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2 **WHITE HOUSE EXIT INTERVIEW**
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4 INTERVIEW OF: MARY FINCH HOYT

5 INTERVIEW BY: NARA PERSONNEL/MARIE ALLEN
6

7 QUESTION: Have you done all this for yourself?

8 ANSWER: No, but I can remember trying to get
9 started --

10 QUESTION: Check my tape. This is an interview with
11 Mary Finch Hoyt on December 16, 1980, in Mrs. Hoyt's
12 office in East Wing. The interviewer is Marie Allen.

13 I'd like to start first by asking you about some of
14 your associations before the White House, this White House
15 period. You were associated with Jane Muskie and Eleanor
16 McGovern, weren't you?

17 ANSWER: Yes. I served as the press secretary to --
18 started off with Eleanor McGovern at the 1968 Democratic
19 National Convention in Chicago, and that was for a very,
20 very brief period of time when Senator McGovern had gone
21 to the convention to hold together Bobby Kennedy's
22 delegates.

23 I went -- would you like to know how I got that job?

24 QUESTION: Yes.

25 ANSWER: I'm not quite sure why I was called, one

1 evening in the middle of supper, and asked if I'd like to
2 go to the convention, which was a few weeks off, and if I
3 would like to serve as Mrs. McGovern's press secretary
4 because Senator McGovern had just announced that he was
5 going to run for president. It was through my previous
6 association as director of radio of television of the
7 Peace Corp., someone had given my name as having dealt
8 with the press.

9 So I was dying to go to the convention, and I said
10 "yes" and got right in the car that very -- stopped dinner
11 and went right out to see Mrs. McGovern and worked for her
12 through that very short period of time. I had quit the
13 Peace Corp. and was in the process of writing a book.

14 QUESTION: May I ask on what?

15 ANSWER: Well, on the psychology of color. It was a
16 book that I had had in my mind for a long time. And I had
17 a contract with McGraw-Hill, and I was pulling it
18 together. And I had all of my papers out and I was
19 working very hard on it.

20 QUESTION: Color in the racial sense or in the
21 different color sense?

22 ANSWER: Color in all sense. It all came out of a
23 very personal idea I had that if people could visualize
24 themselves in terms of color, everyone would have a
25 different portrait of themselves. So I started asking

1 people "What would you do if you had nothing but color? I
2 mean you could put your color in any form or shape or
3 quantity or quality." And I found that everybody, after
4 thinking about it, people were rather caught on with this
5 idea of what their own self-portrait would look like.

6 So this I was going to -- I don't really -- I still
7 haven't written the book because it's kind of been -- as a
8 matter of fact, I told somebody I should probably dig it
9 out again, because whenever I'm in a period in between
10 here and there and not knowing what I'm going to do next,
11 I go back to that book, and the minute I get involved in
12 it -- and it is a fascinating subject -- the phone rings
13 and something else comes along.

14 But -- so after I was -- I was working on the book.
15 They called and asked if I'd like go to the convention.

16 QUESTION: And you drove over to meet Eleanor
17 McGovern?

18 ANSWER: I did.

19 QUESTION: For the first time?

20 ANSWER: Yes (unintelligible).

21 QUESTION: What was your -- she's a very petite lady,
22 isn't she?

23 ANSWER: She's a tiny, little lady. It was just
24 getting dark. Her daughter let me in, and she said her
25 mother was out walking the dog. And I went and sat in

1 this very tiny, little living room that the McGoverns had
2 out in Chevy Chase. I had a friend of mine over for
3 dinner and he sat in the car and waited because I didn't
4 think it was appropriate for him to go in.

5 Mrs. McGovern came in and we sat and simply talked.
6 We had children about the same ages. I had had experience
7 with the press. The phone was ringing off the hook, and I
8 finally said, "Could I answer the phone for you?" And, of
9 course, it was the press trying to find out about her.
10 They had had a problem with one of their daughters who had
11 been caught smoking marijuana, and, of course, that made
12 everything much more interesting to the press. We had a
13 great rapport and I just started to work for her right
14 then and there.

15 I did not know what a press secretary was supposed to
16 do, but I had served in a similar to Jack Vaughn, who was
17 the head of the Peace Corp. when I was there, which was
18 basically to deal with the media and have interviews for
19 him. And I had done quite a bit of work either as a
20 writer, a professional writer or at the Peace Corp.

21 So when I came back from the convention, I got the
22 book out again and I think I only had it out about a week
23 when Mrs. McGovern told me Mrs. Muskie, that she needed
24 somebody like me. So Mrs. Muskie called me up and said
25 would I go out to meet her.

1 And so I got in the car right away and drove out to
2 her house in Maryland, and the same thing was happening.
3 It was almost a replay, the phone was ringing. And I can
4 remember the one thing that was different about it was
5 that Mrs. McGovern and I talked a great deal about our
6 children and a great deal about being in the eye of the
7 storm, so to speak. But with Mrs. Muskie, she had heard
8 all of that from Mrs. McGovern.

9 I answered the phone there too. I can remember that
10 the phone was ringing, and I said, "Well, why don't you
11 just let me answer it. I know it's the press," and it
12 was. And I just sort of kind of calmed things down out
13 there.

14 But I can remember Mrs. Muskie saying -- and I just
15 thought of this this very minute, and I have to tell her.
16 I saw her last night at the party for the cabinet that's
17 being staffed -- she said when it was all over, "Well, I
18 think I would like for you to come and work for me, but
19 there's one thing you haven't told me yet and that is what
20 do you think of my husband?"

21 And, of course, at that point, he was not all that
22 well-known. I mean he was the senator from Maine. And I
23 said, "Well, I'm a democrat, and I think he's wonderful
24 and I'm also the Humphrey Muskie ticket." So I went to
25 work for Jane Muskie.

1 Of course I kept my friendship with Mrs. McGovern
2 and with Mrs. Muskie when both of those campaigns were
3 over. Then I became Washington editor in the *Ladies Home*
4 *Journal*, which that came about because I was doing some
5 ghostwriting for Senator Muskie. And the editor of *Ladies*
6 *Home Journal*, who was also the editor of *American Home*
7 *Magazine*, came down to the Muskies to meet the senator and
8 take the pictures that went with the article that I had
9 ghosted, and he wanted me there. So I gave her a ride
10 back to her hotel, and she said that we should talk. And
11 so one thing led to another, and I became the Washington
12 Bureau chief for *Ladies Home Journal*.

13 And that was interesting because the only other
14 person on the -- I mean I was the bureau chief of a bureau
15 of two, and the only other person was Lynda Bird Johnson
16 at that point, who was breaking into writing and was on
17 the masthead of the magazine too.

18 In 19 --

19 QUESTION: Were you writing primarily or were you --

20 ANSWER: Doing a great deal. I was doing a lot of
21 writing at that point. I had written a book called
22 *American Women of the Space Age*, which was some sort of a
23 book about women who were involved in the space -- behind
24 the scenes in the space field of all kinds, the dieticians
25 of the astronauts and the women who -- the physicists and

1 the engineers, women.

