somebody else in the Maine delegation. And I said, "There's an awful lot depending upon me." I said, "Look, I'm not sure this is right, don't count on this being the right number." Well, the long and short of it, it became a runaway for Kefauver although it did a lot for Kennedy clearly in terms of how well he did. And that was my (*unintelligible phrase*).

The other thing was, the chairman of the delegation was given a car with a chauffeur for his use, and it wasn't used very much. Maine chose not to use it, so I got to use it, so I had this great chauffeur-driven car to drive around Chicago as a college kid. It was a very interesting experience. Anyhow, we came back to Maine, and that was that. And then I got in-, then I was very involved in the Stevenson and Muskie campaigns in '56, and I remember very clearly Adam Walsh, who was the football coach at Bowdoin at the time, later became U.S. Marshall for Maine, was also a member of the legislature, I think actually became minority leader of the legislature at one time, not being very many Democrats. And he was quite a famous man; he had been the captain of the famous Notre Dame four horsemen team.

GB: Heard the name come up before. Another Bowdoin student mentioned him.

GW: And I drove his car on Election Day; I was a really crappy driver at that time because I had never had a car of my own, but I did have a license. And I remember driving his car with his legislative plates around Brunswick picking people up to take them to vote, so I was really in the absolute grass roots Democratic politics at that point in Maine even though I was too young to vote myself. Not too young to drive, but I was too young to vote at that point. And so that was kind of a big experience. I was very impressed by Muskie, obviously I had ran into Muskie a reasonable amount. I was actually impressed by Don and Frank Coffin as well as being, you know, really above average people in political life in that they were, you know, honest and smart, both of which impressed me.

Muskie was very unusual by today's standards of politicians at that time. He was very straightforward, you know, he would say things in an absolutely unvarnished way which I was simply amazed by. They were obviously true things that he said, simple true statements that politicians don't make. And I was very impressed with him, and obviously the people of Maine were very impressed with him because it got him reelected in '56 when obviously Stevenson was not going to carry Maine and did not. You know, Muskie was already beginning to have an effect on Maine, but it wasn't making people vote for the Democratic candidate for president. It was having more effect inside the state. So I was in, you know, that was that phase. So that's a long answer to the question of how, whether I did anything at Bowdoin that got me involved in politics when the answer is clearly yes and very involved. And so I'm always fond of saying on the strength of that that I was a member of the Maine Democratic Party before, you know, Joe Brennan or George Mitchell.

GB: That's great, that's great. All right -

GW: And then the only other, then in '58, which was my senior year in college at which point you're very interested in yourself, I was again involved, though, with Clem Voss I'm sure, in, you know, state, right up to the state convention and so on. But of course when I graduated in June, well, not of course, but in fact when I graduated in June, I left Maine at that time, and so I was, that ended my direct involvement. And the next time I was involved was when I arrived in Washington in '63, I guess, probably, or late '62, and I then reconnected with the Muskie office. He was then a U.S. senator by that time. I reconnected with the Muskie people at that time.

GB: Let me ask you before we get to that, you talked before a little bit about the pre convention platform meetings. How exactly would those function, what would, how often did you meet and what would be a typical meeting?

GW: My guess is, my firm recollection is we possibly only met once before the convention. Maybe we met twice but certainly no more than twice. And the people there were broken down into committees to deal with different subject areas at the convention, and they were to develop what they wanted to see in the state platform. This is how the state platform was developed. I mean, they were trying to make a point which was a good one that the platform was being developed in an open Democratic way rather than by, you know, some party leader sits there and says, this is the platform. So anybody who really wanted to come and participate who was a Democrat could do so, and they'd show up, and they'd be broken into committees, and then I remember very clearly sitting around in committee kind of debating issues; what are we going to say about this, what are we going to say about that, and then that was written up. And that was my job in the agriculture committee was to write up what the committee's position was. That would then go back, I think we had a full meeting of everybody who showed up later in the day, and the committees would come back and report on what they did, and then that got turned by the staff into the document that went to the convention for being adopted as the platform.

GB: I see, and how many people actually did come to this meeting ?

GW: My guess is, and you know, I'm looking back, and your memory is always terrible on these things however good you think it is, but my guess is there were a hundred, a hundred and twenty five people maybe, something like that.

GB: And you got a sense that, you know, the regular folk, the civilians who just kind of came out of nowhere really could make a dent on the state platform?

GW: Well, the Democratic party was nothing but civilians, I mean there were so few elected officials in the Democratic party that they couldn't dominate the, I mean they really needed the involvement of average people, and so I think, yeah, I think it really worked as a process. It was a good idea to build the party that way.

GB: Now, out at the national convention in Chicago, I imagine that would be a fairly hectic, busy experience. How many hours a day would you say you put in actually working during the

course of the convention?

