

Chris HURFORD

Q For the record, this is an interview for and on behalf of the Dunstan Foundation as part of the Don Dunstan History Project being conducted with Chris Hurford, the former Federal Member for Adelaide in his house at North Adelaide. It's being conducted by Mike Duigan as a volunteer worker for the project. Chris has been shown the terms of engagement as required by the Foundation and has sighted the purposes of the project.

I have previously prepared a list of questions or a list of categories of questions, have shown them to Chris, discussed them with him, and it's agreed that we will move through those in the order that has now been agreed.

Chris, thank you for doing this interview. If at any time you want to go off the record I'll push a button and see if I can do it. You'll note from the rules of engagement that whatever is said in this interview is subject to whatever conditions you place on it. You're happy with all of the information that you've been given to date?

Yes, thank you.

Perhaps we could start with some personal information, for those who might not remember. Chris, can you just tell us a bit about your family and your decision to become involved in Labor politics in Adelaide and how you became the Federal Member for Adelaide?

A OK, but please be warned: there is no short answer to those personal questions: before I turned 15, I had lived on 3 continents , which experiences all left their mark. Readers may wish to move on to the next question without bothering about my unusual background for Australian Labor politics. For those who stay, here is my story about my family and early history.

I was born and christened Christopher John Hurford-Jones in Mhow, Central India, [about halfway between Mumbai (Bombay) and Agra (Taj Mahal)] in 1931. My father, an Englishman, from Bristol where his father was a lawyer, chose a career in the Indian Army after the First World War during which he served as an officer with the British Army in Gallipoli and in France.

Chris HURFORD

My mother, an Australian, was the daughter of an Anglo- Australian mining manager and a feisty Irish- Australian who were married in Geraldton in 1897. My Mum and Dad met in Rangoon, Burma, in 1919 where Dad was serving with his regiment and in which country my maternal grandfather was managing a mining corporation. My parents soon moved with Dad's job to India where they were part of the British Raj until Indian independence in 1947.

In 1940, aged 9, Mum took my younger brother and me to Perth, WA, her home city, to boarding school at the boys-only Jesuit St. Louis School (later merged with Mum's girls-only Loreto College into the now John XXIIIrd College). Our parents gambled on the war being a short one: she placed us in the supervisory care of her parents who were then semi-retired from the mining world and were farming near Boyup Brook, about halfway between Perth and Albany. For 5 years, my brother and I spent memorable school holidays on the farm or on the coast for a summer holiday at Flinders Bay/ Augusta. You will gather our parents lost their gamble on the war's length.

In 1945 Mum braved Japanese submarines in the Indian Ocean to collect us. After 3 months acquainting ourselves with Dad in the Nilgris Hills (near Bangalore) where he was then stationed, we proceeded by military repatriation ship (the war was over) from Bombay to London and on to an English boarding school; our parents had decided to semi-retire in England when the time came, which happened a couple of years later. Our secondary boarding school for my final 4 years of education was the Oratory School, founded by John Henry Cardinal Newman now on his way to a Catholic sainthood. The Oratory was in the throes of a post-war rebirth in the Thames Valley near Reading, having been a victim of a wartime evacuation.

In 1949, at the end of my schooling and having just turned 18, the family of Mum, Dad and their two younger sons (an older brother had lost an arm as the result of a war injury and made a life in England as a lawyer) became ten pound pommy migrants, emigrating to Australia with other ten pound pommy migrants in a ship

Chris HURFORD

chartered by the Australian government out of Liverpool.(I had no premonition that 35 years later I would be Australia's Minister for Immigration!) Although one of us was a born Australian (Mum) and 2 half-Aussies (the boys), the bread-winner (Dad) was within the rules, an Englishman emigrating with his family to seek a job down-under in the context of his leaving India in competition with thousands of others doing the same and other thousands being demobilised at the end of the Great War.

We disembarked in Fremantle. After a time helping on the farm, Dad found work in Perth with the National Mutual and Elder Smith companies. I commenced work training as a Chartered Accountant in a large firm, Rankin Morrison & Co (later KPMG). It was the first of a number of times I have been obliged to make a new life in a new location. Practice in networking did not harm my later political career.