2 So, let's see, where was I?

3 QUESTION: You were working in the Washington Bureau
4 in the *Journal*?

5 ANSWER: Right, the *Ladies Home Journal*.

6 QUESTION: And you were doing a lot of writing.

7 ANSWER: And I was doing a lot of writing. And
8 then it became apparent that Senator Muskie was going to
9 run for president. I took two trips with the Muskies.
10 One trip that the *Ladies Home Journal* sent me on was with
11 a small group of reporters to Moscow and the Middle East
12 with the Muskies, which was fascinating. And I wrote a
13 long report, they did not publish it, but I wrote a long
14 report to the editors. And I think probably in retrospect
15 they were really hedging their bets at that point thinking
16 that Muskie would probably be president and I would
17 probably be in the administration at some point and it
18 would be good public relations for them.

19 That was all very interesting, but when it became
20 time for Muskie to run, I quit the *Journal* and I did go to
21 work as Jane's sort of executive -- I don't know what I'd
22 call myself, but it was press secretary and I did sort of
23 everything and got her little staff together and a bunch
24 of volunteers. And I did that until Muskie bowed out. As
25 a matter of fact, I flew home, just the senator and Jane

1 and myself and the security agent, in a little, tiny one-
2 engine plane from the night he quit, dropped out of the
3 race. And I went back to the book again and --

4 QUESTION: Can I ask you about the incident with Candy
5 Stroud and what you --

6 ANSWER: Yeah. Well, that was -- what happened then
7 was a series of things that added up to what was really a
8 very disastrous situation, which I think was probably not
9 the reason that Senator Muskie was not elected -- I mean
10 was not nominated, but I think it probably contributed
11 highly to a lot of other things. We had a small group, I
12 don't remember how many, maybe eight reporters, who were
13 going to go to New Hampshire with us to travel and to
14 follow Mrs. Muskie on her campaign trip, Candy being one
15 of the reporters. It was kind of a crazy, kind of
16 wonderful trip, and we were all very -- I suppose in
17 retrospect I was much too naïve and trusting, but these
18 were women I had dealt with before over the years. I had
19 traveled with them. I traveled with Mrs. Nixon as a
20 reporter with the same group of people when I worked for
21 the *Journal*.

22 So we all climbed on a commercial plane together to
23 go to New York. I can remember that Mrs. Muskie had a
24 problem with her legs, had on Sup-hose, and she made some
25 remark about them, and that became a part of the story, a

1 very -- kind of very unattractive the way it was written.

2 We all got on a bus, because it seemed to me it was
3 very regal and much too queenly to campaign in a big
4 limousine in New Hampshire and having a long, long
5 motorcade behind. So we all got on a bus together and, of
6 course, it was snowing and it was cold. We didn't have --
7 we had terrible advance people. We were all chewing gum
8 like crazy because we were so thirsty and we couldn't stop
9 to get anything to drink. So we were chewing gum, which
10 was also a part of the story about Mrs. Muskie snapping
11 her gum while she talked.

12 We got off finally and found a place where we could
13 each -- where we could get a Coke. And we got a newspaper
14 and the whole front page of the newspaper was a picture of
15 Senator Muskie, I mean just the whole page. And Jane was
16 sitting on the bus, and somebody came back and I took it
17 and I handed it to her, and I said, "Look at this." And
18 she said, "Well, there's Big Daddy." "Big Daddy," "Daddy"
19 is what they called him because he had all of those
20 children. And I mean it was a big picture. And that came
21 out as calling him "Big Daddy."

22 We then had -- we had lost our very inefficient
23 advance people who ended up putting us up in a motel
24 without telephones. We had, you know, no place for the
25 press to fall out, no room service, no way for them to

1 eat. And so we decided that it would be very foolish for
2 us to all try -- for us to try to have special
3 arrangements. And so we all ate together. At that time
4 we all had a glass of wine or a drink, I don't remember
5 which. And Jane made some remark about how she just never
6 had a drink or a glass of wine because it gave her a
7 headache. All of these things that were in Candy's story
8 were factual, but they were pulled together in such a way
9 that it was devastating.

10 And without knowing anything about it, we went back
11 to the motel in Manchester, met the senator, and someone
12 called -- we flew home thinking it had been a very
13 successful trip. Jane had had a wonderful crowd. She had
14 gotten up and had a been a real sport and had spoken to
15 high school students and gone into (unintelligible), and
16 it had been a very hard trip.

17 And that night, it was a -- I believe it was a Friday
18 night, I don't remember, I got home and Newsweek called
19 me. A reporter who's no longer around, and I don't know
20 whether this had anything to do with it or not, but she
21 called me and she said, "I want to verify the quotes in
22 *Women's Wear Daily*," at which point she took out just
23 those damaging, out of context completely -- it was the
24 most -- one of the most damaging and unfair pieces of
25 journalism I have ever seen.

1 So basically it was Candy Stroud's piece, but it was
2 digested by *Newsweek*, which subsequently the publisher of
3 *Newsweek* wrote to the senator and to Mrs. Muskie. And
4 everybody afterwards said this was very unfair. That was
5 the genesis of that story. Whether or not Ed Muskie cried
6 in the snow about it or not, I don't know. I remember at
7 the time that probably he was very angry, probably very
8 moved when he said "She's a good woman," because she is
9 such a good woman.

10 I remember saying then to them "Someday, because of
11 his emotions, that will be" -- I remember as well as
12 anything saying "Instead of damaging him for showing his
13 emotions or his feelings, that in a few years those kind
14 of feelings that men will show will be a plus instead of a
15 minus," which I think is true. So that was that story.

16 But when -- after that was over, right away, as soon
17 as McGovern -- Eleanor called me, and we've -- you know, I
18 think that's one thing that's important about this job,
19 and I tried to explain to Mrs. (unintelligible) secretary
20 the other day, before she was hired, that you have to
21 have -- it's a unique relationship, a press secretary and
22 a principal, as Pat Nixon used to call her press
23 secretary -- her press secretary used to call her the
24 "principal" instead of, you know, "Pat" or "Mrs. Nixon."
25 She would call her the "principal," which I always thought

1 was a little bit, you know, chilly. But I had kept
2 friendships all along with all of these women.

3 When Eleanor called and asked me if I would go to the
4 convention with her in '72, and so I went back; I didn't
5 have anything to do at the time (unintelligible). And so
6 I went back. I did go through the whole campaign with
7 her. When that was over, I wrote a book and wrote
8 speeches for her for about six months, which she went on
9 the lecture circuit. So I was -- and, of course, after
10 each one of these, the first one, I mean after each one I
11 said I would never do another campaign again because it's
12 very debilitating and it's very hard and it's just too
13 unnatural. So I said I would never do that again and I'd
14 never be involved in democratic politics except at a
15 certain level.

