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Interview with Hoddy Hildreth by Mike Hastings

Horace 'Hoddy' A. Hildreth, Jr.

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George J. Mitchell Oral History Project

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Horace A. “Hoddy” Hildreth, Jr.
(Interviewer: *Michael Hastings*)

GHOM# 079
April 3, 2009

Michael Hastings: The following is a recorded interview of the Senator George J. Mitchell Oral History Project, an activity of Bowdoin College. I’m Michael Hastings, the interviewer. The interviewee is Horace Hildreth. The interview is taking place on [121] Free Street in downtown Portland at the offices of Diversified Communications.

Horace Hildreth: That’s 121 Free Street.

MH: Excuse me, 121 Free Street. The date is, as I say, it’s April 3, 2009. I’d like to begin, if you could start by stating your full name and spelling your surname?

HH: Okay. It’s Horace A. Hildreth, Jr., and my surname is H-I-L-D-R-E-T-H.

MH: Could I have your date of birth and your place of birth?

HH: 12/17/31, Cambridge, Mass.

MH: And could you give me your father’s full name and your mother’s full name?

HH: Okay. My father was Horace A. Hildreth, and my mother was Katherine Cable Wing Hildreth.

MH: Can you tell me first about them. What was your, I do know that your father was one of our governors, but I’d like to know more about him.

HH: Well yes, he served two terms back in the ‘40s, I think it was, oh, was it ‘42 to ‘46, or ‘44 to-, yes, ‘42 to ‘46 I believe. And back in those days the governor’s term was only two years, which is sort of unusual. I don’t think there’s any state in the union that has only a two-year term for governor. But anyway, he was born and raised in Gardiner, went to Bowdoin College, Harvard Law School, practiced law in Boston for a few years and came back to Maine in 1937 I think, and was practicing law in the firm which is now Pierce Atwood, and he was always interested in politics. And I think it was in, very shortly after he got here he ran for the state Senate and got elected to the state Senate and served as president of the state Senate, and then ran for governor and was elected and then re-elected. And then he ran for the United States Senate in, and was defeated in the primaries by Margaret Chase Smith.

And my mother came from, her family came from the Midwest, from Nebraska, and her father, my grandfather on that side, was a banker in Boston, and he was president of the First National Bank of Boston. And she was a graduate of Vassar, and met and married my father while he was in Boston, and moved to Maine and always thought of herself as a Maine person after that.

MH: You said that your father graduated from Bowdoin. Was he the first person in your family to go to Bowdoin?

HH: No, his father also went to Bowdoin, Guy Hildreth. He was a, I think, county attorney in Kennebec County, he was a lawyer obviously, and I think he was the first in the Hildreth family that I'm aware of that went to Bowdoin.

MH: Did he also go to Harvard Law School or did he read for the law?

HH: I don't know where he went. I think he read the law.

MH: Really. What was his year again, do you remember, Guy Hildreth's?

HH: Guy Hildreth, goodness, he died when my father was just a very young child, so I've forgotten.

MH: Interesting. Now your father, after the governorship, if I recall correctly, he was an ambassador?

HH: Yes. Well first he, after recovering from his political defeat, he became president of Bucknell University and served as president of Bucknell for four years, during which time he got to know Milton Eisenhower very well, who was the president of the University of Pennsylvania at that time. And when Dwight Eisenhower was elected president, Milton Eisenhower recommended my father to the president as somebody who would be a good political Foreign Service appointee. And my father was a supporter of Taft rather than Eisenhower, and when he was tapped by Eisenhower to become ambassador to Pakistan he said, "Well, what are you trying to do, punish the recalcitrant or reward the faithful?" Anyway, he and my mother spent four years at Bucknell and then four years as ambassador of Pakistan.

MH: Okay, now, let me, where do you fit in with all this? Now, you spent time as a child in the Blaine House, is that correct?

HH: Yes I did. I was, oh, I was in grade school. I think I was in the seventh or eighth grade or something like that, and yes, I can remember living in the Blaine House. I can remember being up in the cupola that overlooks State Street and shooting at the buses with my BB gun as they stopped across the street. It was a lot of fun being there.