GW: Oh, I think probably, you know, I was asked to check in with Dubord say at nine in the morning, something like that, and I then was busy until, you know, midnight. And then I would go to my aunt and uncle's house, and I, they had a key, I barely saw them. I saw my, my uncle would take me for breakfast in the morning I remember before I went off, and I'd go to sleep, and I'd get up and go back and start again.

GB: So it was virtually nonstop activity.

GW: Oh yeah, and I loved it, let me tell you it was great.

GB: Could you tell me a little bit about some of the people who went out there with you? You mentioned Louis Jalbert?

GW: Yeah, oh I knew him, I knew him then and then I got to know him again later when, when, you know, when I came back to Maine and got involved in public affairs again. He was there, and he was clearly, you know, a guy who had a lot of clout, a lot of influence. You know, there were a few areas where the Democrats were discernibly counted and Lewiston was clearly one of them, and Portland, at least parts of Portland were, and Biddeford and a little bit in Brunswick. I think principally where there were Franco-American populations is where the Democratic party tended to actually win elections, you know, aside from Muskie. So you had, and probably from the St. John Valley although I was not really aware of the St. John Valley at that time, probably Waterville a little bit. But mostly, you know, Lewiston everybody knew, and he was there, and he was a big power. I don't recall, there were people, there were labor union people, I don't remember who they were. Probably if you told me the name or somebody told me the name I might remember them.

GB: Big labor union people?

GW: Yeah.

GB: Perhaps Ben Dorsky?

GW: Well, Ben Dorsky was a Republican.

GB: Oh, of course, of course, yeah. I knew that.

GW: Clearly not him.

GB: It's so easy to forget that this labor leader would be a Republican.

GW: No, but there were, I remember there were labor people probably, Lucia Cormier who later ran, I'm sure was part of the delegation. Boy, it's a long time ago, but I'm sure that, you know, I know that Don Nicoll is key in this and I'm sure Don remembers who all those people were. I don't.

GB: Do you recall, and this might be a pretty tough -

GW: I remember May Craig, the only thing I remember was May Craig was not a member of the delegation, was trying to get into the delegation. It was my job, when the delegation had meetings, they had meetings of the delegation, my job was to tell her she couldn't get in. And she was, I was just some little, she was a famous Maine person and I'm just some little college kid from away, and I remember I had to tell her one time she couldn't get in to the meeting, and she was really furious with me.

GB: And who did she work for?

GW: I guess she worked for the Portland paper.

GB: Okay. Now this may be a tough question, but do you recall what the platform was? Do you recall any of the particular planks at all?

GW: Not a bit.

GB: No, all right. All right, so let's get back to where we had left off with, when did you mention you reconnected with the Muskie camp?

GW: After college I studied in Europe for a year, then I came back to Columbia University in New York. And then I taught, yeah, I came back to Columbia, right, I went in the Army, and then I taught in New Jersey. And then I got a job in Washington with the European Common Market. When I studied in Europe, I studied at a place called the College of Europe which was then a small place, now quite a bit larger. I was in the ninth class, and they now have had fifty classes of, which is a one year program related to European unification, now related to European union. And so I got to know people and got very involved, and I was really into that. So when I came back, ultimately I ended up with a job in the Washington office, which I guess must have been in '63, and lived in Washington. And I think John Donovan was either still there or maybe had just moved on, but if he wasn't, Don was there, one of the two of them, I can't remember who was in Muskie's office at that time.

And I went and made contact, and I even did a little low level volunteer work on something, I don't know, probably in connection with, let's see, he'd been elected in '58 to the senate, so he would have been running again in '64, so it probably was in connection with his reelection campaign that I worked on drafting stuff or whatever in the office in Washington. Not, no big deal, and I wasn't a big factor. I was just a guy around who helped out. And that was it, and then nothing happened again, although, you know, I remained in touch, and I knew, I knew these people. John Donovan, of course, came to Bowdoin to teach after having been in the labor department and Don stayed with Muskie all the way through until I came back again to Washington, well, actually in connection with my coming back again to Washington.

The next thing that sort of happened, I worked for the European Common Market until '66 and I worked for the *Washington Post*, nothing political, European stuff, for a couple of years. Then I

came back and worked very briefly for the *Wall Street Journal* and then went to work for a foundation in New York. And while I was there, I was back living in Nassau County again and commuting into New York. While I was there, I was approached somehow, and I don't remember exactly how, to determine if I would be interested in working on foreign policy matters, being a foreign policy staff to Senator Javits of New York, and I even met with Javits about the possibility of doing that. And I called a friend of mine in Washington to talk about the possibility of doing that, a guy by the name of Ted van Dyke, who, Ted I had met, he was working in the European Community office when I went to work there. In fact there, I became kind of the third guy in the office, the first guy was a guy by the name of Leonard Tennyson, who had gone to Bowdoin actually, and then Ted van Dyke, and I don't know how Ted had gotten there, but he was there, and I and then some other people.