16 But Jody called me, I guess because -- I laughingly
17 say I must have had a corner on the market; how many other
18 people had been press secretary to lots of democratic
19 candidates, you know, over and over again. So I think
20 that a couple of people had told Jody what I had done for
21 the other women. And then during -- I think during -- he
22 called me up one day and, you know, my heart just stopped
23 because I was so -- I was writing, I had a little public
24 relations firm of my own, and I as happy as I could be and
25 on the verge of making more money than I had made in a

1 long time, and he asked me if I'd like to come down and
2 meet Mrs. Carter.

3 QUESTION: Had you met Jody before?

4 ANSWER: No, no. I didn't know anything about any
5 of the Carters. I hadn't been involved in the primary at
6 all in any way. I was so out of it. I was, you know,
7 interested, but I mean I'm avid as I can be as a good
8 democrat, but I knew nothing at all about it.

9 So I said, "Well, when?" And he said, "Tomorrow. If
10 we prepay a ticket, will you come down to Atlanta? She's
11 going to be in Atlanta during some interviews tomorrow."
12 So it was really -- I mean it was a question of my saying
13 "No, I really can't do this again." But there was just
14 something about it. Because if you know that you can do
15 something and it's a unique thing, then, you know, you
16 just --

17 QUESTION: It's hard . . .

18 ANSWER: It's hard to say no. And I met Rosalynn
19 and Madeline and McBean and Jody. They were all there at
20 the headquarters. And I talked to Rosalynn for a very
21 brief time. And then Jody said, "Well" -- he walked her
22 out to her car. It was all a very strange meeting. She
23 said, "Well, what would you do if you were me and you knew
24 that you were going to be going through another campaign?"
25 And so I felt quite free to tell her at that point what I

1 would do, which would be to run my own campaign. I mean
2 not let the, you know, the presidential people do it, to
3 be independent to do whatever she wanted to do and to just
4 do what she was comfortable doing.

5 So after that conversation, she said, "Well, that's
6 kind of the way I look at it." And she said, "Thank you
7 for coming down to meet me." And so then Jody walked out
8 to the parking lot with her, and he came back and he said,
9 "Well, she's just so concerned about a lot of other
10 things." He said, "Thank you for coming." And so I just
11 got back on the plane. And I thought "Well, that was a,"
12 you know, "I don't know that that was useful or what it
13 was." We didn't talk about the job or anything. And --

14 QUESTION: And I can come back -- if this afternoon
15 gets too busy, I can come back.

16 ANSWER: Okay.

17 QUESTION: We were just --

18 ANSWER: Well, I mean then

19 QUESTION: -- talking about the meeting with Rosalynn.

20 ANSWER: Right. Then I know that -- then Jody
21 called and asked me if I would come to work for the
22 convention and the campaign. It was always "come for the
23 whole time," it wasn't just the convention. And there
24 was -- we had quite a few conversations. I wasn't quite
25 sure, having been used to being kind of in charge of

1 things, I wasn't quite sure how I'd fit in with Madeline.
2 I wasn't quite sure I wanted to -- I wanted to be sure
3 that I wasn't going to lose money because I had just
4 started making money. So we had a lot of conversations
5 and I decided to do it. And so then I mean
6 (unintelligible).

7 QUESTION: Did you decide based on conversations with
8 Jody, or did you have another conversation with Mrs.
9 Carter?

10 ANSWER: It was more -- I did talk to Jody, but --
11 and I never could talk to Mrs. Carter in detail. I talked
12 to Madeline a little more, and we finally -- I mean, you
13 know, Madeline -- I guess I did talk to Jody, because I
14 said, "Jody, I'm having a problem figuring out -- I'm used
15 to being in charge and I'm not, you know, I just cannot go
16 through anybody," which I think is a very important thing
17 for historical pur -- this is what I was saying to Robyn
18 Orr (phonetic) the other night and what everybody, I
19 think, should know if anybody ever cares about this kind
20 of a job, you cannot -- you have to have total access to
21 the person that you're dealing with. It's just like Jody
22 and the president: You have to be able to pick up the
23 phone at any time and ask any question and feel
24 comfortable doing so. And the person for whom your
25 working has to understand that and wants you to do it.

1 So I will say that for a couple of weeks, I wasn't
2 quite sure, I had some feelings that I was getting
3 involved with something that the train was already going
4 and I was sort of running and catching on the train, which
5 is not the way that I ever worked. It's usually been the
6 other way around. And I wanted to be quite sure that I
7 spelled out my own role, for which I'm very grateful I
8 took the time to be very assured, I mean even to the point
9 of Madeline calling up and saying "Now, look, I'm in
10 charge of this and you're in charge of that." And we
11 talked back and forth. And I think it probably took us
12 maybe the better part of two years or maybe a year and a
13 half to work that out. And now, you know, we did work it
14 out.

15 QUESTION: How did you split it up? How did you
16 divide the responsibilities?

17 ANSWER: Well, everything person -- I mean
18 personal -- well, it seemed to divide itself up. Because
19 Rosalynn, if Rosalynn had done a lot of personal and a lot
20 of social things and had not been a working first lady, it
21 probably would have been different. But Madeline took all
22 the personal, all of the very, very personal things and
23 the family things and all of that, and anything that
24 took -- anything that had to do with the campaign, the
25 speeches, the substance, that kind of thing just sort of

1 fell into -- that was sort of what I did. So that was
2 kind of the way it worked out.

3 QUESTION: And it carried over into the administration
4 in some ways.

5 ANSWER: It did, it carried out in the transition.
6 I hired the staff. I think -- it's interesting to see
7 what's happened now with the next administration. My
8 title was "press secretary to the first lady and East Wing
9 coordinator," which basically meant that Rosalynn -- there
10 would be no staff director and that Rosalynn would be her
11 own staff director. And it worked -- it was probably -- I
12 still have mixed feelings. That's always the way it's
13 secretary has sort of been the staff director, because
14 been here, that the person who has been the press
15 otherwise -- you have to know everything that's going on,
16 because if you don't know what's going on, you can't serve
17 either the first lady or the press.

18 That remained that way, with some range of success,
19 until Kit Dobbelle came in. It was a great deal of hassle,
20 a great deal of work, very, very difficult to do both jobs
21 and try to be, you know -- as a matter of fact, it's like
22 raising children: You can't, you know, do what has to be
23 done and be loved. I mean it's not the most popular kind
24 of thing. But being probably more experienced and a hell
25 of a lot older than everybody else, that didn't bother me

1 so much.

2 I think one of the big problems for me, and, of
3 course, a very personal one, I lost my youngest son two
4 years ago. And at that point, I just sort of took out all
5 my -- everything on my job, I think for a while. I
6 probably would have died without the job. But on the
7 other hand, I think my job suffered.