MH: Do you have siblings?

HH: I have three sisters.

MH: Three sisters, younger or older?

HH: One older, two younger.

MH: So there was a, they were all there in the Blaine House?

HH: Yes, yes, we all were living there.

MH: And were you, did you also go to Pakistan?

HH: Yes. I took my last semester of college at Forman Christian College in Lahore, and it was great because the classes were all taught in English, which was a second language to most of the students. Practically all of the students were Pakistani, there were a couple of Americans and one Brit and I think one Swiss kid. So actually my last semester at college was very easy, I got all A's but yes, that was a great experience.

MH: I want to cycle back a little bit to the, do you remember, besides the BB gun incident, do you remember much about living in Augusta when your father was governor?

HH: Oh yes. I remember it was during the war, and I remember we used to have, they were always having to put on lunches and they were almost invariably some terrible fish dish, that I can recall. I've since relearned to like fish and very much, but I remember in those days it was not, you know, there was a rationing going on and that kind of stuff and, I don't know, it was – what was the question again?

MH: Well, really about living in the Blaine House while your dad was governor.

HH: Well, it was a lot of fun. I had a paper route in Augusta, and my sisters and I had pretty much of a free run of the State House.

MH: You really weren't that far away from your regular home?

HH: No, we grew up in Cumberland.

MH: Right. Okay, oh, you did. I thought you were from Gardiner.

HH: Well, he used to live in Gardiner.

MH: He started up there.

HH: When he moved back to Maine he moved to Cumberland and was in the state Senate representing Cumberland.

MH: Did you go to school locally in high school or did you go away?

HH: I went to Cony and then, then I was sent off to Deerfield, graduated from there, and then went to Bowdoin.

MH: Frank -, what was the headmaster?

HH: Boyden.

MH: Frank Boyden, a Deerfield man.

HH: Right. Good for you.

MH: John Souter and Frank Boyden.

HH: Oh, John Souter was my, yes, I knew him well, he was my housemaster, or whatever you call them.

MH: And you decided to go to Bowdoin. Was that a, was that a choice you really made or was it always assumed that you would go, since your father and grandfather had gone?

HH: No, no, actually I sort of wanted to go to it, as my father had taken me to football games and commencement things and so forth, and so I really liked Bowdoin as a place. I did apply, I guess, I guess I have to confess that Bowdoin was the best college I could get into.

MH: And you say you spent at least your first three year there, your last year in Pakistan.

HH: Right.

MH: What was Bowdoin like when, the period that you were there and the Senator was there?

HH: Yes. Well, of course Bowdoin was a lot smaller then. I've forgotten what it is now but it, I think it was -

MH: It's about seventeen hundred now, I think.

HH: Well it was probably around six hundred then, maybe even less, and then of course it was all male and it was a lot simpler. I remember I liked to play hockey, and there was no indoor rink. The skating we did was in one of the hangars at the Brunswick Naval Air Base, which they used to flood and that was not terribly satisfactory, but it was a much smaller, simpler place in those days.

MH: So you played hockey?

HH: Just j.v., yeah, I wasn't a star athlete.

MH: Any particular professors stand out in your memory?

HH: Oh goodness, yes. Athern Daggett, Herbie Brown, Larry Hall. I majored in English. And, yes, I think those three were probably -

MH: What was, what was non-class like during those years?

HH: Well my favorite times were on Saturday afternoons when football games were going on, I'd go off hunting, bird hunting. And my father had always taken me hunting.

MH: Nearby or far away?

HH: Oh, pretty nearby. I mean, Merrymeeting Bay was a wonderful place for duck hunting, and there are lots of partridge and woodcock covers --

MH: Are you still a hunter, bird hunter?

HH: Oh, I sort of gave that up, but I was until fairly recently.

MH: Did you, at Bowdoin or even at Deerfield, was the fact that you were the son of a former governor did that, was that a helpful or more, made it difficult?