And Ted had, when Kennedy was assassinated, or after Kennedy was assassinated Ted wrote a letter to Hubert Humphrey, who he'd never met in his life, saying this is what I think you ought to do to become president of the United States. This was a strategy, like a ten, twelve page letter. And he then became a confidante of Humphrey and eventually went to work for Humphrey as one of Humphrey's chief staff guys and had been involved in the '68 Humphrey effort. And anyhow, this was, or be-, but in, this was, must have been in '69, '70 I called Ted up, and I said, "What do you think about my taking this job with Javits?" And he said, "Well, Javits is a good guy and does lots of useful things but, you know, unless you want to end your political career, I wouldn't do it because you're a Democrat, and Democrats will never trust you again if you work for Javits even though he's a very liberal Republican." So he said, "But if you really want to come to Washington, I think I can probably find something interesting for you to do if you want to work for a senator." So I said, by that time, "Yeah, I do." Javits thing got me interested, so I won't go with Javits. I think that's very good advice, but if you can find me something, please do. At which point I said, "Gee, I know people in Washington myself. I know Don Nicoll. I know Ed Muskie." So I contacted them, and I said, "I'm interested, I'm looking into the possibility of moving to Washington and working there. Do you know of anything that I might do in the Muskie office?" And that began, so it must have been '69, that began a multi-month negotiation with them about going to work, which must, about like eight months, I mean a long period of time in which, and the job was ghostwriting one or more books for Muskie. He was obviously going to run for president. He had run for vice president; he was obviously going to make a run for president and, you know, to prove that he had a breadth of knowledge about a lot of things. He wanted to write one, he got a publisher's contract for one or more books, and, you know, I would ghostwrite it for him. I had written by that time nothing popular that had been published, but I had a couple of, my dissertation had been published and another book about the European Common Market had been published, and I'd written for the *Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*, so they knew I knew how to write. They probably saw my stuff in the *Post* actually, so, you know, I know that guy.

So anyhow, they were interested in it, but the thing never progressed, I mean it just dragged on very slowly. So Ted, well, then this must have been early '70 that this happened, Ted said George McGovern's looking for a press secretary I guess, and I had done that kind of work for the European Common Market in Brussels. I actually ended up working in Brussels, and, "So do you want to talk to him?" So I said, "Sure, absolutely." And he set up a meeting with me and McGovern in Washington, and I came down to Washington, and I met with McGovern, and he

took me to lunch in the senate dining room and introduced me to a couple of key members of his staff from South Dakota. And we talked about it, and he said, this was like a Tuesday or a Monday, he said, "I'll call you by the end of the week." So while I was there I went over to see Don Nicoll, and I said, "Gee, you know," because I clearly would have preferred to work for Muskie given past attachments and so on. I said, "You know, what gives? Nothing's moving here." He says, "Well, you know, we're working on it, we're working on it," same stuff I have heard. And I said, "Well, you know, I, please let me know, I'm really very anxious, I'm considering other opportunities," and so on. "Yeah, yeah, yeah, we will be in touch." Came home, and I said to my wife, "I'm going to take the first offer I get out of these two." Saturday, the end of the week, George McGovern called and said, "You want to be our press secretary?" I said, "Yes, I do." And he said, "Well, be down here such and such a day," a Monday probably no more than two weeks later, something like that, in my office.

GB: Pause for one moment there -

End of Side A
Side B

GB: Please continue.

GW: Okay, so, I told him, I called Ted up right away, said, "Thank you very much; I got the job." And Ted was not associated with McGovern at that time, he was just an independent consultant, and he ran a kind of dinner discussion group among key Democratic offices looking forward to the '72 election and so on. He said, "Well, I'm having one of my dinners next Wednesday; why don't you come down and represent McGovern at the dinner." This was very early, McGovern didn't have, McGovern when I talked to him made it clear he was going to run for president, you know. I asked him, and he said that, that was part of my discussion with him. But Gary Hart wasn't working for him yet, I mean there was virtually no staff yet. And so I think I called McGovern and said was that okay, and he said, "That's fine, go ahead, I don't mind, probably a good thing to do." I wasn't yet working for him, I wasn't on the payroll yet but, you know, I was committed and that was that.

So I went down to Washington on a Wednesday afternoon for this Wednesday evening dinner, and it was in a hotel or something, a small, I mean there were maybe ten people at dinner. The guy representing Muskie was Don Nicoll, and he didn't know I'd gone to work for McGovern, and he was obviously not happy. And, you know, and I said, "Hey look, you know, had to move. Took me, you know, eight months is a long time to have this, and I had actually gotten a better job with McGovern, but that wouldn't have happened, mattered." If he had called me up, you know, and said, "Come on down, the senator wants to see you, we really want to sign you up to do whatever," I had a very strong connection with Maine and with Muskie and so, and I liked Muskie a lot. I would have done it, no question. But if I'm not, am not sure it's ever going to happen, then I'd better take something, or I th-, I liked McGovern right away. He was obviously a very decent guy, a very open guy so I didn't feel there'd be like any tension with him, and I'd be working directly with him, and I liked the people from South Dakota I had met. And one of them turned out to be somebody who was very demanding, and apparently she had liked me right away which was a very unusual event, so all that, you know, worked pretty well, and so I took it,

and I did that job.