In 1952, after 3 enjoyable years in Perth, I moved from being an accountant in private practise in Perth to being one in the mining industry in Broken Hill. I was attracted by the lead bonus (a bonus based on the price of lead) ; the price and the bonus were at their peak at this time of the Korean War. The bonus doubled my remuneration. I came of age in Broken Hill living with mainly university graduates in a bachelors' quarters known as the House of Lords (the other two 'batches' were named the House of Commons and Hangover Square!). We were all employed by the Zink Corporation and the New Broken Hill Consolidated, related, jointly managed companies with their Head Office in London. Broken Hill gave me a splendid introduction to the historically great Australian trades union movement in what was a union-led town. Also I completed the first of my accounting qualifications after studies at the Broken Hill Technical College. This Broken Hill apprenticeship for a future Labor member of Parliament was hard to beat, even if I say so myself.

In 1954, at the age of 23, I left Broken Hill after 2 years to study for a university degree in economics at the London School of Economics (LSE) which catered very well for part-time students between 6 and 9 on week-nights. Although saving the

Chris HURFORD

lead bonus enabled me to make the move to the LSE, my savings were insufficient to study fulltime. So I worked in my accounting profession for a year before winning a job as an accountant in the retail industry with the well-known Marks & Spencer company. After a year working in a group of stores, I was transferred to the Head Office to work with buying departments. After a further year in that role, they allowed me a leave of absence to complete my degree fulltime; I had gained a London County Council Fellowship enabling me to afford the opportunity of gaining the degree in a more reasonable timeframe.

I was awarded a second class honours degree, a Bachelor of Science (Economics) [a BSc(Econ)] in July 1958. After a short return to Marks & Spencer, I decided to return to Australia and was recruited by an English firm of chartered accountants to spend a couple of months with them in London before reporting for work in their Sydney office in early 1959. One step I took at this stage of my life to prepare for my return to Australia was to streamline the hyphenated surname with which I had been burdened at christening. I thought about just getting rid of the hyphen and being then “the Jones Boy”.(Do you remember the song-“the whole town’s talking about?) I decided that Hurford would suit better. Just as well—because to win a place for my 18plus years in Federal Parliament, I had to beat a Jones!

Adelaide had been the nearest ‘big smoke to paint red’ during my time in Broken Hill. I had met a number of South Australian folk during short visits—which was sufficient, in my over 4 years in London, to become acquainted with many more at Adelaide parties. One person whom I met at one such party was my future wife, a social worker, Lorna Seedsman; we got engaged after my return to Sydney later in 1959. (Incidentally, I don’t think taking on a husband with a Hurford-Jones surname would have suited her!)

Lorna had obligations to help her widower-father whilst he was still in the workforce as general manager of Elder Smith Ltd—so I decided to move from Sydney to Adelaide in the middle of 1960 to join a firm of chartered accountants here. We

Chris HURFORD

were married in Adelaide in December 1960. When she died in 2006, we had been married for over 45 years—and she had been my best friend for about 50 years. We had/have 5 children, all of whom are contributing well to Australia’s ‘public good’, not the delinquents many expect a politician’s offsprings to be!.

The combination of, firstly, my studies in economics at the LSE leading me to the belief that “laissez faire” was not the path to a more prosperous, contented society and that the market should be “on tap , not on top”, and, secondly, the vast contrast between the “equality” characteristic of life in Broken Hill and the vast, class-ridden “inequality” of British society which had been tackled admirably as a first step by the Atlee Labour Government in the early years after the second world war, that factor and others led me to join the Labour Party in London in 1957. I joined the Australian Labor Party in Sydney in 1959 (the Woolloomooloo branch). Soon after my marriage, I transferred my membership to the South Australian branch of the ALP in 1961. I am now in my 50th year of SA membership.

Q Perhaps before you go beyond that, let us dwell while you tell us who your political friends and allies were, or who became your political friends and allies, when you moved to Adelaide.