HH: Well, I think it made it difficult. By the time I was at Bowdoin it was sort of old hat, but I remember when I was at Deerfield it was very embarrassing, although there were a lot of other kids whose parents, one or the other their parents were a lot more prominent than a governor of Maine and so it wasn't all that bad. But yes, I was always quite embarrassed by that sort of thing.

MH: Now did you, did you ever meet George Mitchell at Bowdoin?

HH: Oh sure, I knew him well at Bowdoin. I mean we were in different fraternity houses, but no, I knew him, and we weren't close, he wasn't one of my closest friends, but we knew and liked one another.

MH: I suppose the college being so small you probably had a passing knowledge of virtually everybody there.

HH: I think that's true. There are very few people that one didn't know.

MH: Have you been able to keep in touch with other friends in that class?

HH: Some, but not very many. As a matter of fact, two or three of my closest friends died some years ago, and I would have kept up with them, but no, a few, but not very many. You know, people drift apart, have different interests.

MH: Right. After graduating from Bowdoin, did you come back for graduation, from Islamabad?

HH: Yes, I did, I did. Yes, I came back and I think I took my final exams at Bowdoin.

MH: Did you ever get a, did you ever have a, while in Pakistan did you ever have an inkling to go into the Foreign Service yourself? Did that life seem to interest you?

HH: That's strange, I never thought of it. No, I didn't have any interest in doing that. I suppose my interests were more parochial and I loved being there and I loved traveling around and I spent some time up in northern Pakistan, the American expedition was trying to climb K2, at that time it had never been climbed and --

MH: Did you get to meet the people?

HH: Oh yes. And I got up into their base camp and got to know a couple of them a little bit and spent some time up in that area.

MH: Now, Pakistan had only been independent, partition was what, five years earlier?

HH: Yes, you're right, I think partition was what '48, something like that?

MH: Forty-eight or '49.

HH: Yes, and I was there in '53.

MH: Were your father's duties largely ceremonial or was he -?

HH: Oh no, I don't think so, I think they were setting up Southeast-, SEATO, Southeast Asian Treaty Organization, which was I guess a forerunner of NATO, and yes, I remember Nehru was the prime minister of India and he visited a couple of times.

MH: Did you get to meet him?

HH: Oh yes.

MH: What about Ali Jinnah?

HH: No, he had died.

MH: Oh, he had died by then, okay. With all this happening now, you must reflect back on that -

HH: Oh, I do, and you know, it was a very different country then, of course it was, at that time East and West Pakistan were one country, separated by eighteen hundred miles of India which is the craziest thing, I don't know what the British had in mind when they did that. My sister, my older sister married the son of the Pakistani president, Iskander Mirza, and they've since got divorced but, so it was, we were fairly close to a lot of the political people in Pakistan. And there was *not* the kind of fanatic fanaticism that is so prevalent in parts of Pakistan today. It was really, the Muslim religion was really quite attractive, and I think it probably still is except for these crazy people.

MH: Have you traveled back to that part of the world since, since you lived there that year?

HH: No, I've never been back to Pakistan since then.

MH: When you were there, your father I assume had to go to Bengal or East Pakistan?

HH: East Pakistan, yes.

MH: Did he go by land, or did he fly?

HH: I think he usually flew, yeah. And the seat of government was in West Pakistan, not East, and he did make trips to East Pakistan and knew all those people, but the seat of government was in Karachi.

MH: So after graduation from Bowdoin, you go directly to Harvard Law School?

HH: Columbia.

MH: Columbia, okay. It was your father that, yeah, Columbia, Columbia Law School.

HH: But there again, it was the best law school I could get into.

MH: There's a recurring theme here. How long were in New York?

HH: I never practiced in New York, I always knew I wanted to come back to Maine and so I came back to Maine. As a matter of fact, one summer I worked at Pierce Atwood as a law student, and then when I graduated I came with the firm.

MH: Was it a big firm then?

HH: It was tiny, it was, what, eight people, nine people.

MH: Wow. Now I think it's the biggest firm in Maine.