And then off we went on what was, what turned out to be a very unhappy relationship between Muskie and McGovern, which I was obviously on the McGovern side. I did take a look at The Long Shot this morning just to see, I haven't looked at it recently, just to see how much about Muskie there was in it, and there was really actually quite a bit about Muskie, and I can't really improve on my recollections of what's in the book because those were fresh recollections at the time, and, you know, a certain amount of detail that I don't otherwise recall, so I won't repeat in a way what's in the book. But I recall that McGovern, who nobody really took too seriously, it's important to recall that in January of 1972 he was getting about three percent in the polls, and Muskie was getting multiples of three percent by that time.

In 1971 Muskie had been selected by the Democrats to respond to a speech by Nixon, who was obviously going to be running again, so it was potentially the two candidates of the two parties, and McGovern was really depressed, to say the least, that Muskie had gotten this shot because I mean it looked like you're just giving him the nomination, what's the point for the rest of us in doing this. And, I'll never forget that, I mean, you know, we thought that was a very major event for Muskie, to have that opportunity, and we also thought he didn't do it very well which was interesting, that he hadn't taken the maximum advantage of the opportunity. That may or may not be true with hindsight. It may not have really mattered how you did it, just that you did it, but at least we took some comfort that we thought there was the opportunity. I would say without repeating what's in the book because clearly I can't do that as well as the book does it, but I would say that my, and I would say probably our impression, and I would also note from about the summer of '71 through the election, which is November '72, the number of days I was without, was not with McGovern was probably fewer than ten in that whole period. I was what was called his body man; I was with him all the time. I was kind of his office on the road. As a result I knew what he was thinking about everything all the time. I didn't always agree with him, but that was part of what I was useful for because I was not a yes man so that I would say whatever I thought. But it was certainly my opinion, and I think it was McGovern's opinion, that what Muskie's problem was was he really didn't like running for president. He liked the idea of being the nominee, he wanted to be the nominee, and he probably was somewhat resentful that the rest of us out there in the field were making him work for it. You know, since he had been the vice presidential candidate in '68, he should have kind of moved up in '72, and here was everybody else running against him, you know, Scoop Jackson and George McGovern and other people, and he probably felt, gee, this is, should come to me. But he didn't enjoy campaigning, he clearly didn't, didn't do it.

I remember very clearly, and I know this I did mention in the book because it made such a strong impression on me, this was after New Hampshire. But we were in Wisconsin, and I remember we were sitting out in a car waiting to go into some factory, to go through and shake hands, and we sat in the car and waited because Muskie was there in the factory, going through and shaking hands. And, you know, you can't have two presidential candidates. I don't know why you can't, but you can't. So we had to wait for him to leave before we could go in. Maybe the factory manager wanted it because he actually wanted some work done that day, something like that.

Anyhow, Muskie leaves, we didn't even see him but we were told, okay, you can come in now.

So we go in, and we start working the aisles, you know, McGovern would go along and shake hands, "Hi, how are you? I'm George McGovern," all that stuff. And I would be right next to him and people were saying, "Well, you seem to enjoy this a lot more than that other fellow." It was very clear that Muskie didn't like pressing the flesh and all of that kind of stuff, which McGovern absolutely loved. I mean, he really did enjoy campaigning, and Muskie didn't, and it was clear, you know, he just, and I think that was a large part of his problem in the early primary states, that he thought it was going to come to him more easily than it did, and, number one, number two he hated doing the dirty work that you had to do out there. They had a very top heavy campaign organization; we had a very hungry campaign organization. And he also wanted to be statesmanlike, which is great, I mean that's nice for a president. But we had the issue, which was the war, and what you can motivate people about- I mean this wasn't done to manipulate people; we all were very strongly anti-war people, and that was our issue. This was an anti-war campaign whatever else it was, and he didn't have that kind of focus that motivated people. He wanted to be kind of above it all and bring everybody together and so on. That's great, it's wonderful, I'm for it, it just wasn't going to work that time to get the nomination. He was against, he voted fine on issues relating to the Vietnam War, Muskie, and you could rely on him. I mean there was no question that his heart was on the right side, but as a campaigner he didn't want to push that too hard, he didn't want to alienate organized labor or whoever, the more conservative parts of the Democratic Party.

So I think that's really why, what happened in '72 as we went along between us and Muskie, that it wasn't I don't think in the long scope of the campaign his allegedly crying on the back of a truck in Manchester was of any real significance at all. I don't care whether he cried or not, the whole thing was incredibly silly. But I think that they just thought they had New Hampshire, and Maria Carrier was what made the difference, who was his campaign manager, and she predicted he would get more than fifty percent of the vote. And that's what hurt him.

