



University of London

## INSTITUTE OF COMMONWEALTH STUDIES

### VOICE FILE NAME: COHP Dr. Hugh Craft (Parts One and Two)

Key:

**SO:** Sue Onslow (Interviewer)

**HC:** Dr. Hugh Craft (Respondent)

PART ONE:

**SO:** This is Dr. Sue Onslow talking to Dr. Hugh Craft in Canberra, on Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Hugh, thank you very much indeed for agreeing to take part in this project.

**HC:** My pleasure.

**SO:** I wonder if you could begin by reflecting, please, on the importance of the Commonwealth to Australia. When you first joined the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1971, what was the Commonwealth's value as an ideal for Australian diplomats and civil servants?

**HC:** Well, thank you for coming and thank you for the opportunity to be interviewed. We've been looking forward to your visit and I've been looking forward to speaking to you.

I came to diplomacy from a rather unusual background, which I won't go into now, but it meant that when I joined the Department of Foreign Affairs, as it was then, in 1971 – in fact it was the Department of External Affairs – I was pretty naïve about huge areas of Australian foreign policy or indeed global politics. I think they recruited me for reasons other than my academic knowledge of policy. It was at the end of a long period of conservative government and, during my early days, the Whitlam Government came to power in 1972 and greatly changed the multilateral dimensions of Australian policy. Up to that point multilateral policy had been fairly totemic, I think, in terms of adherence to the United Nations, membership of the Commonwealth, as a very important presence in the South Pacific region, and sitting on the edge of whatever happened north of our borders in the South East Asian, or North Asian, or even the East Asian/East Pacific areas.

Of course, the controlling factors were the relationship with the Americans and the NATO Alliance, and the huge amount of post-war consciousness about Australia's continuing relationship with the UK.

Now, let me say that my awareness of the Commonwealth began really when I was at Cambridge. I actually went on a Victoria League visit to London as an Australian student. That was a very informal introduction. What I was to learn later was that, in the terms of Australian foreign policy, attendance at Heads of Government meetings, for example, was seen as pretty much obligatory by Australian leaders, but that there wasn't a great deal of enthusiasm for the Commonwealth amongst the bureaucracy. My real introduction came later when, on my first posting to Athens, we were covering Cyprus, and there was a slight awareness of the Commonwealth's ongoing position on Cyprus. But we were never asked to do anything on Cyprus and the Commonwealth as such.

**SO: So, were you in Cyprus in 1970...?**

HC: '71 – '74. We covered Cyprus from Athens.

**SO: So, you were there during the Turkish invasion of Northern Cyprus? That was a ringside seat.**

HC: Yes, very much so, and with all the events leading to the fall of the colonels. My departure coincided with the return of Karamanlis, and I was in Syntagma Square when the millions welcomed him back in August, 1974.

So, what I'm saying is that, as a general run-of-the-mill diplomat in the Australian Foreign Service in 1971, I was not aware of any particular commanding interest in the Commonwealth. In fact, I was unaware that 1971 was the year of the Singapore Declaration – so important in modern Commonwealth history. The Commonwealth was not something that was brought to our attention as being important in the formulation of Australian foreign policy. So, that says something in itself about the consciousness of the Australian diplomats, as the priorities of the government were elsewhere.

My first real contact with the Commonwealth was probably on my next posting in Suva [Fiji Islands]. It was a social function where Emeka Anyaoku came and charmed the local, totally-white Royal Commonwealth Society Branch, and to which I happened to be invited. It was a gathering of the remnants of the white colonial society, some of whom were still running key parts of the government. Even then it didn't make much of an impact on me. Equally, Emeka didn't show any interest in me, in particular, either.

**SO: Do you know why he was there?**

HC: Oh, I think it was part of his normal sort of global rounds.

**SO: Peripatetic visitations?**

HC: Yes, what senior Commonwealth Secretariat people do.