HH: I think so, either that or Verrill Dana, they're both -

MH: And tell me about your practice, your own practice here.

HH: Well back in those days there was very little specializing like there is today, and lawyers did, at least at Pierce Atwood they did a little of everything, a little bit of trial work and a little bit of title searching and general business law, divorces, everything.

MH: Was there a part of it you preferred?

HH: Yes, I guess I liked the business law of things, working through business connections and situations and contractual things. I liked administrative law. I got very interested in, for some reason they thought I would be a very good lobbyist and Pierce Atwood represented a lot of paper companies, International Paper Company and places like that, so I spent a great deal of time in Augusta lobbying for their lobbying clients. In fact I probably spent more time in Augusta over the twelve years I was there, was I there that long? I don't think I was, no, I wasn't, I was there for about five or six years.

Then I got the political bug and in 1964 I ran for the state senate. In politics timing is everything, and that was the year that Goldwater ran and Republicans all over the United States lost elections that year, and I was one of them, and then -

MH: Who was your opponent?

HH: At that time Cumberland County had four senatorial representatives, and so there really wasn't any single opponent, and I think Cumberland that year elected four Democrats to its four seats and, oh yes, and the legislature that year was heavily Democratic.

MH: But you must have gone back, because I see there's a senator plaque on your desk here, so I assume -

HH: My only relic, yes, two years after that I ran again for the state Senate, and the fortunes of war had changed and I was the lead, I got the most votes over four of us that got elected. Roger Snow was the only Democrat that got elected from Cumberland County that year. It was several years later that the Supreme Court's one-man-one-vote thing required districts to be formed, which is kind of too bad because nobody knows what district they're in. Nobody knows who their representative is anymore.

But it was sort of interesting, I had to, I resigned from the firm because they were doing all this lobbying which I had been doing, and so I resigned. When I first started practicing or lobbying

for Pierce Atwood, as I told you, they represented a whole lot of paper companies and very quickly I got so that I didn't like a lot of the things that the paper companies were doing in environmental things. And I said, "Look, I'm happy to represent these paper companies on things like labor law, taxation, all these other things, but I don't approve of what they're doing in this environmental stuff," so Ted Atwood concentrated on that aspect of it. And so when I got elected, I started writing some of these laws that the paper companies didn't like at all and got several of them passed in the two years that I was there.

MH: What were the big issues?

HH: Well, the wild lands, I always call it the Wild Land Zoning law, but it was the LURC law that -

MH: Land Use Regulatory?

HH: Yes, this is a -

MH: This is entitled *A Legislative History and Analysis of Land Use Regulation Law in Maine*.

HH: Right. And this is, that's how it starts.

MH: In 1967.

HH: But that was one of them. Another law that I wrote was the -

MH: That's quite an achievement. I mean that's, LURC is a very important feature in the governance of Maine, larger and larger parts of it unfortunately.

HH: I wasn't able to get it passed, that one passed when I was in the legislature, but it garnered enough support so that people kept working on it after I left the state Senate and it passed. Harry Richardson, who died recently, was a good friend of mine, and he was instrumental in getting it finally adopted. But the Site Location Law is another law that I wrote, and the Wetlands Control Law which at that, we didn't have anything like that on the books at all.

MH: Let me ask, did the Natural Resources Council exist when you were a senator?

HH: I think it was just starting to get formed and, yes, I don't -

MH: My point is really, were there organizations or constituencies that were coming to you with these ideas?

HH: No, no, and there was nothing of that. There were no laws on the books, there were some

very crude anti-pollution laws but nothing with any teeth in them and, no, and it was only because I had been lobbying for a number of years that I was very aware of some of the shortcomings of our legal system in terms of dealing with the environment. And after I got out of politics, it wasn't voluntarily out of politics, I ran, the whole thing went to my head and I ran for Congress and got my ass handed to me by Peter Kyros.

MH: That would have been in 1968?