GB: And he pulled, what, forty-six or so?

GW: I don't know, and we got thirty-nine percent, we were within a few percent of him and did much better than anybody thought and denied him the fifty percent. And it was one of those things where everybody thought we won in New Hampshire. Actually he got more votes, more delegates than we did, but everybody thought we won because we had so exceeded expectations, and he had fallen short of their announced, "I will get fifty percent." That was the problem, and that was related to this overconfidence: Muskie ought to be crowned as the nominee and not work for it. And I think there was, I don't think we had any ill feeling in the McGovern campaign toward Muskie, and I still liked Muskie; I probably wouldn't have stood for it actually. And so there wasn't a lot of anti-Muskie sentiment, but I think there was a lot of anti-McGovern sentiment in the Muskie campaign.

GB: Oh, really.

GW: Yeah, they thought McGovern was a real usurper and not worthy and not up to it and what all, and I did in glancing the book see where I discussed a meeting between McGovern and Muskie after the first kind of phase of primaries. We knew, we didn't win a primary until Wisconsin, and we beat Muskie head to head in Wisconsin, a state where Milwaukee is half

German and half Polish. Now, if you can beat Muskie in Wisconsin, you're doing pretty well. And of course Madison is all students, and that was our territory, the University of Wisconsin (*unintelligible phrase*) work for us.

GB: With your anti-war (*unintelligible word*).

GW: Yeah, the anti-war stuff. But you know, there's a lot of mill towns or working class towns in Wisconsin, big paper state, not dissimilar from Maine. And McGovern won that state cleanly, and we knew that we won at that vote, we knew he was going to get the nomination. That was only the first primary he won, and we knew we were going to get it at that point. And so did a lot of other people, I think, kind of knew that unless something drastic happened that we'd do it. And there was an effort, and I refer in the book to a meeting between McGovern and Muskie where McGovern thought he talked Muskie into pulling out of the race, and he didn't, and I think it was, as I said in the book, McGovern's fault really that he didn't because instead of saying, "Look, it's all over, I'm going to get the nomination. I'll show you the numbers which show I'm going to get the nomination. We could have a much stronger and unified party and a better chance if I can have your support," which is a kind of tough position. It was more, "Gee, I don't have a lot of problem with your positions on the issues. I can accommodate you." It came across weaker to Muskie, and apparently Muskie interpreted it as a lack of confidence on our part and stayed in the race.

And then, anyway, and he stayed in the race and it became clear there was a third thing going on in the election, which was Hubert Humphrey, who was not running really was running and really wanted to get in the race, and he thought if the two of us chopped each other up that he, the door would be open for him. And I think I say this in the book, I'm sure I do, it went so far as one time that Humphrey started putting money into the McGovern campaign as a way of making sure that Muskie didn't get too far ahead. And I remember one very clear story, and I'm sure it's in the book, I've told it a lot of times since then. When McGovern and I, by Illinois we got Secret Service protection, so then we had a limousine with somebody driving it. I remember McGovern, and I traveled with McGovern all the time. We were sitting in the back seat of the limousine somewhere, California I think, and somebody opened the door and put a satchel on the floor in front of us, and it was ten thousand dollars in cash as a contribution to the campaign, and it had come from Humphrey, or the Humphrey people. And, you know, we gave the ten thousand bucks back. McGovern ran a very honest campaign and unlike people at that time a campaign that left the Democratic Party with no debt. The Kennedy's left the party with debt and so on, we didn't, we paid our bills, stayed even, didn't spend more than we had, and didn't take ten thousand dollars of cash in suitcases either.

But that was aimed at Muskie. And so Humphrey, his old pal, former running mate, was actually trying to make sure that Muskie didn't do too well. Now, Muskie I don't think was involved with it, maybe he was, I have no way of knowing, but Muskie was, you know, involved in doing something to us. I'm not sure Muskie knew everything that happened in his campaign. He had a more professional management team running his campaign than we did, and they very well could have just been running it. But I don't mean to accuse him of anything; I have no knowledge of it.

Anyhow, it is clear to me that Muskie wanted the nomination, thought he still had a shot at it, thought that Humphrey going after McGovern, who had become the front runner, would mean things would fall into his lap. And Humphrey's tactic with McGovern, with whom he had been a very close friend; they're both from the upper Midwest, progressive Democrats, that sort of thing, farm Democrats, was to give Republicans all the ammunition about McGovern being a crazy guy for abortion, amnesty, that kind of stuff guy, and so that kept hurting McGovern and gave the Republicans eventually enough ammunition. And Muskie I think sat there on the sidelines waiting for this to fall into his hands so that by the time we got to the convention in Miami I think Muskie believed he could still get the nomination. There was a so called ABM, "Anybody but McGovern" movement, which his people were clearly involved in. And we then in that convention had to go to considerable lengths to ensure we got the nomination. Credentials committee fights, platform committee fights, which turned the convention into a very unsatisfactory media event for McGovern, which made his campaign even more difficult. So I think by the end of that there were hard feelings toward Muskie and Humphrey both, and we had a sense that we had captured the Democratic Party nationally, clearly it was ours, it was no longer their party, but they weren't in it either, they were on the sidelines, they were out. And in fact, in the run of the campaign after that, from then until November, Humphrey and Muskie were no help at all to the campaign.