A On arriving in Adelaide, I knew no political allies other than my future wife, Lorna. My first political friends were those I met when I entered SA Labor’s office in the Trades Hall building seeking a transfer of my membership from Sydney. There were Martin Nicholls, who later became the federal member for the then new seat of Bonython, and Geoff Virgo, who later entered the state parliament and became a prominent Labor government Minister. They were my first ‘sponsors’ in that era of patronage prior to organised factions. There would have been more enthusiasm for me because I undertook a revival of the North Adelaide sub-branch . [Why SUB-branch? Because in our federation, the State (eg SA) is the branch] Very soon I was meeting Reg Bishop, later a Senator but then secretary of the Trades and Labour

Chris HURFORD

Council (TLC), who became a great friend, and the well-known Clyde Cameron, who had been MHR for Hindmarsh since 1949 and was also a friend and sponsor.

Q So you made the right friends such as to enable you to get preselected pretty well soon after establishing a relationship with these men?

A You will recall I was reviving the North Adelaide sub-branch in 1961; the sub-branch members elected me to represent the sub-branch at monthly State Council meetings and Annual conferences of the ALP—so it was not unexpected that SA leaders would ask me to be Labor’s candidate in the then-safely-Liberal-held State parliamentary seat of Torrens. Thus, I have to correct your inference in putting the sole emphasis on such words as “right friends” and “relationship”. Frankly, there were not many, or any, in those days prior to Labor’s revival, clamouring to walk the streets of such suburbs as Walkerville, Medindie, Gilberton, Prospect, even North Adelaide to promote the Labor cause!

Personally, it was a very difficult time for me to accept the challenge. I had not been married for long. I was working for the very-established, largest firm of chartered accountants in SA, auditing such companies as Hills Hoist: I suspected I would be obliged to find another job—which turned out to be the case. I was living from week-to-week financially; the lead bonus had been spent long ago on such needs as the LSE fees. I had to rely on the ALP for campaigning resources other than my and Lorna’s shoe leather. However, with lovely encouragement from the ‘home front’ (Lorna was a social worker at the Adelaide Children’s Hospital), I found that needed new job as a taxation accountant in a smaller firm and became endorsed as Labor’s candidate for Torrens in the 1962 SA state election.

The good news is that Labor, with my and Lorna’s help, achieved an 8% swing our way; the Liberal sitting member won only with preferences from the DLP. The bad news was that Labor narrowly failed to win government so I, out of loyalty, was obliged to stand again in 1965—in a seat which I felt was never winnable on the

Chris HURFORD

then-boundaries. That proved to be true; I merely held the vote in 1965---but Labor did win seats elsewhere to gain the SA state government for the first time in very many years.

Q This was the State Parliament you were talking about.

A Yes---whereas my future lay in the federal sphere. Returning to your earlier question about ALP friends and colleagues, in addition to those I have already mentioned, there was Jim Toohey, a wonderful person, later an SA senator in the federal parliament who was, when I first knew him, the secretary of the Vehicle Builders Union. I must not forget Jack Wright too, a very able, likeable person from the Australian Worker Union. Also I was advancing in the party at the same time as the very able Hugh Hudson. He was in the Economics Department of the University of Adelaide—and later Flinders University. He, too, was pre-selected for a state seat—in his case in the Glenelg area. He won it in 1965—and became a highly regarded Minister of Education as well as of other portfolios. We became spokespeople in some areas, with fairly regular broadcasts on 5KA. Frank Walsh was the elderly leader, and as I'll explain later, Don Dunstan was the de-facto leader at this time, the planner and deliverer of the Labor revival. Hugh Hudson and I were the new boys on the block.

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Q And the economists on the block.

A And the economists – although Hugh was more of an economist than me because he went full-time into university economics, whereas I went back to my chartered accountancy. But through that chartered accountancy I got to know more trades union leaders well because I found them coming to my chartered accountancy firm as clients..

Q And then came 1969 and ---.