HH: Sixty-eight, yes. And so then, I had apparently alienated so many of the clients of Pierce Atwood that I was not asked to return to the firm. I think I was fired. And so I started my own firm with Harry Richardson and Bill Troubh and Phil Tyler, and started the environmental lobby in Augusta. And as a matter of fact Angus King was one of my first hires so it was like, he was great. He was a better lobbyist than I was and, I don't know how I got onto that.

MH: I was asking about the environmental constituency, as a -

HH: Yes, and things were just starting to bubble up, environmental awareness was just starting to bubble up, and it was interesting because it was very bipartisan, I mean both the Democrats and the Republicans started to get interested in, you know, 'yes, we do have a problem.' It was great because there were no laws on the books that dealt with it and so a lot of the, it was fun practicing law because it was administrative law then, and that's what I really got into and liked very much.

MH: During this period, did your legal activities connect at all with George Mitchell, or did you -?

HH: Well, actually not. I mean, we knew one another. He was, I'm trying to remember where, when his -

MH: He came back to Maine in '65 or '66, having served for a couple of years as Senator Muskie's executive assistant, and he came to a law firm -

HH: What was the law firm?

MH: Mert Henry's.

HH: Mert Henry's, right, yes. And I used to see him all the time but it just happened I never had any situations in which his client and my client were involved with one another, and so I just never got a chance to deal with him in that sense. So all I saw of him during those years was just on the street or at legal things.

MH: It's interesting, because it sounds like that your interest in environmental things somewhat paralleled his -

HH: With Muskie.

MH: Well, yes, I mean he developed an interest and quite a reputation in environmental law.

HH: Well that's true, but it was all in Washington. And that's quite right, but as I say, Maine was a, oh, what is the phrase, it was a *tabula rasa*, an unwritten upon kind of thing and everything was new, and inventing legal arguments and legal bases for legislation was --

MH: So, when did you leave the law? I mean your not, now not, you're not a lawyer, I mean you are a lawyer but you're not practicing.

HH: I'm a recovering lawyer. Well, let's see, I ran for Congress in '68, got beaten, started this firm and practiced until '79, would that be right? Yes, and then I, one of my clients was Diversified Communications and --

MH: Which had been started by your father, or, your father was involved some way?

HH: Yes, he started it. When he was, I don't know if you've ever read the political accounts of the day, but it was really vicious, the political reporting, much more than it is today. And anyway when he was governor, he was always being -

MH: Now you're referring to the press?

HH: My father, yes, the *Portland Press Herald* in particular, and Guy Gannett was alive and well in those days and he was sort of like Loeb over in New Hampshire and, but anyway, my father was continuously frustrated by these political reporters. Peter Damborg, who is a name that I remember, and he was one of the worst from my father's point of view. And anyway, so after my father got beaten in his race for the United States Senate, he bought a television, a radio station in Bangor, WABI, and his theory was that he would then be able to editorialize and offset the monopoly that the Portland papers and the Bangor paper had. And I think I was still in college when he started WABI-TV, which was the first television station in Maine. And the editorializing part of it never really came to much for some reason. Oh, I know, the Fairness Doctrine was, if you editorialized in one direction you *had* to open it up to somebody else. Of course the newspapers didn't have to do that, but the public airways had to do it. So anyway, his reason for getting into that kind of thing sort of disappeared, but he did start the company but it was Walter Dixon, second guy from the right, ran the operation in Bangor, and [my father] was sort of an absentee owner because he was at Bucknell and then after that he was in Pakistan.

MH: What was, I guess you mentioned Guy Gannett here in Portland, was he considered to be a, you likened him to William Loeb, who was an arch conservative. Was Guy Gannett considered to be that well? What was Guy Gannett's bent that your father didn't like?

HH: Well, I think it was personal, I think they didn't like one another. And I don't know what, no, I think Guy Gannett was probably more liberal than my father was, that's my guess, I don't really remember. And it wasn't a quarrel so much with Guy Gannett, it was really the fact that he did have a monopoly, and it was also the fact that Peter Damborg and others were really, some of the articles were really pretty bad, and it wasn't just my father, it was the whole political scene was kind of rough and tumble compared to what it is now.