GB: Did they ever officially endorse McGovern?

GW: Oh, I'm sure they did but in a very half-hearted way, tepid way. And I felt after that that, I knew after that, you know, that Muskie didn't get the nomination, McGovern got the nomination, I hadn't worked for Muskie, I worked for McGovern- that wasn't the difference to be sure- but that I had, you know, I wasn't liked by Muskie at the end of the day, I had been a traitor although nobody said that. I don't know the feelings were that strong.

So, I then came back to Maine to live after the campaign because I still had this very strong attachment to Maine, I had a couple of young kids, I didn't have a regular job, so I could decide where I wanted to live. And I did, and so that inevitably, and Muskie was still a senator, and that inevitably meant that, you know, I was, and I was active in the Democratic Party at that point. Immediately I started, in the 1974 Democratic state convention I was a delegate from my town so that I was really right back in politics. My wife had been appointed immediately. When we came back in '73, there was, Curtis was the governor, and I had known Curtis because I had known him through the campaign. But that was irrelevant, but I knew him and liked him, thought very highly of Curtis, and Curtis was criticized in the newspaper for not appointing any women to high positions in state government. And I knew that he consolidated the departments of state government, and a new, he reorganized state government, Curtis. And he had created a new department, and he was looking for, actually he was looking for a banking superintendent, which was within the department, my wife had worked for the federal reserve in, both in New York and Washington.

And he was looking for somebody to be banking superintendent, and I said, "Write him a letter." There was an article in the newspaper saying, "Why don't you appoint people [women] to office?" I said, "Why don't you write him a letter, tell him you'd be interested in being appointed to office?" So she did, and he said, "Come on up, I'd like to talk to you about being

banking superintendent." So she did, and in fact he appointed her to a higher position. The banking superintendent was in the department, brand new department called the department of business regulations, which is now professional and financial regulations, and she became the first commissioner of the department, and she's only the second woman in the history of the state to hold a governor, department head position, the first one having been somebody in the thirties when there was a Democratic governor because of the New Deal sweep, you know, the turnover. A man by the name of Brann from Lewiston -

GB: Louis Brann.

GW: Yeah, had been elected governor. He appointed a woman, I believe, as commissioner of labor just as Roosevelt had appointed a woman as secretary of labor. So she was the first woman commissioner, and Roberta was the second woman commissioner, which is a long gap between the two, I mean, the thirties and the seventies. So she, you know, we were really back, you know, and involved and visibly involved in politics, and Muskie, I'm sure, was aware of that. And then of course by the time Brennan appointed me to be in state government, which was in '79, Muskie was still senator at that time, I think, or not yet become secretary of state. You know, I then would come into contact with him or his office because I was very visibly involved with state Democratic politics at that point. So, I, that's, I had worked for Mitchell, and I was one of the senior people in the Mitchell '74 campaign for governor when Longley won, and so I had gotten pretty visible pretty fast. I mean, I came back, I'd been in national politics, you know, Maine media covered me and so on so that I didn't have any trouble getting back at the higher levels of the Democratic Party in the state. And Muskie never opposed that as far as I could see. I didn't have much to do with him, but, you know, we were in the same place at the same time and said, "Hello." And he was a little frosty to begin with, but it kind of improved as time went by. I don't think he ever was a great friend of mine but, and I don't claim that I knew him, you know, as well as a lot of other people did personally. But you know, we came in contact with one another and he, and things kind of thawed over time.

GB: Now, after working for Mitchell I understand you lobbied Muskie to have him appointed as a judge, as a federal district judge?

GW: Yeah, when Muskie, when, what was that, that was like in the mid seventies, I think, when he was appointed to the court, or mid, late seventies, '77, '76, something like that. And Mitchell called me up and asked me if I would take on the job of really kind of working on Muskie to get him appointed. I'm sure he called lots of people, I mean, I don't think there was anything unique about me but, you know. And I liked George. I'd worked for George, when I was still in Washington after the McGovern campaign George ran for Democratic national chairman, and a lot of us ex-McGovern people preferred him to Bob Strauss, who was running against him. And so we went to the Democratic national committee meeting, worked the halls, kind of really tried to get votes for George. I don't even think he asked us to do that, but he knew we were there doing it. I mean, I talked to him at the meeting, and he just missed, he lost by like three and a half votes or something to be Democratic national chairman. So, you know, I had, by that he knew I was a supporter and friend of his and so on, and he kind of knew Roberta somehow along the way, and he's a great fan of hers.