A Yes, there I was in 1969 in a position to be the Labor candidate for the seat of Adelaide of which the state seat of Torres was a major part. Not easy, because I had to beat somebody for the pre-selection; it was Joe Sexton, who had been the federal member for Adelaide when the seat was lost in 1966. He was a former Secretary of the Party and a former trade union leader; in 1966 Arthur Calwell was the Party's leader and the main issue was a then-unpopular policy to withdraw our troops from

Chris HURFORD

the Vietnam war, That caused the loss. In 1969 that issue had turned in our favour. I won a difficult pre-selection, one reason being because the Party was looking for a younger candidate

Q So was your harder candidate the Labor man seeking pre-selection, Sexton, or was it the incumbent Liberal?

A Well, the incumbent Liberal was Andrew T. Jones and he was not expected to be beaten because he, during his time in Parliament, generated incredible publicity; it was only at the end that the name recognition turned against him because of his own actions, particularly in the week of the election being caught at the wheel of his car over the limit, drunk driving.. I think I was going to win anyway, in spite of that last effort on his part to give me the seat, but nobody was prepared to tell me that at the time I undertook the task. We did not have so much polling at that time so we were flying blind and this fellow was just so well-known that he seemed to be harder at the time than Joe Sexton.

Q Chris, if we can turn now to item seven because at your request you wanted to talk more, early in the interview, about your relationship with Dunstan, how you met him and the nature of the relationship that developed over the years.

A Yes, I'm glad to give that background. Martin Nicholls and Geoff Virgo, who had their eyes on me as the candidate for Torrens, arranged a meeting with Don Dunstan, which took place in that little lounge in the Parliament House on one of the ways through to the dining room there.

Q The hallway changed to an office.

A That's right.

Q And this is in respect of the first period –

A The first pre-selection for Torrens in the 1962 state election.

–Q first preselection.

A Yes, this would be about 1961, I think at the end of 1961, after I'd had about six months in the SA Labor Party and reformed the North Adelaide Sub-Branch. They

Chris HURFORD

wanted Don to assess me ; there were no problems there, but it illustrated his prominent position in those fairly early days of his parliamentary career. Eventually I got to know most other State Members ,the State being my focus at that time, but it was quickly clear to me that Don was the leader in waiting.

Q So they needed to introduce you to Don –

A Yes.

Q in a more formal way to see –

A Yes.

Q as a result of the interview whether or not there might be a relationship which would work into the future.

A That's right. And I was endorsed unopposed.

Q And how did the relationship develop after that?

A Very well in all respects-but particularly for me in terms of opportunities for experience. When I didn't win in 1962 I believe it was Don Dunstan in particular who supported me for appointment to a few boards. He, like me , believed that government ministers who knew what they wanted, appointed people who shared their values---unlike the silly Kevin Rudd in more recent years.

I became a member of the boards of the old Savings Bank of South Australia, of the Municipal Tramways Trust and of the Social Welfare Advisory Committee, so that was for me a good, all-round group of challenges for opportunities and experience ; and for the bank, let me say, it was a breath of fresh air for the management because, after all those years of so-called Liberal 'government' – a really conservative government rather than liberal – of Tom Playford & Co, the bank chairman was in his eighties, there was only one other Labor appointment before I got there and I'm not going to remember his name but he was the publicity bloke from the PR firm who used to run the Labor campaigns in those days. And apart from him, I was less than half the age of any of the other directors. Alan Cilento was the chief executive

Chris HURFORD

there at the time; I believe he and his team welcomed being able now to bring matters to the board knowing there would at least be one or two new members who would understand the need for change.

Q So there was no antipathy on behalf of the board members to your turning up, not only young but also very much –

A I don't know the thoughts of the older board members---but I do know that management welcomed the new boy(s) on the block. We were seeking to do what was required—to drag the old board into the 20th century.

Q a person heading on towards – – –?

A Oh no, you must not see this in terms of what might be my future parliamentary career . Who knew that? Certainly not me

There was real hostility on the MTT (the Municipal Tramways Trust) board.

Q For a Labor man being on the board –

A That's right.