MH: So did he end up only owning WABI, or did he have other TV stations?

HH: Oh no, he, the company got very much involved. We owned stations in, still own WABI of course, and another station in Gainesville, Florida, but we had stations in Scranton and New Bern, North Carolina, and one other one. Anyway, we've gotten out of the television business except for Gainesville and Bangor, partly because we needed to buy out some stock holders and so forth so we had to sell some assets, but Bangor and Gainesville stations are the dominant stations in their respective markets, and in today's world, except in big cities, it's very tough to be number two or three in the television business.

MH: So this all evolved into Diversified Communications?

HH: Yes.

MH: Print media?

HH: Yes, the *National Fisherman* is something that we acquired and, we publish trade magazines that go along – our biggest expansion has been in the trade show business over the last twenty years or so.

MH: Do you have other members of your family who are involved in Diversified as well?

HH: Well not as much as I am, they're on the board of directors. My sister, as I told you I had three sisters, and two of my brothers-in-law, who are really sort of, I don't think they felt I was managing the company very well and so they wanted to get bought out and we did buy them out and, well you know, family.

MH: How many, so for how many years have you been involved with Diversified Communications, that would be?

HH: Twenty, more than that now, almost thirty now. Let's see, '79 I think was the year I left law and started running the company.

MH: Are you considered a national company or an international company at this point?

HH: Well, we're international in the sense that we have trade shows all over the place. We

have a big show in Brussels, and we have a couple of shows in Great Britain, and we have a bunch of shows in Canada, and we have a seafood show in Italy and we have, I think, thirteen shows in Australia, and we're still looking in places like India and China and so, I guess we are.

MH: So as this company has grown, has it taken up more and more of your time, or what are your outside interests?

HH: Oh, I'm pretty out of it now. No, I really retired as chief executive officer, oh golly, almost ten years ago now, and I come into the office and people are still polite to me. And you know, I'm talking with our people all the time, you know, I'm here but I'm not working. I have other extracurricular activities. So to answer your question, no, I was highly committed until I got Dave Lowell to be the chief executive officer, who is a lot smarter and more able than I am and he was doing wonderful. He just retired and now Nancy Hasselback is our chief executive officer and she's doing a great job; I've always been very interested in getting the smartest people, the most able people I can, and that doesn't include me.

MH: Outside interests, what are they, what have you been doing?

HH: Oh, I still am very much involved in a lot of environmental stuff, on boards of like the Conservation Law Foundation and the Maine League of Conservation Voters, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust and things like that.

MH: Tell me about the Conservation Law Foundation, what does that do?

HH: I love the Conservation Law Foundation because it gets in there and fights. It started off as a Boston outfit and what they really started doing was bringing legal pressure to bear in situations where the law was being either ignored, or where there wasn't a law or whether it was being applied incorrectly or whatever, and so over the years they've been involved in all kinds of things.

And, oh, about ten years ago or so they started a Maine chapter, which is headquartered now in Brunswick, and they've gotten involved in things like fisheries problems where fisheries regulations weren't being enforced or, one of the more recent ones was the Maine Mall out here, the drainage. These acres and acres of asphalt, any time it rains everything goes into Long Creek, and totally pollutes Portland Harbor, and so they've finally gotten these, the Maine Mall is one, to start treating the runoff and stuff, so that kind of thing. And they get involved in, another one is they're trying to put the wolf fish on the endangered species. I don't know if you've ever seen a picture of a wolf fish.

They get involved in pollution things, the river pollution and so forth, they're a very competent organization in the sense that the lawyers that they have are really sharp, and the board people like myself are really, most of us are former lawyers or presently lawyers, but we just try to, not run things but try and give advice as to general policy things, which things strike us as being

more important than others and that kind of thing.

MH: Is your role similar on the Maine Coast Heritage Trust?

HH: My interest in the Maine Coast Heritage Trust was purely preservation of undeveloped land along the coast. You could see it being just developed like hell. Every time the, what is it, *Downeast* [magazine] came out, there'd be pages of islands for sale and all that kind of stuff, and my interest in the Maine Coast Heritage Trust was really not so much environmental as preservationist.