Then I came back to Canberra in 1974 – out of the blue – as we were medically evacuated from Suva with a sick newborn child. We thought that, because of her condition, we would be stuck in Canberra for four or five years rather than off to another posting in some hot and sticky parts, probably. So we were settling down for a long stretch in Canberra, when a call came from the Departmental Secretary saying that this job had come up in the Commonwealth Secretariat in London and the government was keen to get a senior Australian into the job, and would I be interested? He thought that it might fit my particular circumstances in not being able to go on postings to Third World countries, for example, which were totally ruled out. The best of medical facilities would be in London, [and] it would be an interesting and important job in the run up to the 1981 Melbourne CHOGM. So, after an application and interview, I arrived in Marlborough House and the International Affairs Division at the end of 1979.

**SO: Hugh, please, if I could just ask you: you made a comment about the bureaucrats within the Department of External Affairs not rating the Commonwealth particularly highly. But, from '75 onwards, you had a Prime Minister in Malcolm Fraser who really was trying to use the Commonwealth as a platform.**

HC: That's right. This is one of the anomalies of policy-making in the foreign affairs area.

Derek Ingram, on behalf of Chief Anyaoko, once did a survey in the Commonwealth to do with promotional issues – [i.e.] how the Commonwealth could improve its image in Commonwealth countries – and he visited a large number of countries, including Australia. Derek concluded that, whereas you might have heads of government who were committed and keen to make the Commonwealth work, the bureaucracy was almost adamantly opposed to the Commonwealth. Later, when I was doing a PhD, I did a similar thing in Canberra. I thought I'd test this, and I did a paper. I interviewed 20 or 30 senior people that I'd known personally who'd been senior in policy-making areas, multilateral policy-making, and in Commonwealth countries. So, I tested them on this and I wrote what I thought was an interesting paper. It was in response to a request from the Round Table for a piece on Australia and the Commonwealth. My conclusions were the same as Derek's. It was never published, because whoever refereed it thought it wasn't good enough [*laughter*]. Editor Andy Williams wasn't very impressed, because he was keen to publish, but there you are.

What I'm saying is that heads of government and bureaucrats can run at different paces and, in the case of Fraser, he had a very strong supportive back up in his own department – the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet – who ran with the Fraser initiatives and ran very successfully. The Foreign Affairs department – which has always played second place to Prime Minister and Cabinet when it comes to heads of government meetings – were playing catch-up with PMC the whole time, and not always willingly.

**SO: So, where is the locus of foreign policy making in Australian politics?**

HC: Well, it sits in the Foreign Affairs Department. But on the specific issues of interest to Prime Ministers, like CHOGM meetings or G-20, the Prime Minister's department would have a very direct relationship with what the Prime Minister wants and set about getting what he wants. It's changing, and foreign affairs has not always been the strong point of our recent Foreign Ministers – apart from Kevin Rudd, who used DFAT as an instrument, very much his own department. But, certainly, in the context of the Commonwealth and CHOGMs, the international division of the Prime Minister's department has taken the running with DFAT providing a supportive role.

**SO: I'm just struck by the dichotomy between what you're saying of the attitude of the Department of External Affairs and my knowledge – having also interviewed him – of Fraser, who really used the Commonwealth as a platform to promote Australia in international affairs, and to further Australian interests.**

HC: Absolutely.

**SO: And Tony Eggleton was encouraging him to do so.**

HC: Yes, and there were others there too that were equally supportive, and initiatives like the CHOGRM, for example, were run very definitely as a result of Fraser's own personal interest and commitment, and executed by his department.

Foreign Affairs officers were always involved because of missions overseas that have to be involved, but the people calling the shots were in the international area of PM&C. I can remember being in New Dehli for the CHOGRM in 1980 and having a drink with the High Commissioner the night before Fraser was due to arrive. His principal advisor from the Prime Minister's Department – the guy running the CHOGRM agenda – was at the drinks. I was told by the High Commissioner that the brief had come from Canberra, but this guy actually ripped it up, put it in the bin, and re-wrote it for Fraser. So, that's an illustration. I'm not sure it could happen that way these days, but then when Fraser was running very hot and strong in the Commonwealth that was the disposition of the bureaucrats.