Q – of an organisation dealing with, primarily, a Labor-based organisation.

A Something like that. I made it quite clear that I was going to be putting a point of view of those working in the industry, put it up-front, and that I intended to talk to the secretary of the union quite often in order to be able to help him be informed about the issues. Les Johns, well-known in the Labour Movement, was the secretary of the union; later he became Secretary of the Trades and Labour Council; he and I formed a firm friendship, and I believe that that friendship was responsible for the Adelaide buses and trams moving from two persons, a driver and a conductor, to one person, here without a strike and the only place in the world where that occurred. And it's because the workers had somebody that they knew was watching their interests that created that peace.

Q Now, that was the benefit that *you* got out of the relationship.

Chris HURFORD

A Not so much a benefit for me but for the whole community, including those working in the industry.

Q What was the relationship like in advance, what advice were you able to give Dunstan in respect of his budgeting and economic priorities?

A Oh, not much, if any.

Q Or did he not seek it?

A No, he didn't seek it and I didn't expect he would. I don't think there was much that he wouldn't have already known through the proper sources of the bureaucracy. I certainly wouldn't be passing on anything confidential unless the board authorised me to do so. What I did was to remain absolutely open with my fellow board members at the same time as breaking new ground by being more transparent particularly with those working in the industry. But the chairman was a real crusty little fellow who was head of Kelvinator at the time, (I've forgotten what his name was). He was an efficient administrator and it ran quite well. He was wary of me --- but came around to seeing the benefits.

Q So that institutional exposure helped with you pursuing the possibility of a career in State Parliament but it must have come to an end when you decided to focus on federal issues.

A I think I have to try to change your perspective once again. Neither I nor those who placed me on those boards, particularly Don Dunstan, saw this in terms of helping me gain a seat in parliament. We all saw it in terms of my making a contribution to achieving Labor values and at the same time gaining experience in case I ever became a Labor Minister, federal or state. Yes, when I was pre-selected for federal Adelaide (because I was in the right place at the right time—nothing to do with board appointments) I had to resign from all those positions because they were “offices of profit under the crown”.

Q Was it a deliberate decision on your part to, as they say, ‘go federal’ and to move away from the State sphere, or was it simply a matter of opportunity time and convenience?

Chris HURFORD

A Well, a bit of both. I have to say that my training as an economist, my other experiences and my aspirations for improving Australian Labor Party platforms and policies were more in the federal sphere than the state. The State Governments I looked upon, even back in those days, as having more of a role in delivering national policies, an administrative role.

A So you get into Parliament at a federal level and the Federal seat of Adelaide coincidentally takes in the State electorate of Norwood, for which Dunstan was the Member. Did that result in a continuing relationship with Don, either on a political or a policy level?

A Well, let me sum it up this way: we had a personal friendship, we used to go to each other's home – very occasionally – for dinner; this was when he was married to Gretel. When I became Federal Member we used to see each other at functions, of course, perhaps more often than otherwise because our electorates did overlap. But one of my gripes about our present system of government is that there *isn't* a lot of liaison between federal politicians and state politicians. You meet at citizenship ceremonies, also in Party forums and on those sorts of occasions, but I can only remember about twice in the whole of my eighteen-plus years as Federal Member it being considered that we had a job to do for the State Government and Don Dunstan himself as Premier convened a meeting of the Federal Labor Members as well as the State ones, and he may have even on one occasion of those two included the Liberals as well, to say, 'Now, this is a State issue. I'd like you to know what we, as administrators of this State, think about it', and so on. But during my eighteen and a quarter years, about twice that happened. So this business of the Senate being a states' house is just, of course, as we all know, a nonsense and I think the government of the country would be better if there *is* more integration between the various levels of government.

Q It would also be better if members of the Labor Party were integrated with one another.

Chris HURFORD

A Not only the Labor members. It would be of benefit for our nation if governance generally at all 3 levels were better integrated. I have written about how and why this should be done elsewhere.

Q If we could go back now to what was item two, we've moved number seven up a bit.

A OK.