And so when he, so when he ran for governor, it was normal that I would support him doing that. And then so I, you know, had gotten into his inner circle or somewhat close to his inner circle at least, and so he asked me to lobby Muskie. And I did lobby Muskie and finally, it must have been at the Democratic, it was at some Democratic state convention, so it must have been '78, I guess, I remember Muskie turning around to me and saying, you know, "Enough! Get off my back," you know, "I got the point." I said, well all right, I did my job, I must have gotten through to him okay. But that, but I thought he ought to appoint George. It was probably self evident that he would appoint George since, of their relationship, but somehow Mitchell thought it was useful for me to bother Muskie about it. Which I did, and then he was appointed.

And then really the last involvement I had was, I was very close to Brennan, and I really was in his inner circle and was in state government at the time when Muskie was appointed secretary of state. And there is a, there is a belief that Muskie told Mitchell to, told Brennan when he met with Brennan in Brunswick, I guess, that he ought to, you know, that he wanted him to appoint Mitchell and that that was put that way. And I'm quite confident that that's not true because, a) because Brennan doesn't work that way. You don't tell Brennan, I mean he's, he is in some respects, he's a good Democrat and so on, but he isn't in the sense that he's his own party. And the other reason is, I know, because he called me in to talk with him about who he ought to appoint, and we kicked around names, and Mitchell's name didn't even come up initially because I knew that they didn't get along that well as a result of the '74 campaign where Brennan had run in the primary. Mitchell won and then lost to Longley, and Mitchell lost to Longley because Mitchell was not a good candidate in '74. And so we talked about a number of candidates. I even came up with a scenario of how he could himself be the senator, you know, because my loyalty was to Brennan at that point.

Then we talked about Mitchell; he raised Mitchell, I didn't, and he raised Mitchell, and I said, "Hey, as you know, as you would imagine Mitchell would be my first choice. I didn't know you'd consider him. But, you know, of all these people we talked about I put him at the head of the list because, because I think very highly of him, I think he's an excellent choice if you're willing to do it." I didn't know you'd be willing to do it. But, I don't think it was because of me, but I'm probably one of the people who said very favorable things about Mitchell and that was that. And that was kind of the end of the Muskie story, that was kind of how that all ended because then Muskie was Secretary of State. I saw him once when he came to Maine as secretary of state and gave a speech in Portland, and I think that was probably the last time I saw him.

GB: I see, I see. Now, so you've worked fairly closely with, well, I guess the three major figures in the Democratic Party would be George McGovern, Ed Muskie and George Mitchell.

GW: I think that's right.

GB: Could you compare and contrast the three of them personally or politically, your impressions of them?

GW: I think they're, I, it goes without saying, I mean, if I worked for them, I think highly of all of them, and I do. I mean, I clearly, I think they were all intellectually sound. They weren't

just politicians; there was something going on between their ears that was different. I think Muskie and McGovern had something in common in that they were people who made a Democratic party, or didn't make it, I mean, Muskie had a lot of help from Frank Coffin and others in making the Democratic party in Maine, but they were the front guy for the emergence of a Democratic party in a Republican state, which means you had to be slightly nutty or courageous or something, you know, willing to stick your neck out for something that might not do you a whole lot of good personally. And they both did that. I mean South Dakota was a very Republican state, and McGovern got elected to congress initially and then to the senate, you know, in a state which was not only Republican but, not like Maine. Maine was Republican but not sort of hard right Republican; South Dakota was. So I think that was a similarity between them.

I think personalities were all significantly different one from another. Muskie likes, liked I think, being called Lincolnesque. I mean, that really appealed to him, kind of statesman, heavy, you know, that kind of thing. McGovern was much more maybe a real populist. Populism wasn't a big thing in Maine anyhow, it was more a Midwest kind of thing, and he was a real populist. And I think more than either of the other two had an easy touch with average people. I think that Mitchell acquired it, and that was the difference between '74 and then when he ran after having been appointed. He learned that, I mean that, I think of the three of them Mitchell's the smartest, I mean, he's got just more brains. I think he's a very smart, very able guy. I think that probably, like mediating in, or whatever it is in Northern Ireland, I don't think the other two could have done it.

GB: Really?

GW: I mean I think only he has that kind of skill. I'm not saying the other two weren't. I mean, McGovern was a Ph.D. in history from Northwestern, not a jerk. Muskie is obviously Secretary of State, which he conducted extremely well, very good senator, innovative legislation, you know. None of these guys are slouches. I just think in natural brain power probably Mitchell is smarter. Mitchell and Muskie are more careful, were, are, I mean whatever tense is the correct tense, more careful than McGovern, McGovern tends to be less careful. McGovern was more of a loner, I imagine, than either of them. They're more organization people, depend on staff more than McGovern did I would say. McGovern depended on staff but not to the same degree, I think, he was much more willing to do something. I start the book with the story of the speech he gave for the McGovern-Hatfield Amendment, which he wrote himself and was a very, what is a great speech, a very strong anti-war speech delivered on the floor of the senate. Muskie wouldn't have done that because his staff wouldn't have allowed him to do that. We weren't in a position to allow him or not to allow him, we didn't draft the speech, he wrote the speech. We found out what it said when he showed it to us. That's different.

