

For the Record...

An Early Morning Interview With Martha Mitchell

Excerpted from an interview held by Barbara Walters with Martha Mitchell on the Today Show, February 11, 1971.

Walters: Mrs. Mitchell, I hope, if we can in this interview, that we'll be able to let the American people have an idea of what you're really like and what your motivations sincerely are. So let me just start with that.

What is your motivation speaking out as you do? What do you want people to know?

Mrs. Martha Mitchell: Barbara, one never knows oneself, and it's very difficult for me to say that . . . I have many motivations and I love to do things; I love to know people. And what I'm doing in Washington just seems to come more or less natural.

Walters: Well, you've made headlines because of your habit of making telephone calls late at night. At those times, do you know what it is that impells you to do it?

Mrs. Mitchell: Well, let's straighten that one out. May I ask you a question?

Walters: Certainly.

Mrs. Mitchell: How many telephone calls have I made late at night?

Walters: Well, the one that comes to my mind—and really if you had to pin me down, as you are, I would think of the one about Senator Fulbright. There have been others though, have there not?

Mrs. Mitchell: Can you name them?

Walters: No.

Mrs. Mitchell: Can anyone else name them?

Walters: I don't know. Is that your answer, that you've really just made that one?

Mrs. Mitchell: That is the only one late telephone call. And, furthermore, why should everybody get so excited about it when I was making it on my own time to a newspaper which is open all night?

Walters: Now, when you do these things—a telephone call or a statement to the press—do you discuss this with your husband? Is he aware that you're going to do it?

Mrs. Mitchell: My husband gets a big bang out of what I do. He seems to enjoy it thoroughly. Barbara, I don't represent the government; I don't represent my husband's viewpoint. I'm an individual; I'm a free individual. And, consequently, what I say and do he gets a tremendous bang out of . . .

Walters: How do you feel about liberal Republicans?

Mrs. Mitchell: Well, I agree with them in many ways. In many ways, I don't. It's the same way with conservatives. I agree with them in some ways; in some ways, I don't.

Walters: Well, let's say a liberal Republican, like Senator Goodell. Now, you were not displeased when he was defeated for reelection.

Mrs. Mitchell: I prefer not to discuss Senator Goodell, because I feel somewhat like I do about Lindsay, Lindsay.

Walters: It is Lindsay?

Mrs. Mitchell: Lindsay.

Walters: It's Lindsay?

Mrs. Mitchell: Yes.

Walters: We're talking about John Lindsay?

Mrs. Mitchell: Yes.

Walters: It's not Lindsay, it's Lindsay?

Mrs. Mitchell: Lindsay.

Walters: What do you mean?

Mrs. Mitchell: Well, I've worked for the mayor of New York, and worked rather

hard, especially among some of my good Democratic friends in Washington—in New York. Pardon me, I never know where I am. I say one and then the other.

And I really went out full for me. And all of a sudden, he just didn't come up to my expectations of a mayor of New York. And about that time, Mike Quill started in on him. And it used to tickle me to death when Mike got on television and ranted and raved, and he called Lindsay 'Lindsay'. So when I got mad at Mr. Lindsay, I started calling him the same thing.

And I have a peculiarity, Barbara. I must



tell you about. When I don't like somebody, I usually have a nickname for them.

Walters: So John Lindsay is John Lindsay.

Mrs. Mitchell: Lindsay.

Walters: Now the Republicans have a Democrat in their midsts, former Governor of Texas, John Connally, who is a Cabinet member. How do you feel about this: a Democrat in with the Republicans?

Mrs. Mitchell: Well, I think . . . [Mr.] Connally is perfectly wonderful. I assure you the President of the United States is correct in every move he makes . . .

Walters: Do you think so? Is there ever a time when the President does something that you don't agree with?

Mrs. Mitchell: There have been times, but it's perhaps because—well, I know it's not him. But he has advisers, and they can't always be perfect.

Walters: Can you think of a time when you've disagreed?

Mrs. Mitchell: No one's perfect. Not specifically, no. You asked me about Mr. Connally. Now, I think that he's a delightful person from what I've heard about him. And I know. As my husband said, I didn't speak to him for two days after it was done.

Walters: You didn't speak to your husband for two days?

Mrs. Mitchell: No, not that he had any-

thing to do with it. But I wasn't exactly certain this was a good move. So I don't know. I'm really not sure.

Walters: Why didn't you think it was a good move?

Mrs. Mitchell: I'm not certain that we should have Democrats on the Cabinet. And that's my feeling.

Walters: If you could mount a soap box and talk about anything you wanted, as indeed you can right now since we're on national television, what would you like to say? Anything on your chest you'd like to get off?

Mrs. Mitchell: If I had a little soap box and could go around the country, I think I would be inclined to start out on these revolutionary people in this country that I think should be run out. And I don't believe in them; I don't think that a democratic country, how democratic it may be, should tolerate people that want drastic overthrow of the government of this country.

Walters: Which for example? What groups of people?

Mrs. Mitchell: Well, it's hard to say, because there's a whole list of subversive groups and people in this country that I do not have my fingers on. These are in the files of the various and sundry departments in government. And I do not have my fingers on all of these. And so it's difficult for me to single out any. If I singled out one, I'd like to cover this whole group who are violent.

Walters: What do you think we should do?

Mrs. Mitchell: Throw them out. Kick them out. Send them to Cuba. Mr. Castro has emptied all his prisons over there. And those are the unfortunate ones that we've gotten. We have gotten a lot of good ones. But you take the return trip on that. And what happens? They go dead-head back to Cuba.

Now, in these planes all these revolutionaries, if they want that type of government, can get out of America and go to Cuba.

Walters: Do you think they should have a trial in this country before they leave? You're going to just ship them out?

Mrs. Mitchell: Not if they come out and advocate such a thing. And I'm only speaking of the ones that want violent revolution, which means overthrow of the government . . .

The Washington Post

EUGENE MEYER, 1875-1959
PHILIP L. GRAHAM, 1915-1963

KATHARINE GRAHAM
Publisher

PAUL R. IGNATIUS President
BENJAMIN C. BRADLEE Executive Editor

Philip L. Geyelin, Editorial Page Editor; Eugene C. Patterson, Managing Editor; James J. Daley, Vice President and General Manager; Gerald W. Siegel, Vice President and Secretary; Robert P. Thome, Treasurer; Harry Gladstein, Vice President and Business Manager; Joseph P. Lynch, Vice President-Advertising; Jack F. Patterson, Circulation Director; Julian J. Eberle, Production Operations Director.

Published by The Washington Post Company:

FREDERICK S. BEEBE

Chairman of the Board

KATHARINE GRAHAM

President

JOHN W. SWEETERMAN

Vice Chairman of the Board