Q I think we've covered a lot of those issues already.

A Yes.

Q Is there anything else you'd like to say about anything in item two?

A Well, I got to know Don even more because in those early days of mine in the Federal Parliament – in other words, in 1970 and 1971 – I took an interest in the Northern Territory, which was bereft of any representation in the councils of the ALP. The NT branch of the Party had no money to spend on federal Conferences, and so I used that and other reasons to get to know something about the Aboriginal and other NT issues by visiting the Northern Territory and visiting many of the various settlements.

Q Is this on your own behalf as a federal member or as sort of a representative of the State Government?

A Neither really , I did it on my own initiative as a federal member on behalf of the NT in general and the NT Labor party branch in particular. I recognised that I was one of those members geographically closer to the NT and there was a job to be done. But I can give credit to Don Dunstan for my undertaking that initiative because he was the one who introduced me to the Aboriginal issue long before I went into the Federal Parliament. He was the one who asked me to be the first Treasurer of the Aboriginal Education Foundation, a group founded and run by the late Laurie Bryan. And so I met so many Aborigines at that time and that prompted me to go and learn more about Aboriginal settlements. Arising from that, the leaders of the NT Labor Party asked me to use my resources to represent the branch at a forthcoming

Chris HURFORD

federal conference of our Party. Attendance at that conference in Tasmania gave me another opportunity to witness Don Dunstan use his talents, this time at the federal level.

Q I think we can just move on. You see item four is really about the Dunstan years or the Dunstan Decade – that’s how they’re described in books and journal articles.

A Yes. I think we should also refer to the revival of the SA Labor Party in the mid-60’s as the Don Dunstan Labor Revival.

Q What did they mean to you, that whole period of the ten years from when Dunstan got in during the late ’60s through to his retirement through ill-health in 1979.

A Well, it goes without saying that I’ve –

Q You were in opposition for all of that time, I suppose, weren’t you?

A In opposition from 1969 to 1972; then in government 1972 to 1975. To summarise, I found him to be an outstanding person with very good judgment on political issues. I was a member of the State Executive, I was a member of the monthly councils, I was a member of the state conventions and I witnessed him at the federal level. I believe I supported him with most, if not all, of the things he wished to achieve where it was possible for me to do so . And a lot of them were very difficult, like the White Australia Policy changes and those sort of things. Above all, he was a great orator who knew how to sell to the people good policies even when initially they were not disposed to follow him.

Q So the description is worth its moniker: the Dunstan Decade, the Dunstan years.

A Oh, yes, yes for South Australia. He was the de facto leader and then the parliamentary leader. He achieved with the very great support of Jim Toohey, Geoff Virgo, Clyde Cameron, Jack Wright, Hugh Hudson and people like that – very prominent South Australian Labor people; he did lead us into a very, very worthwhile, progressive period.

Chris HURFORD

Q I think those people are – well, it is often said that those people were instrumental in the longevity of the Dunstan Decade because they not just managed the Party, they ran the Party and were fair in their running of the Party. Would that be your judgment as well?

A It would, and I want to emphasise Jack Wright's contribution in that regard .Bert Shard, leader in the Legislative Council, was another. These people were very, very wise in their support for Don Dunstan's leadership.

Q And do you think it's because of their influence and because Dunstan was prepared and happy to work with them that there was few conflicts between the ALP as a political organisation and the Union Movement as an industrial side of the Labour Movement?

A I do, yes. The trade unionists very soon recognised Dunstan's worth because he was a man of good judgement and oratorical talent. I repeat, he could sway a meeting against the populist view at the beginning of that meeting to a more sensible pathway. He had these personal talents. He wasn't an easy person to meet, as you know; he didn't have time for a lot of small talk. But he certainly wasn't *unpleasant*, either; he was never short-tempered in *my* presence or anything like that. And he was so impressive on the public stage .

Q People say about the absence of significant conflict that it was because they individually, as a representative of a union, had a good relationship with Don, that it was individuals had this special relationship. And they also say of caucus that it was because of "my" influence with Don that made the difference.