But the Maine League of Conservation Voters for instance, to me is another really relevant organization because it puts pressure on, they have this legislative report card that they put out that puts, it's starting to really, when they first started working, either the Republicans wouldn't pay any attention to them because they thought it was a Democratic front organization, but over the last six or eight years they've gotten to the point where legislators really take them seriously in terms of understanding which environmental issues are important and which ones really aren't. And this report card has resulted in people really paying attention.

MH: Is the report card a national report card or a local report card?

HH: No, its - yes.

MH: Your father was a Republican governor, you ran for the Senate as a Republican. Have you been involved at all in party politics?

HH: Not really. I don't know what's happened to the Republican Party. I'm what they call uneasy Episcopalian, I guess. I'm a Republican, I vote in the Republican primaries, but usually I end up voting with the Democrats in general elections. And I don't know what's happened to the Republican Party. I think of myself as, we used to call them Rockefeller Republicans, pretty liberal on social issues but fairly conservative on fiscal issues, and hopefully enlightened on social issues. But I don't know what's happened to the Republicans, and things have gotten so partisan I really don't care to be involved in Republican Party politics.

MH: What did you think of your classmate George Mitchell's performance as a senator?

HH: Well, I thought he was very capable, I thought he was very competent, I thought he was a very competent legislator. Now, that doesn't mean I, it's been quite a while since he was in the Senate and so I've forgotten some of the issues, but George is a lot more of a liberal, a lot more of a 1930s liberal than I am. And to be honest I think he's never gotten over the fact that his mother was a cleaning lady, and I think that's colored his thinking. And I think he's almost a relic of an earlier day. That isn't to take anything away from his competence. I think he's got an excellent mind, I think he's a great negotiator, I think he was, I wish he had not been as, he's a fighter, and a very partisan fighter, and I think he could have been better if he'd been less of one.

MH: What do you think of his current assignment?

HH: Well, poor guy, God. Well, I mean his Irish caper held together for quite a while and, I don't know, I think he's the sort of person that, I think he's going to have a, thank God Obama got elected because I think the presence of Obama is going to help George Mitchell immeasurably in trying to get these crazy people to be decent. And it's far too early to tell. I hope it's not an impossible task but, I mean if you were to think of an impossible task that would be high up on the list. But no, I'm glad he took the job and we'll see how it works.

Obama is, my wife loves Obama even more than I do and she was saying isn't it wonderful that he's doing such a great job in foreign affairs and so forth, and of course it's always easier for a president to look good when he's off in Europe or Asia, you know, being in the States when, I mean that's usually where they go when they're in trouble. But I think it's not quite that way with Obama, and I think the fact that it is Obama who's the president is going to help George Mitchell, is going to help his credibility and may make the job easier for him, or more possible.

MH: Are you a baseball fan, did you follow the steroids investigation?

HH: No. My wife is a Red Sox fan, but no, I'm not. I just follow it intellectually and I just deplore the doping of athletes. It's just, well I don't know. No, I have other interests.

MH: Well, this has been great. Thank you very much.

HH: Well, you're welcome; I can't imagine I've added anything.

MH: As I said to you, well, Senator Mitchell being a Democrat, many of our interviewees are Democrats, people that worked for him, but it's nice to have a perspective on what was happening in Maine during this period from a well known Republican, and so thank you – and a well known environmentalist.

HH: Well George is a, he was, let's see, I'm trying to remember now, he was appointed, who, why was he appointed, somebody -?

MH: Secretary Vance resigned after the Iranian rescue attempt, and Senator Muskie was appointed to be secretary of state. Governor Brennan then appointed Senator Mitchell, who was a sitting federal judge at the time.

HH: Yes, and he was a good federal Judge. I never argued a case before him, but he had a great reputation as a judge. And it was a great appointment by Brennan, too.

MH: Well thank you very much, appreciate it.

End of interview