**SO: Was that to your advantage – that Fraser was 'running hot and strong' on the Commonwealth – when you arrived at Marlborough House in 1979 as Director of Political Affairs?**

HC: It was. The Prime Minister's Department decided they wanted to have an Australian in a senior position in the run-up to the Melbourne CHOGM. In fact, two Australians out of PM&C had spent several months working with the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, getting the message straight as to how the CHOGM in Melbourne should be organised. They were very committed, really committed.

**SO: Because, as I understand it, Fraser's agenda underlying the 1981 Melbourne CHOGM was very much economic development.**

HC: Yes. It was.

**SO: He tried with Michael Manley to set up the Common Fund, having had that small meeting at Runaway Bay in Jamaica in 1979. Fraser seems really to have been trying to combine West/South economic collaboration and developmental issues. How far was this part of [the] Department of External Affairs' agenda at this particular time?**

HC: Well, very little I think. Because the whole notion, for example, of CHOGRM, was to develop what has since evolved into APEC and the establishment of trading and financial links across the region, specifically in respect of economic issues. Now, we can talk about that separately, but that was Fraser's emphasis, and it was a very heavy emphasis in Melbourne. He found it ran true to the Third World developing agenda, which Sonny Ramphal was pressing in the Secretariat, but it didn't sit comfortably with others like Muldoon and Thatcher. But it sat very comfortably in the Commonwealth's broader agenda, which Sonny was pursuing in all sorts of ways – through the Brandt Commission and other areas – and of course the whole support for the New International Economic Order through the UN. Sonny found a soul mate in Fraser and was able to pursue that agenda almost as a sort of personal predilection, based on the fact that he knew he had support out there in strong Commonwealth figures like Fraser.

**SO: If I could go back just to your arrival, then, at Marlborough House in 1979, with Melbourne scheduled as the next Heads of Government Meeting. To what extent, as Director of Political Affairs, were you involved in setting that up? Or was that much more the Office of the Secretary General?**

HC: Well, just a bit of background. I was recruited as Assistant Director and I took over as Director in 1982. But, about my recruitment: when I said I would be interested in the job, I then went off to London to the interview, crammed on the aeroplane on the way there, and did my nervous best in the interview; because, frankly, I knew nothing about the Commonwealth.

**SO: Like a typical World Bank official reading a country project report!**

HC: Yes, that's right. So, I landed in London and, a bit overwhelmed by the magnificent context of Marlborough House, I was interviewed by a panel consisting of Chief Emeka Anyaoku, who was Deputy Secretary General and the Chair of that selection committee, Moni Malhoutra as the Director of the IAD, Peter Snelson [as] Director of the Education Division and Henry Lynch-Skylion from Sierra Leone, the Director of the Administration Division. So, it was a fairly high-powered committee and I was grilled pretty much by them. Andrew Peacock had supported my candidature, which was helpful, I think. But I remember very clearly that Moni queried my Anglican theological background, wanting to know if I was sound enough politically, regarding – I

guess – the multi-faith nature of the Commonwealth. He gave me a real grilling.

But, anyway. In the end, they then called me back the next day and asked me to come and meet the Secretary General. I had a one-on-one with Sonny, and he was obviously checking me out. Moni was there as well. I remember one thing Ramphal said. I knew the heavy emphasis of Fraser and himself on economics; and Sonny's own very proactive involvement in international economics. I said to him, "Look, I'm sorry, I'm not an economist, and I'm not going to be much help to you on all of that stuff", and he said, "Well, thank God for that." [Laughter]

**SO: We need some balance!**

HC: That's right. But, what I'm saying is that the Australian government was very committed to getting someone in there. I don't think they'd had anyone there since Michael Wilson – whom you met yesterday, who worked in Arnold Smith's day in the International Affairs Division – and there may have been one other, but only for a short time. But, it's interesting, because in succession to Emeka – who'd been an Assistant Director in the International Affairs Division in those days, under the Brit, Tom Aston – Emeka became the Director. When he became Director, Moni succeeded him as an Assistant... He was an Assistant Director, and became Director. Henry Lynch-Schillon came at the job very briefly, but was then transported to administration; and then that's when I was recruited to replace Salv Stellini from Malta [who] was elevated to Assistant Secretary General, as was Emeka prior to him.