A Yes.

Q But it seems that, while people may wish to assert that relationship with someone who was significant and famous, it may be that – and I would like your comments on that – the significant things about Dunstan was that he could read an audience and he would always be able to develop an agreed position with whoever he was with.

A I agree with your judgment there. I'm not sure that he would have altered his view, he had a very clear mind; but he would have been very persuasive in a quiet way and would not have antagonised people. He was persuasive, that's the correct

Chris HURFORD

word, he was persuasive on a one-on-one basis when he needed to be, just as he was on a platform.

Q One of the things that the material written about him contends is that he took industrial relations into a more modern arena by recognising the value of the unions, the value of industrial work, the value of improving the system of wage negotiation and wage bargaining: is that something that you noticed?

A I wasn't very much involved because it was a State initiative rather than a Federal matter; but I was very, very interested in his industrial democracy initiatives because they were something worth examining. I'm very sorry that it didn't work. I haven't in recent years gone back and studied its history to know the reasons why, but my intuition tells me that Don was probably wrong in thinking it would ever work in the corporate governance system that we have developed in the Western world to date .

Q Do you think it would be fair to say that it morphed into a social democracy type of concept where, in a whole range of policy areas associated with the role of government and the welfare of people, more and more representation was made of different groups from different areas so that a lot of the decision-making of government deferred or was able to rely on the participation of more people?

A Well, that happened I think because we had a Labor Government federally as well as in the state. I'm not sure whether it was necessarily any growth in ideas that brought that about but it was a natural effect of having the Hawke Labor Government in particular. In Gough's day he was so much imbued with his own ideas as to what should happen in so many different areas and he was there for such a short space of time that I'm not sure there was anything new in the way of labour movement participation. There would have been a few more Labor people on boards and that sort of thing, but ---.

Q How do you think he got on with Whitlam?

A Don Dunstan? I think pretty well. You see, they were on the same side on White Australia Policy. Don was a great help to him in his really troublesome time seeking to reform the Labor Party itself. I don't think that they'd have been warm friends because neither of them really had much capacity for warm friendships. I may be

Chris HURFORD

doing Don a wrong there; I never became a close friend but I can't really picture many people of his own ---.

A But in the end they were both politicians and their goals were political goals, right, and personal friendships was something that took a back seat – was that a fair observation?

A Yes, I would agree with that; but I don't think it took a back seat just because they were in politics . I think it was the nature of their makeup. Neither of them were warm individuals.

Q There's often a lot of discussion about comparing Dunstan to other Labor Premiers, both of his time and subsequently. It started off with Wran and whether Neville Wran was the equivalent or just a shade better or a shade worse, and then it goes on right through until the '90s group of Labor Leaders in States. Is there any value in doing that, do you think?

A Not really, because the times are so different, they really are. Just about that, you see, where I think Don came unstuck with his industrial democracy was because he wasn't able to break through the way that the corporate governance system throughout the Western world had grown to that point of time. I hope this is not intruding a personal thing rather than talking about Dunstan, but I believe that we're likely to achieve more through profit-sharing in the corporate world than we have in the past. I mean I've tried to represent workers, as you heard from what I told you about my time on the Municipal Tramways Trust board. I've been on other boards; later on in my career, after coming back from New York, I became a director of the CFM, the Commonwealth Funds Management, where eight billion dollars of super funds belonging to Commonwealth public servants were invested. In jobs like that I try to involve my membership of the board with responsibilities to the people whose money it was that we were investing . So that's always been in my nature. But I think we haven't gone far enough in this whole profit-sharing area and I often would like to go back and talk to Don, to ask whether he thought about trying that himself.

Q The end when it came for Don came quite abruptly –

A Yes.

Chris HURFORD

– and the common view, the public view, is that it was a breakdown of his health –

Yes.

– because of the amount of time and effort that he was putting into it. There is another view: that his spirit was broken by the bastardry of some of the fellow members of his own Cabinet, calling meetings criticising himself and ALP policy while he was absent examining the issue of uranium overseas. Have you got any observations about that?