8 QUESTION: Did you have other children? Did you --

9 ANSWER: I have one other son. I had two sons. I
10 had an adopted son and a natural son. And my -- I mean
11 not that that makes any difference, but it was my natural
12 son, my youngest son who went to sea and didn't come back.
13 And I was sitting right here when I heard about it, and
14 nobody's ever known what happened. He and five other
15 young men -- the boat, they were on a huge boat, and he
16 was captain of the boat, and it was struck probably by
17 another -- a freighter or something. So it was a terrible
18 shock and a terrible blow.

19 QUESTION: How old was he at that time?

20 ANSWER: Twenty-seven.

21 QUESTION: And this was a pleasure craft? It wasn't a
22 (unintelligible)?

23 ANSWER: No, no, no. He was -- oh, no. He was the
24 captain. I mean it was a lobster (unintelligible).

25 So that was a -- you know, I think back now, I think

1 it's taken me maybe -- that was in '78, September of '78,
2 I just don't know what -- I can't even remember too much
3 about, you know, I mean -- I just worked like a fiend. It
4 saved my life, my work. But I'm sure that I was
5 destructive as heck at the same time. So . . .

6 QUESTION: Grief is quite a difficult thing to handle.

7 ANSWER: It's a very hard thing to handle. But
8 that --

9 QUESTION: You had worked out the arrangements, and
10 Kit Dobbelle, she assumed the staff director
11 function --

12 ANSWER: Right.

13 QUESTION: -- and you then were able to focus on the
14 press.

15 ANSWER: I thought that was going to work. I mean,
16 you know, I thought that would work out fine, because that
17 would take away all of those personal relationships. And
18 I also was traveling with Mrs. Carter and trying to keep
19 everything going here, and I had it all and I didn't -- I
20 was not at all happy about giving it all up.

21 And, as a matter of fact, when we had gone to the
22 Middle East, I had mapped out what I thought was a rather
23 logical way that I should turn over more of my work to my
24 deputy and that I should, you know, let loose more. I
25 realized what I was doing, which was I was being very

1 destructive to myself and to everybody else. And we had
2 worked with the little senior staff of five of us. And
3 that meant that one person always had to come down -- I
4 mean, you know, we could -- there was always a "yes" or a
5 "no" that way. And I think it would have -- it could have
6 worked, and I don't think that, except for personal
7 feelings, I don't think it really made any difference
8 when, you know, Kit Dobbelle came. I mean it just
9 kind -- it's -- I don't know, with last year so much going
10 on, I just don't know.

11 QUESTION: Have you been traveling, continuing to
12 travel with the first lady?

13 ANSWER: Mm-mm.

14 QUESTION: So all -- during this entire administration
15 and during the campaign, you've always traveled with the
16 first lady and you've always handled the press.

17 ANSWER: I've always handled the press. I've done
18 most of her speeches. Our role here in this office is to
19 disseminate information about the White House and its
20 grounds; to be sure that all the social events are
21 covered; to see that all of her educational and cultural
22 activities are covered; to worry about publications,
23 magazines; set up interviews. It's a big job because it's
24 more than just the first lady. It's got a lot to do with
25 the house, it's got a lot to do with the social life of

1 the White House. And it also has a lot to do with, you
2 know, what is a good idea and what's a bad idea. If
3 somebody wants her to be the head of something or wants
4 her to fly to Cambodia or to be the chairman of the heart
5 fund or to take on the project, it takes a lot of research
6 and a lot of figuring out how is that going to be
7 perceived, how much can she really do, how much can she
8 follow up, how much can the staff do. It's really been --
9 I mean the volume here is so much more than I ever
10 anticipated. For a first lady, I don't think anybody
11 really understands that.

12 QUESTION: Each first lady leaves a special imprint
13 from -- on the job. In the area of the social events,
14 what do you think Mrs. Carter's special imprint has been?

15 ANSWER: I think that's what happening now will --
16 which has been very negative in the last month about the
17 social imprint of the Carter administration, will probably
18 turn around 45 degrees within another month. I think that
19 there are already signs of this. And we've already had a
20 couple of -- well, quite a few articles written and there
21 are others in the works, because that was a very unfair
22 perception that this has been kind of an Andrew Jackson
23 kind of administration.

24 I think the imprint of the Carter administration will
25 go down as having thoughts to why this variety of culture,

1 art, music, the brilliance of the performances here, I
2 don't think will be matched in the next administration and
3 it has not been matched. I think the historian or the
4 armchair historians who covered the White House will say
5 that this has been an administration perhaps noted for the
6 breadth and variety of arts and cultures highlighted here.

7 And also it's been probably a much more open -- open
8 to the average person than ever before. I mean I don't
9 know how many other administrations have really invited
10 people who wrote and said they wanted to come to the White
11 House. I think we've had people from all walks of life.
12 In that way it hasn't been as glamorous as a lot of other
13 administrations, and I think that's what they're talking
14 about now. I mean we have not had the Frank Sinatras and
15 the very well-known Hollywood people here except on very
16 special Hollywood occasions. It's been kind of a people,
17 people White House.

18 QUESTION: So the first -- and this was some of the
19 first lady's own ideas as far as having a (unintelligible)
20 with coming in and a (unintelligible) of art and
21 cultural --

22 ANSWER: Open, friendly, warm, very hospitable and I
23 think in many cases extremely elegant and comfortable.
24 But I think that arts and the culture, the American -- the
25 Americana -- I don't know how to say that other than arts

1 and culture. I think in retrospect they set a standard
2 that's going to be almost impossible -- I mean those
3 Sunday afternoons, Horowitz and Rostropovich and
4 Baryshnikov, were historic. And to open that up on public
5 television for the whole country to see was a wonderful
6 thing to do.

7 QUESTION: (Unintelligible) we enjoyed it. What about
8 the -- this first lady's imprint on press relations. How
9 do you think she interacts with the press?

10 ANSWER: Well, I think the press had to take --
11 she's gone from the press -- from no image, which they
12 started saying after about a year, to too much image and
13 too much influence to now I think probably she has more
14 solid -- people admire her in a more solid -- she has
15 solid respect of the press. She has been extremely
16 accessible to them, probably more than -- Helen Thomas
17 told me she thought she was the most successful first lady
18 she's ever covered. And she rarely has passed by a
19 reporter without answering, which is -- it's quite
20 unusual.

21 I don't know how I would grade it on a scale from 1
22 to 10. I think she's respected by the press, and that's
23 what counts, I think.

24 QUESTION: Okay. What about projects the first lady's
25 been involved in (unintelligible) any special projects?

1 ANSWER: Well, I do think her mental health
2 legislation -- perish the thought that anything should
3 happen to funding it -- will be something. I mean it's a
4 legacy that I think is known world-wide, actually, because
5 every play we go -- I mean we've been to Canada twice to
6 talk about it, and every place we've gone, she has --
7 people have known about this.

