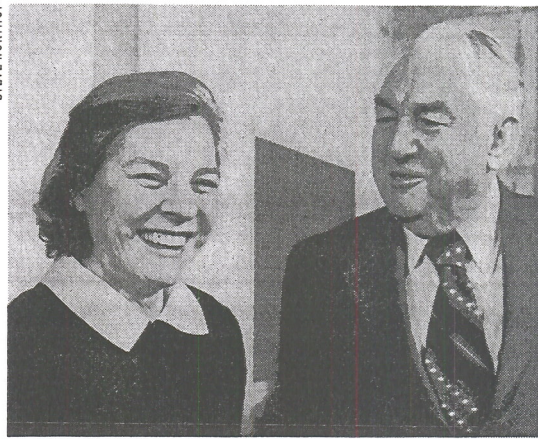


"He's extremely intelligent. He has so much common sense. He's become a sort of folk hero." Could it be that the lady praising Senator **Sam Ervin** was Novelist **Mary McCarthy**, whose tongue is generally sharp enough to crack ice at 30 paces? Indeed it was. In Washington to cover the Watergate hearings for the *London Observer*, Mary became such a fan of Ervin's that she asked for a little talk with him. How had the Senator got his legal talent? she inquired. "He told me that he comes from a long line of lawyers from North Carolina—and one who practiced away." Where was that? "South Carolina," the Senator answered. In her first dispatch, the Parisian expatriate, who once did a stint

as theater critic for the *Partisan Review*, found some highly theatrical touches in "the rather shabby" marble-pillared Senate Caucus Room. She might even do a book on Watergate. "The characters of the story, though," she added, "are very dull and basically uninteresting. Starting with Richard Nixon."

STEVE NORTHUP



MARY MCCARTHY MEETS SAM ERVIN

James 7/9/73

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