**SO: It seems like complicated chess moves within Marlborough House!**

HC: But it's all very interesting because it's all part of a devised system that meant that people with influence found themselves in increasingly important positions. So, Emeka became – from the Assistant to Director of International Affairs – Assistant Secretary General and then Deputy Secretary General. Moni, on the same track, to Assistant Secretary General, but failed to become Deputy for all sorts of reasons.

**SO: Hugh, please could I ask, is this all part of building the Secretariat as silos of strength? There appear to have been relatively autonomous departments, with a Secretary General who built up a coterie of people around him whom he believed to have particular strengths. I know that Sonny Ramphal was quite explicit at head-hunting what he deemed to be the best talent, and to make sure that he had *his* team. This was very much Sonny's management style, and also a key way to proselytizing his agenda.**

HC: Yes, that's very much the case. Even more so there were divisions that were preferred over others like a hierarchy of divisions, if you like. In the top echelon were the International Affairs Division and the Economic Affairs Division. There was a proposal at one stage that, as Director of International

Affairs, my salary should have a component to reflect the importance of the work; the same with Vishnu Persaud, who was doing the economic work. That was met with almost industrial action on the part of some of the Division heads: others who felt that they were doing an equally-important job, whether it be industrial affairs, or management, or agriculture or whatever was going.

**SO: Yes. How far did you feel that there was a tension between the Office of the Secretary General and the International Affairs Division?**

HC: We operated as a wing of the Secretary General's office, so there was very little tension: particularly when Moni became Assistant Secretary General but also Head of the Secretary General's office. Moni held those two positions in tandem. When he was Head of International Affairs, he was also increasingly the Secretary General's principal confidante and advisor. When I arrived, he was both Head of International Affairs and Head of the Secretary General's office. Mark Robinson and Chris Laidlaw – as was Stuart Mole – ultimately, all Assistant Directors in the SG's office, working under Moni. I didn't ever find there was ever any conflict between what I was mandated to do and what the Secretary General wanted, because in those days Moni basically ran them both.

**SO: Well, he had a prodigious capacity for work.**

HC: He had a prodigious capacity. He was a brilliant operator, and not everyone got on with him. I did, after an initial eruption, and we worked very happily together and very successfully together. I could tell you a myriad of stories about how that brought us into conflict with other senior officers in the Secretariat, but I chose to put my weight behind Moni – not exclusively, but knowing how he reflected the wishes of the Secretary General. I'll tell you a story. The first job Moni got me to do – whilst [I was] settling in with my small children in a hotel, looking for a house with all those sorts of things you've got to do when you go to a new posting – was to write a piece on India and Pakistan upon independence, which I knew nothing about at all. But this was Moni's way of testing me. So, within a week, he gave me this assignment. I locked myself down and wrote it – with a lot of help from staff and Chatham House, I might say – and presented it to him, and it seemed that I got a tick for that.

But there did come the time when, because of his 'interference' in my role as Assistant Director, I had to say to him, "Moni, I'm sorry, I don't have to be here, and I don't have to be humiliated, which I suspect you're trying to do. I'm prepared to pack up my bags and go back tomorrow to Canberra. I don't need to be here. If you want me to be here, we've got to work collaboratively". I knew he was a tough boss. I've sat in his office when he called up a colleague and, while I was there, tore up his draft and said, "Go back and do it again". This guy later became Foreign Minister in his government. So, Moni wasn't liked by all, but I found him charming, a considerate human being, intellectually brilliant, great company and very supportive.

**SO: Did he have a problem delegating work or responsibility?**

HC: Yes and no. I mean, he delegated everything. I don't know of anytime that he actually said, "Well, that's yours, I'm not going to...", or, you know, "I want to have control of this".