8 Her other projects have not been -- you know, the
9 kinds of projects that have been begun, they're not
10 dramatic projects -- the elderly, the problems of the
11 elderly, ERA, trying to help people in communities to help
12 each other, (unintelligible), and these are just not
13 very -- she calls them "sexy" projects -- so that they're
14 not covered as well as they could be.

15 But I don't know whether you saw the editorial in the
16 *Washington Post* this week as well as the excerpts from her
17 speech all on one page, paying tribute to what she's done
18 in the city here in a quiet way. I think that all of her
19 accomplishments are being recognized, not in a dramatic
20 way, which is the way it ought to be, I mean I think.

21 QUESTION: In talking with her, what do you -- what do
22 you think were the things she wanted most to do here as
23 first lady?

24 ANSWER: I think she is a very contemporary woman in
25 many ways. And I could never venture to say what would

1 interest her most. In fact, you know, someone told her
2 about the terrible problem in Cambodia, and she called up
3 and said, "What'll we do about it?" And we worked all
4 weekend, and within three days we were on our way to go
5 over there. And she helped raise six billion dollars and
6 helped save a race.

7 I don't think that you could ever pin her down. She
8 defies labels. One thing leads to another. I mean the
9 mental health would probably led her into -- which it did,
10 I think, led her into the fact that if we don't take care
11 of the mentally ill in your own community, you're not
12 going to get any (unintelligible). Start worrying about
13 your community. And it's the same way with the elderly.
14 And I think she just -- there's a sort of a serendipity
15 the way she kind of approaches her projects. But they're
16 all kind of tied together with people helping people. She
17 used to say in her speeches over and over again that it
18 sounds a little grandiose, but what she hoped was to be
19 her legacy was to help build a more caring society. And I
20 think that's -- I think she made great strides. I've very
21 proud of her.

22 QUESTION: Do you get the impression that -- well, I
23 get the impression this first lady has been interested in
24 the whole variety of administration (unintelligible) as
25 well as in her particular personal projects. Is this

1 accurate do you think?

2 ANSWER: I think it is. I think that the stories
3 about her being involved in administration policy are very
4 over-blown. I think the president and she are very good
5 friends as well as very close and I know they talk about
6 everything. And I know that she is very forthcoming with
7 her opinion. But the fact that she is involved in policy
8 about the budget or some of the other things that people
9 think she's involved in . . .

10 I've never known a person who was more interested in
11 being fully informed. She -- it's like life is a
12 continuing education for her. I think that's one thing
13 where I really relate to her so much, because she doesn't
14 want to know a little bit about something; she wants to
15 know it, and once she learns it, she knows it and she will
16 either go on further with it or she tucks it away in the
17 back of her mind someplace and it comes in handy.

18 She is a very curious, very intelligent woman who
19 wants to know about these government programs, wants to
20 know why they aren't working, and if they're not working,
21 why. And I've seen her greatest frustration, I think, has
22 been about bureaucracy that she's had to deal with
23 herself. When people say "Well, we can't do that
24 because . . ." And she'll say "Well, I don't know why. I
25 mean I had a good idea. Why wouldn't it work?" Kind of a

1 disgust with bureaucracy is (unintelligible).

2 QUESTION: And what other frustrations do you think
3 she's felt?

4 ANSWER: Well, I think she's felt a lack -- the
5 difficulty of communicating not only what the president's
6 done, but perhaps sometimes how she -- her own projects.

7 QUESTION: Then --

8 ANSWER: I mean I suppose that communication, not
9 being able to communicate what the president did or wanted
10 to do is something that will always be a frustration to a
11 lot of us.

12 QUESTION: It seems to me a first lady is in an
13 awkward stage in this age in which we have a women's
14 movement, and yet again we don't have one, in which, you
15 know, there's some areas -- a first lady gets caught
16 between not being enough of an independent, not being
17 enough of a feminist; on the other hand, being so much of
18 a feminist that she's running the president, being charged
19 on both sides.

20 ANSWER: Well, but that's just because the press has
21 to have a neat label. I mean it's because of the way you
22 can't (unintelligible). I keep saying to Rosalynn "You
23 are like a renaissance woman. I mean you have a wonderful
24 extended family, a good marriage. You are a great mother.
25 You are a hard worker. You like the sports." I mean

1 across the board she's -- there's some of us who can do
2 some of those things and some of us who . . . But she's
3 fortunate in that she has these many aspects of life as a
4 woman where she has a chance to excel just because of the
5 circumstances of her life.

6 But people don't want that. They want a career woman
7 to be, you know, this way, and they want a mother to be
8 this way. They want a first lady -- I don't know what
9 they want about a first lady. I think most people want a
10 first lady who's really -- they want kind of a surrogate
11 mother. People expect a first lady to be emphatic to
12 anything. The letters she gets, they are indigent, they
13 are pleading, they are "listen to me." She belongs to
14 everybody.

15 But, of course, the press wants somebody very easy to
16 describe, and Rosalynn is not easy to describe. Rosalynn
17 is -- some people say she's so shy that she, you know,
18 used to throw up before she'd give a speech. Other people
19 say she's very cold. They're looking at the same woman.
20 It's the same way I've said over and over again, she has
21 not changed a thing from having no image to the image of
22 having too much influence, you know, and back again

23 QUESTION: You can't see any reason for that changing
24 perception other than the media creating it themselves?

25 ANSWER: Well, one or two stories can take a life of

1 their own. And that's why this is a very -- I find it
2 takes a little while till you realize how important it is
3 to take very, very seriously every story that is written
4 because it can be so damaging and it can be so inaccurate.
5 You know, you just have to -- you have to be more
6 aggressive than I ever dreamed in terms of calling up
7 somebody and saying, you know, "Why didn't you call and
8 check that with me first, because these are the facts.
9 Wouldn't you rather . . ." Reporters want the facts, but
10 sometimes they don't have time or sometimes it's just
11 easier to think that they know some -- you know, to just
12 sort of fill in a blank.

13 So I have felt a responsibility about all of this,
14 probably more so, you know -- in any case, it's more than
15 I really needed to feel that it was my responsibility.
16 But you do.

17 QUESTION: Do you have primarily women reporters who
18 are writing about the first lady these days?

19 ANSWER: That's all changed. When I used to travel
20 with Mrs. Nixon, there was this sort of group of women and
21 they were all the same women. And we got little
22 invitations to go with Mrs. Nixon and then we got "thank
23 you" letters afterwards. And not it's across the board.

24 QUESTION: Excuse me.

25 [Side 2]

1 ANSWER: -- question because there are no more
2 women's pages in the newspapers. And that has changed the
3 way first ladies are covered. I just was going over the
4 list of people who want to cover Mrs. Carter before she
5 leaves: You know, Mike Wallace, Bob Schaefer (phonetic),
6 Meg Greenfield. You know, we're not talk -- it can be --
7 there are really only a couple of sort of social people,
8 social reporters left.