A No, I haven't. I just wasn't close enough to it and I haven't gone back and read about it or thought about it . I don't know of that intrigue at all. If that was happening, I believe it would have been due to his health, that he was not the man that he used to be .

Q So the enemies, if they existed, would have used his health as an opportunity to move in rather than ---?

A Well, that's not quite what I'm saying. What I'm saying is that if he had been a fitter person he wouldn't have given those people who were inclined to do that, he wouldn't have upset them. He was too much on top of everything for that to have happened.

Q Now, I think it's more or less, finally, if you've got any general views about Dunstan that we haven't mentioned, is your views about him as a Labor man, for example.

A I think he was thoroughly that. It means different things to different people, as we know, but he was somebody who believed that the State could make a difference to people's lives, he recognised that it was the quality of the government that mattered, it was the quality of the innovatory ideas that mattered. He was very bright and was able to be innovative himself. He was able to lead and he was clearly leading before he became The Leader. He was the leader during the Walsh years.

Q Have you any knowledge, history or observations about the extent to which he relied on sources of advice and information outside the Party – that is public servants or people in business, academics and so on?

Chris HURFORD

A Yes, he did have his advisers and one of his great strengths was making use of that, and also in a couple of cases of persuading them to come and join him, and the great example of that was Len King. There was Len already a much-admired lawyer, who I don't think had any ideas of coming into government although he had left leanings, but it wouldn't have happened without Don Dunstan. Len progressed to be not only an Attorney-general in a Dunstan Government but also to be SA Chief Justice.

Q Would you include people like Bill Hayes in that sort of group as well?

A Well, Bill Hayes would have always gone on voting Liberal, but Bill Hayes was one of those good industry leaders (a Lord Mayor too) who was prepared to give his time and effort to those who were in government of whichever political persuasion. Jim Jarvis was another one, another Lord Mayor of Adelaide, to whom that applied.

Q As was George, George Joseph.

A And George Joseph. George I suppose might have had more of a left-of-centre leaning from the start. But a splendid people's lawyer with his heart with the punters.

Q He did give good advice.

A Let me now check my notes to see if I had listed anything else. One of his outstanding areas of innovations that I admired was at last giving us town and country planning legislation, and I helped him with that. I was involved at his request in setting up the Town and Country Planning Association so that there were a group of people to show leadership with government in urban planning, I wasn't a person whose career was in that area, but he asked me to help him with that and I probably was the first Treasurer of that body.

Q It ended up being a repository, it's said, for democrats and communists.

Chris HURFORD

A A bit harsh because they did do some constructive work including successfully lobbying for our first town planning act to get passed by the troglodyte majority in the Legislative Council.

. Founding the Council of Civil Liberties was something that I helped him with. Also I got placed on the ABC Advisory Committee, but I don't think that would have been to do with Don; that would have been just because I was by then a Labor candidate. We talked about the industrial democracy. The Jam Factory was part of his interest in design ; I think that would have been one of his initiatives.

Q Absolutely – and it was in his electorate.

A We haven't talked about the world of the arts.

No.

That's very important to me for a number of reasons, including because I have a daughter who is a senior administrator in that area and it's wonderful that, almost singlehandedly, he helped to make Adelaide the leading capital of the arts in Australia.

That's right.

And some of his choices on his personal staff one can admire, and I put among those Jack Richards and Tony Baker and Kevin Crease; but with others he did recognise that they had their weaknesses – but had too big a heart to send them on their way.

Well, I think that just about covers it, unless you've got anything you'd like to say about any of his Cabinets over that period of ten years.

When you invited me I told you I wasn't going to have a lot to say because I wasn't that close to him –

I think we've done well.

Chris HURFORD

– but I was on the fringe and I hope I've added to the body of knowledge in a slight way.

Thank you for that, Chris.

My pleasure.

As I said earlier, a copy of the transcript of this interview will be sent to you for your editing and it will be edited in accordance with your wishes and published in accordance with your instructions.

Thank you very much.

Okay, all done.

END OF INTERVIEW