I think McGovern is probably the best writer of the three. McGovern can really sit down and write stuff himself. Well, I value that highly, I think that's a real skill. McGovern I think is a better campaigner than Muskie was, better than Ted Kennedy too. We had Ted Kennedy campaigning with us, and there was no question that McGovern really handled himself. We had hecklers; we had a really tough time out there. Muskie-Humphrey, you saw how Muskie handled the heckler, the famous, very well, good, in control, confidence, you don't scare me.

McGovern did that a lot and handled it well, was able to calm down very excited people. He was very good at that. I don't think Mitchell ever had that kind of challenge. I don't know how he would have done with it. I think McGovern was nearest to the natural campaigner of the three of them. Mitchell had to learn it and did, very well. I don't think Muskie ever learned it. I think the idea of Ed Muskie was more important than the persona of Ed Muskie.

But he, when he first ran in Maine, I saw the real change in Muskie during his first term in the senate where he became kind of a little bit detached from it. When he first ran in Maine he was very, his expression was so direct that it amounted to good campaigning, when he ran the first times, say, twice for, leaving aside his house seat and so on. But when he ran for governor twice and then for senator the first time; it was a different kind of campaigning then. I mean, he might have had it and lost it, Mitchell might have had it and gotten it, McGovern I think always had it. I don't know what else to say, I think politically on the issues, at the end of the day pretty close, pretty close on the issues.

GB: That's fascinating, that's great. Now, I just realized we should just for a ready reference for any researchers, the name of your book that you've made several references to, it was The Long Shot?

GW: The Long Shot: George McGovern Runs for President.

GB: George McGovern Runs for President. And I know for a fact that that's available at the Bowdoin College Library because that's where we got it from on a -

GW: You don't have one in the Muskie collection?

GB: We don't have one in the Muskie collection.

GW: I'll get you one; I didn't know whether you did, so I brought one along.

GB: Well thank you, thank you very much, that's excellent. Now, to complete our time line here, what has been your career path since the seventies?

GW: Well, I was with Brennan in his first term in state government, I was commissioner of business regulation, I was state energy director, and I was the first public advocate. And I think, and that was at that time a so-called cabinet level position. With the Longley, with what Longley did we had created as a result the notion of a cabinet in state government instead of just department heads because we arrived at a point where the governor could remove his department heads at will, which is what Longley wanted, didn't get, but was enacted for the next guy. So Brennan, the first Brennan administration was the first one you could call an administration, and he could remove people. So I was in the first Brennan administration. We now have administrations in Maine, thanks to Longley, and I think I'm the only person who's ever held three cabinet level department head levels in a single term of a governor in this state, at least in modern Maine political history. I left, and I started this business.

I had actually started this business in 1974; I started this as a consulting business when I came to

Maine and did it with other things I was doing. I published a newsletter called *Political Intelligence* for about four years and sold it in '78, and then I was in state government for four years, then I came back to the firm and have been doing this and I now have a law book publishing company as well. And I was, I remained active politically even for a while after that, and I've become, I was active really through the '92 presidential campaign.

I knew Bill Clinton from the McGovern campaign where he had run Texas for the campaign. So I knew him, and I guess I had met Hillary, but I don't have a clear recollection of that, but I knew Bill, and so I worked in his campaign in '92 and was kind of unhappy with what happened immediately after the campaign. I contributed not huge sums of money but a decent amount of money, helped furnish the office in Maine for them, and I had a hell of a hard time getting invited to the inauguration. And I said to myself, I did in the end, but I said to myself, "All they want's my money; they don't want my talent, so I think I'll retire from political involvement." And then the only other thing I did, I was, which is not in partisan politics, I was a selectman in my town for three years, which is definitely politics but of a different kind.

GB: All right, so I'm done with my questions so do you have any final remarks you'd like to make, anything you'd like to add or emphasize?

GW: No, I know this all is, I can't think of anything in particular. I know this is all about Muskie, this is all in connection with the Muskie archives. I think I've made it clear that I greatly admired him. I can't say that I should be counted among those who had a very close relationship with him; I had an occasional relationship with him, which I think was as much the way he wanted it as the way I wanted it. And I think had he been president, he would have been a very good president. I think he would have surrounded himself with very good people. I think it's a shame in a way that he didn't get the opportunity to be president, but I think from my perspective that was mostly his own doing, not anybody else who did it to him. You know, and I'm proud to say that I knew him.

GB: Great, well thank you very much.

End of Interview