9 QUESTION: And why do you think that's happened just
10 in the last --

11 ANSWER: There's no place for them, I mean because
12 of the newspaper, the way the media has changed.

13 QUESTION: You said because women are now reading or
14 expected to read the substantive parts of the paper;
15 they're not supposed to be limited to the women's pages?

16 ANSWER: Well, I had someone call -- I couldn't
17 believe one of those reporters saying to me "Now, I really
18 want to talk about politics in the role of the first lady.
19 None of this fuzzy-wuzzy lady stuff." I mean here's a
20 woman telling me that, I mean which shows me that she's
21 not very, you know, modern herself in thinking. I mean
22 it's a female chauvinism.

23 But there -- I would say it's 50/50. It's right down
24 the middle whether it's men or women covering or on the
25 other end of the phone. Once in a while people will call

1 and say "You know, I really don't usually do this, but
2 so-and-so's on vacation and I have to ask about the first
3 lady." And I say "Oh, that's all right. Don't be
4 embarrassed about it. You know, most of the people who
5 cover are men. So you don't have to worry."

6 QUESTION: What is the difference, primary difference
7 between the coverage of the president and the coverage of
8 the first lady?

9 ANSWER: Very little, very little. As a matter of
10 fact, the other night when one of the reporters had this
11 little party with former press secretaries for Robin Orr,
12 the day before she was fired, and they both, the UP, Helen
13 Thomas and Marine Santeeny (phonetic), who are the White
14 House press correspondents here, said -- told her that
15 they covered both and they covered them in exactly the
16 same way. There is no difference anymore. There used to
17 be when I covered. There used to be. I mean I used to
18 write down "Mrs. Nixon had on white pumps and she wore
19 white pumps and she wore pearl earrings," you know, and
20 what we had and how she kept her lingerie drawer which she
21 showed us. Well, I can't imagine a first lady showing a
22 reporter how she kept her lingerie drawer now. It's just
23 a whole different thing.

24 QUESTION: With Mrs. Muskie and Mrs. McGovern, were
25 you still in the primarily female reporter stage there, or

1 had that begun to change?

2 ANSWER: With Mrs. -- I remember with Jane in '68,
3 yes. But a vice-president's wife doesn't get all that
4 much coverage anyway. But it was mostly going in and
5 having local women's talk shows, but mostly women's page
6 reporters, yes.

7 With Eleanor, Eleanor was a little bit different
8 because Eleanor gave speeches and she would get up and she
9 was, I think, more popular than George was a lot of the
10 time. So that she was covered a little bit both ways.

11 As far as Rosalynn's concerned, she's always been --
12 there haven't -- but that's been, again, because of the
13 change in the media, I mean the change in newspapers from
14 going from the women's section to -- I mean the society
15 page to style or portfolio that has a little bit of
16 everything, I think that's the basic reason for it. I
17 would say that Eleanor was kind of on the cutting edge of
18 the new period where they were writing editorials now and
19 then about her. There's been no difference with Rosalynn.

20 I mean that's one of the problems: If it's not a
21 political year or if you're not talking about politics,
22 what a first lady does, is it national? Is it local? Is
23 it style?

24 And very often one of the most shocking things that's
25 happened to me in this administration was when the

1 President's Commission on Mental Health was announced in
2 the Eastern -- by the president and Mrs. Carter was made
3 the honorary chairperson, it was not in the *Washington*
4 *Post*. They didn't know where to put it. It was not
5 national news, it was not local news, and it was not style
6 news. So none of the reporters picked it up. I mean this
7 is something -- a significant piece. You know, you're
8 talking about millions of people being affected by this.
9 So that -- that is a lot of reason for a, quote, unquote,
10 "fuzzy image." I mean you don't know whether to report or
11 (unintelligible).

12 Now, the minute you get into a political campaign and
13 certainly the minute that you're out being a surrogate for
14 your husband, you're on the national and you're on the
15 news and then you have a different image.

16 So all of these factors are . . .

17 QUESTION: This pressure on the first lady is also
18 transmitted to the first lady's press secretary. I would
19 think you've got to be much more substantive in your
20 information these days.

21 ANSWER: Oh, yes, I can tell you that the last year,
22 I mean I have sitting over there a box of issues that, I
23 mean, that I don't care -- I mean at any moment Rosalynn
24 would say "Now, exactly what is bio-mass or what did you
25 say the unemployment figure in Lansing, Michigan is?" I

1 mean, you know, it's always a question of trying to keep
2 up with her or keep ahead of her so that you can be
3 helpful or saying -- I mean finally at the end, you know,
4 I would say "Oh, I don't know." I just carried everything
5 with me, my head with me. It's a great deal of pressure
6 if you have a first lady who feels the necessity to answer
7 all those questions.

8 In the past I would say that, in both Eleanor and
9 Jane's case, they would say "I don't know." But Rosalynn
10 said over and over again, "I went out in '76 and I
11 promised people, I told people what Jimmy Carter would do.
12 I cannot go back and say 'I don't know what he's done.'"
13 So she took a great deal of responsibility to keep
14 informed and to be briefed.

15 QUESTION: You mentioned the mental health thing as
16 being one of the greatest frustrations in this four years.
17 What -- pick out one or two of your greatest triumphs in
18 the press relations area, things you're proudest of,
19 events or image effect.

20 ANSWER: Well, one thing I was proud of is when we
21 did an hour documentary with BBC, which somehow or other
22 you sort of feel like you're, you know, kind of a producer
23 behind there because you're picking out the kinds of
24 things that you think that you'd like to -- the showcase
25 that was for a series called "The Americans." It's still

1 being shown all over the world. They sold it to Time Life
2 here. Those kinds of things. Some of the television
3 things that we did that were sort of, you know, I felt
4 that I had a great deal to do with that. Some of the
5 speeches that I wrote for her, which she and the president
6 both liked and maybe changed a word or two and the
7 (unintelligible).

8 QUESTION: Pick out one or two, one or two that we'll
9 have in the library, and we need to know they came from
10 your (unintelligible).

11 ANSWER: Well, one that was sort of an answer to the
12 (unintelligible), and it's in the National Press Club
13 speech, and the Morehouse College speech and the speech
14 she gave for the Mental Health Association dinner about
15 courage. You know, just (unintelligible).

16 But then on the other hand, there are a lot of
17 speeches I was very proud of, the one she gave the other
18 day that was in the paper. That's -- to me, the idea of
19 saying "I would like you to give a speech and write
20 (unintelligible)," it would be wonderful to give a speech
21 that we could get up in that little corner next to Herb
22 Block's (phonetic) cartoon and get somehow or other on the
23 editorial pages of the *Washington Post*, and then to pick
24 up the paper and see the speech and see an editorial about
25 her accomplishments in the city is about as satisfying

1 as -- in this job.