**SO: Or is this micro-management?**

HC: Only in so far he scrutinised absolutely everything in fine detail. He was very happy that I had come with first-hand knowledge of the South Pacific. In those days in Suva, we'd covered Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Kiribati as well as the regional organisations. I did all the work on that. He was glad to have someone to write a paper on the disposition of the multilateral organisations in the South Pacific, which became our policy. He left it totally to me. He didn't interfere whatsoever. Other people like Stuart – who worked more closely with him next to SG's office – might have felt a bit restricted, because he protected his relationship with Sonny very closely.

**SO: If I could take you back to the CHOGMS, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings. Did you attend Melbourne?**

HC: Yes, as an Assistant Director. It was my first CHOGM.

**SO: Malcolm Fraser commented that the background demonstrations by Aboriginal human rights activists was an important part of the setting, because his hope [was] that the news story at Melbourne would be economic/developmental consensual issues and there was this aspect of Australian domestic politics which intruded. Does that accord with your memories of it?**

HC: Not really, no. I'm sure as Prime Minister it probably preoccupied him. I'm sorry, I can't really give you a comment on that because I don't recall other than it being one factor that was happening. That wasn't the thing that was preoccupying me. I was an Assistant Director, Moni was Director. The two things that happened at that meeting which were really memorable – apart from lots of interesting policy stuff that came out of the meeting which had long-term implications – was the conflict between the Secretariat and the Australian officials about the conduct of the meeting, the shape and size of rooms, and the importance of getting it right, for the Commonwealth way of doing things.

**SO: What, 'in the round', rather than theatre-style...?**

HC: Well, no, in the way the rooms were set up. Australia had spent a lot of money on the Exhibition Centre that meant they had to rebuild it. It wasn't just to do with the size and shape of rooms, but who was running the meeting, basically, and the Secretariat people – and I'm thinking of Moni in particular... I don't remember much about what Emeka was doing in those days, but Moni, he used to carry the can for the Secretariat in these sort of



discussions with Australia. The second thing I remember was my introduction to Commonwealth drafting, because, you know, there's a huge amount of drafting that goes on by the Secretariat, in and around CHOGMS, and in particular the communiqué. Sitting around the table late at night, very late at night, with Sonny and Moni. Again, I can't remember Emeka being there, but I do remember Mark Robinson playing a great role in the choice of wording, getting the words and phraseology right, which was very important to Ramphal, because he'd pick it up and walk it around to Heads of Government – that was his style – and get things moving.

The third thing was really on the policy side, where a lot of things were initiated in Melbourne, including the Small States Programme. It wasn't heralded as such, but the Australian government moved in behind proposals to reinforce the capacity of small states – particularly in the Pacific – to have a meaningful voice within the Commonwealth, and the possibility of representation in the UN.

**SO: That really came out of the first CHOGRM meeting in Sydney in May 1979, when Malcolm Fraser had commented that he felt that this was entirely appropriate, because small Pacific island states felt remarkably reticent at speaking out at these increasingly large Commonwealth meetings, and they needed a smaller venue.**

HC: Absolutely right. But it took root and evolved over a number years – mainly through the work of people like Chris Laidlaw and Ed Dommen in the UN system, who had begun putting papers together with the support of Sonny. These were the proposals that were floated initially at Kingston. But it did begin to pick up pace through 1980-81, and ended up with Australia coming up with the money to put together the New York office for small states.

**SO: So, it was Australian money to do that?**

HC: Australian money, yes.

**SO: Was this intended as capacity-building for small states, to have that permanent presence in New York...**

HC: Amazing. Yes. Well, it was IAD which covered all the arrangements on that when I was head of the division: including negotiations with the UN, who didn't want it.

**SO: Did they not?**

HC: No, they didn't; certainly didn't.

**SO: Why wouldn't they assist you?**

HC: Well, because the UN concept of membership was not only related to states possessing political independence/autonomy and the capacity to pay fees upfront, but also that they possess an individual physical identity in New York.

A combined office – embracing a number of separate states – weakened that notion.