2 But on the other hand, there were so many things
3 where I would send her an idea and she'd diddle with it
4 and then send it back, and then I would fool with it or
5 somebody would have a lot of input into it or, you know,
6 we'd send it . . . I guess it's the things that -- oh,
7 and when she went up to see the Pope, to meet -- greet the
8 Pope, and there were a lot of people who wrote a lot of
9 different things. And I guess really, basically, I take
10 some credit. And she and I sort of together wrote what
11 she said. I mean I feel very -- we can talk about those
12 things, but those things are satisfying.

13 QUESTION: Did you advise the first lady on how she
14 should -- what kind of image she should try to put forward
15 or what her appearance should be? Did you ever give her
16 specific advice?

17 ANSWER: Only when asked, when she would ask me if
18 that would be -- oh, sometimes when we went on -- I
19 remember when she went on the Phil Donahue show, I said
20 "Wear that great white suit and that blue thing because
21 it's just perfect," sometimes like that. Or I'd say "What
22 are you going to wear?," and she'd say "I don't know.
23 What should I wear?" when something was very important.

24 "Image" is a word I just hate. I mean, you know, you
25 are what you are and you make the best out of that. And

1 as far as her image is concerned, I've always thought that
2 the very aspects of her life, the various phases of her
3 life, she should just be very proud of them and just let
4 them all -- be as candid about them as she can be.

5 QUESTION: Was the first lady a person who did try to
6 run her own staff and spoke frequently with each of the
7 major office heads, or was she someone who preferred to be
8 a little removed?

9 ANSWER: Nobody ever knew when -- when the phone
10 rings -- and I mean she's the most (unintelligible), I'm
11 sure. In picking up the phone, someone would say "Well,
12 have you talked to her today?"

13 "No. Have you talked to her?"

14 "Well, she just called me three times" or " She just
15 talked to me." Or we'll say "She's really upset about
16 this" and she talks to a lot of different people.

17 She's not the most organized person in the world.
18 And she's very much, I think, like the president in terms
19 of -- but -- when I say "but," being very, very meticulous
20 about everything. I mean a lot of times we've all said,
21 "If she'd just turn that over to us and not worry about
22 it. Why does she spend her time worrying about that,
23 because we've all worried about it and we can handle it."
24 And I think that she probably learned to work from the
25 president. I think that's the way the president works,

1 from what I understand.

2 QUESTION: You've had close associations with three
3 very important women in this time and age. How would you
4 compare them on intelligence, on personality, on
5 initiative, on substance, the degree to which they're
6 interested in substantive issues, and on their
7 relationship to their husband and his work? How would
8 you -- 25 words or less.

9 ANSWER: Well, that's a tough one. Yeah, that's a
10 tough one. I mean I think that I couldn't compare them
11 and I wouldn't because they're so different. I mean
12 they're all of them very, very loyal, unswervingly loyal.
13 I mean, my gosh, I think all three of them would tie
14 themselves to a railroad track to help their husbands.
15 Their personal relationships have ranged from practically
16 non-existence to -- I think the Carters probably have one
17 of the closest marriages I've ever seen. I mean it is
18 something that I think perhaps has caused a lot of bad
19 press from maybe cynical women reporters or male reporters
20 who see this and really say "Oh, that's too good to be
21 true" are maybe a little jealous of them.

22 I think that in terms of intelligence, they've all
23 had this great innate intelligence. Jane was kind of what
24 I -- is a very open kind of person, but at the same time
25 she kind of covers up how much she knows. Eleanor would,

1 you know, has an endlessly seeking mind. And George once
2 said to me, "She's totally enamored at the last person she
3 talked to." But it was wonderful, she had books and she
4 had sayings and she had quotations. And I spent most of
5 time trying to write this book really for her, figuring
6 out which one of her quotations she really like the most.
7 She loved ideas.

8 Rosalynn is by far the most driving, pragmatic, I
9 suppose. I don't know. I certainly (unintelligible) in
10 terms of intelligence, I think a lot of it has to do with
11 what you're opportunity is. I think maybe that's the
12 word, "opportunity," is seeing an opportunity and making
13 the most out of it. Rosalynn, by all counts, probably
14 took advantage of opportunities more than anybody else
15 I've ever worked for, whether the other two women and
16 other people as well.

17 But I would never really compare them. They're
18 all -- I don't see much of Eleanor anymore because Eleanor
19 is a very -- she's in (unintelligible). Her politics and
20 the president's politics are obviously at such variance
21 that she felt that we could not be close. But I'll see
22 her again when this is all over. You know, we'll be
23 friends.

24 QUESTION: Are there any other things that you'd like
25 to talk about I haven't brought up about the last four

1 years in the job and the things you've done?

2 ANSWER: I can't think of any. I have to take time
3 to sort it all out. I mean I don't know what's been the
4 most satisfying and what has been the most difficult.
5 It's been all those things together.

6 QUESTION: And --

7 ANSWER: It's been a very -- I wouldn't have missed
8 it. Really, I wouldn't have missed it. I think you
9 probably could only take it so long at the pace we've been
10 going, even at any stage in life, that the volume is
11 tremendous.

12 QUESTION: Yeah, and the hours, I would imagine.

13 ANSWER: Yeah.

14 QUESTION: Could you say just you or staff director --
15 and you've been here and worked with people in the East
16 Wing, of course, the whole four years. Could you say a
17 little bit about how the job has been broken down and just
18 a brief bit about the personalities of each of the persons
19 here?

20 ANSWER: Well, Gretchen Posten is the social
21 secretary. And Gretchen, as we laughingly call her, our
22 Cecil B. DeMille. She's a very creative, very driving
23 person who is, I think, probably difficult to work for,
24 but people seem to follow her with great -- with great
25 enthusiasm. And I think her ideas that she presents to

1 the president and Mrs. Carter about what she wants to have
2 done here have been extraordinarily creative in many way
3 if you really go back and look over them.

4 She has a key role, because, of course, she not only
5 has to worry about what Mrs. Carter wants but what the
6 president wants and what the senior staff of the West Wing
7 wants. So her job is very, very important. I mean I told
8 Mrs. Reagan's people that they had to have a press
9 secretary and a social secretary by inauguration day.
10 They didn't need all these other people until they got
11 that settled because those two things . . . And the press
12 secretary and the social secretary have to work very well
13 together. And Gretchen and I have had a good
14 relationship; I mean ideas that just, you know, spring off
15 each other. I mean she's very good at taking somebody's
16 else suggestions and saying "That's a fabulous idea." And
17 we work well together, I think.

18 Kathy Cade, who is Mrs. Carter's projects director,
19 is a very bright young woman who's more probably -- she's
20 a pragmatic person. I think she probably -- she's very
21 smart. She has gone into the substance of the mental
22 health legislation. She is very careful about follow-
23 through. I have a very good relationship with Kathy, I
24 think. We've -- this is kind of a healthy competition
25 over here, I think.

1 Mrs. Carter's scheduler, Jane Fenderson, is someone
2 I've know for a long time. She worked with Senator
3 Muskie. Her job -- I don't know. That's a different kind
4 of a job. The scheduler can do either -- be the person
5 who kind of tells the first lady what to do or she can
6 just be the person that puts the schedule together. I
7 have probably the least -- even though she's been my
8 friend the longest, I have the least relationship with
9 her.

10 Madeline has become really a close friend 'cause
11 we've traveled, the three -- Madeline and Rosalynn and
12 Mary have been on those planes everyplace. I mean every
13 place Rosalynn goes, Madeline goes as a personal assistant
14 and I go as her press secretary. So over the years we've
15 worked out a very good relationship there. We're very,
16 very different, but I respect her for what she does and I
17 think that . . .

18 QUESTION: How are you different?

19 ANSWER: Well, we're just very, very different. I
20 mean Madeline is a very kind of bureaucratic person. She
21 knows -- she's very proprietary about the first lady. She
22 really takes care of her. She really protects her. We're
23 just very different, that's all. But I respect her for
24 what she does and for being very tough when she has to be
25 and saying "no" to a lot of things. And that's a problem

1 that, you know, some people can't say "no." The people
2 that I've probably had the least -- I mean I have very
3 little tolerance for people who are not able to say "I'm
4 sorry, that's not right for the first lady" and to just
5 really handle it for it, to turn things down. That's one
6 thing you have to do. That's just (unintelligible).

7 QUESTION: I would think so.

8 ANSWER: So that's about it. I have no relationship
9 with Kit Dobbelle, and very few people here do. She's a
10 nice person, but I just don't know what she does.

11 QUESTION: She's officially staff director?

12 ANSWER: Right.

13 QUESTION: Are there regular staff meetings or . . .

14 ANSWER: No. We've only had one since she's one.
15 We had one.

16 QUESTION: This is crossing the line a little bit in
17 administrations, but you made a reference to a party in
18 which Robin Orr attending, a party for Robin Orr, past
19 first lady's press secretaries. According to the *Post*,
20 the *Washington Post*, there was a story that developed that
21 evening about supposedly Nancy Reagan had suggested that
22 the Carters might move out of the White House early. What
23 do you know about that story?

24 ANSWER: I don't know whether it did or not. That
25 story, Helen Thomas was at that party, Helen Thomas and

1 Marine Santeeny, Mrs. Nixon's press secretary was there,
2 Liz Carpenter was there, I was there, a couple of other
3 reporters. Unfortunately, I got lost and I was late and I
4 had a dinner date and I had to leave early. The story was
5 that everybody left and Helen stayed behind and Robin told
6 her this. That has been denied, so I don't know that that
7 was the case or not. It was very clear to me the day that
8 I met Robin with Mrs. Reagan and Mrs. Reagan
9 (unintelligible) to Mrs. Carter. Kit and I were there and
10 Robin and Nancy Reynolds were there, the (unintelligible)
11 of us. And it was clear that this was -- was not the
12 right choice.

13 She came over the next day to see me too. And I feel
14 very -- I think it's a human tragedy what happened to her,
15 that she was not hired. It's a very good example of not
16 hiring somebody in advance, I mean before you see them or
17 talk to them. And she should never have taken the job
18 without talking to Mrs. Reagan. I mean if you cannot --
19 if you have to go through somebody, which now they just
20 this afternoon said that Peter McCoy, the staff director,
21 will be working -- will be a deputy assistant to the
22 president, which means that they're going to go back
23 again. I don't think the East Wing, as we have seen it
24 and as it is now will ever be the same -- will be the same
25 in this administration. It will now be back the way it

1 was when Erlichman and Halderman ran it, really, and told
2 people what to do. So if that's the way Mrs. Reagan
3 wants it, it will probably work out fine. It will be just
4 intolerable for me and I know Mrs. Carter. I've heard
5 Mrs. Carter say, you know, several times when I'd say
6 "Well, so-and-so said that," and she'd say "Well, so-and-
7 so is not my staff. He works for Jimmy." I mean -- you
8 know.

9 QUESTION: She treasured her independence?

10 ANSWER: Oh, absolutely, absolutely.

11 QUESTION: Was Robin -- Robin Orr has described
12 herself as a chatty-Kathy kind of person. Was that the
13 problem --

14 ANSWER: Oh (unintelligible) is what I call her. I
15 mean she just walked right in in front of -- Helen Thomas
16 is really the dean, I suppose you would say, of the
17 reporters. She's been around and she's been No. 2 and No.
18 1, I guess. She walked in and said, "Well, I'm sorry
19 that" -- she said, "I've had" -- "let me tell you two
20 things that have happened." She said, "I have just had
21 two hours with the dean of all women reporters in
22 Washington, Betty Beal." [sp?] And, of course, at that
23 point everyone -- you know, Betty is a social columnist,
24 and here she was with very hard -- serious, hardcore
25 reporters. And I think she simply was naïve. She had not

1 been to Washington. She had no idea what she was getting
2 in for. She just was wrong for the job. So I think it's
3 just such a shame. She worked for 30 years and gave up
4 her job. It must be humiliating for her.

5 QUESTION: Yes.

6 ANSWER: I'm going to write to her and tell her I
7 saw (unintelligible).

8 QUESTION: Especially played out in a national stage.

9 ANSWER: And then she -- well, yes, but then she
10 came here and she asked me all of these questions about
11 how -- who should Mrs. Reagan be interviewed by and who
12 I -- I mean the naiveté of coming in and expecting
13 somebody to tell you how to run your job, I mean I was
14 more than -- I mean people the people who have been here,
15 I cannot tell you how much time I've spent on this
16 transition trying to help people fill this job, which is
17 fine, I'm happy to do it, but it reaches a point where . . .

18 QUESTION: What do you plan to do now? Are you going
19 back to your public relations firm or . . .

20 ANSWER: No, I'll be doing -- I'm going to write and
21 I'll probably do some speaking and I don't know. I'm not
22 going to write about my four years at the White House, but
23 I am a writer, I am a writer and that's what I do and
24 that's what I love to do. And I look forward to a less
25 public life. I mean I've been in and out and in and out,

1 you know, I mean back and forth and it's time now to take
2 in instead of give out so much.

3 QUESTION: You will not write about the first
4 lady's -- the first lady or about your Carter years?

5 ANSWER: Oh, in a context of an overall story about
6 my own life, I will. But not just a book about my four
7 years, never. And I've already told Rosalynn that -- I
8 mean I've been asked if I would write a book about
9 Rosalynn. As long as Rosalynn's going to write a book
10 about Rosalynn, then nobody else should write a book about
11 her.

12 QUESTION: And she is definitely going to do that?

13 ANSWER: I think so. She's talked about it.

14 QUESTION: Thank you.

15 ANSWER: You're welcome.

16 QUESTION: Anything else you'd like to say?

17 ANSWER: No, no.

18 QUESTION: Hope you'll come to the Carter Presidential
19 Library and see some of your contributions there.

20 ANSWER: Well, thank you.

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22 [End of Recorded Material]

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