**SO: Why?**

HC: So, we had to negotiate this concept through the UN system, which wasn't easy, mainly because it was so novel. And we had to negotiate the physical arrangements with landlords on contracts [and] with builders on the construction. As you can imagine, we spent a lot of time with New York lawyers. Not forgetting potential participating governments and the broader Commonwealth constituency. All that was set up during my time: I think, involving five or six missions. Remarkable success. I don't know if you've been to it, but it still sits on Second Avenue somewhere and I think now houses about 12 missions. Remarkable. That was with Australian money – at Malcolm Fraser's [initiative] – and then it was broadened to a more solid funding support. Politically, it was given more point and purpose by the Small States Initiative coming out of Delhi in 1983.

**SO: What other particular policy initiatives do you recall coming out of Melbourne that had lasting significance, in addition to the Small States programme?**

HC: Well, it was the first meeting with Mugabe there. Mugabe was there, Pierre Trudeau, Mrs. Gandhi, [and] Thatcher. Muldoon, playing a mischievous role. No Michael Manley, but Maurice Bishop was there and the usual line-up of very interesting figures. The range of outcomes that came out on the political and economic front – the Small States issue, the consolidation of the African wing with, if you like, the celebration of Zimbabwe – all of which seemed to give the Commonwealth a sense of real relevance and importance.

**SO: A Commonwealth triumph.**

HC: Exactly. And Mugabe was good in those days. People like Lee Kwan Yew, Kenneth Kaunda, Julius Nyerere and Tupula Effi from Samoa, representing a breed of new and interesting leaders.

**SO: So, [at] this particular point then, in 1981, the Commonwealth appeared to have development and economics as one of its grand strategies?**

HC: Yes. Yes, it did.

**SO: Okay, when did that start to dissipate?**

HC: Well, John Eyres didn't cover this extensively the other day [at the COHP Witness Seminar, 24 June 2013], but the principal earlier role of the Commonwealth in economics was to set itself up as a repository of information about international economic developments that would assist member states in their own internal economic development, as well as in their posture internationally.

**SO: So, again it was capacity building?**

HC: Capacity building, absolutely. Yes. And this was built upon – in later years – by the Technical Assistance Group (TAG), which moved into Commonwealth countries and gave them expert support in negotiating and in capacity building: for example, in providing computerised systems so they could access the information themselves. And particularly in places like Papua New Guinea and Bougainville, where the TAG people – Roland Brown, a renowned international lawyer, and Professor Michael Faber, who had been the head of development studies at Sussex University – they actually provided the negotiating team to stand behind the Papua New Guinea Government in negotiating the original Bougainville Agreement on its copper assets.

So, the Melbourne meeting gave a huge boost to the Ramphal political/economic agenda. It was to build upon a role focused on the provision of economic and statistical information to newly-established independent ex-colonies. This had been a function initially undertaken by the UK that had even preceded the establishment of the Secretariat in 1965 and expanded in Arnold Smith's day. Now it was to align Ramphal, the Secretariat and the Commonwealth with the global international developmental agenda.

**SO: Not development, aid and planning?**

HC: It was the heyday when Ramphal, with the partial blessing of Commonwealth Heads of Government, became so heavily involved in the international commissions – particularly in the Brandt Commission – and everything that surrounded those eminent people, whose ideas were pretty much dismissed in the early days but in later years became very much accepted as international policy in the UN. You've got to remember that the Ramphal policy stated and re-stated, time and time again, was – and it's absolutely true – that "the Commonwealth cannot negotiate for the world, but can help the world to negotiate". And that's a very smart summary of, really, what his view [was] of how we could work. We cannot actually institute a new economic international order, but we can provide viable intellectual input to global negotiations on things coming from a group of 50 plus Commonwealth countries. So, you'll notice all of those Declarations that came through – in the '80s, for example – were aimed at emboldening the aspirations of the international community. For example: in Nassau, while leaders did all that work on apartheid and the Commonwealth's call on Southern Africa, they were offering their support to World Order on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations.

**SO: Sir Peter Marshall made reference to this in his interview: that the United Nations was unable to come up with an agreement on this particular declaration – to mark the anniversary – and yet you managed to draft it down in Nassau.**

HC: Yes, we actually carried it to New York after Nassau, picked up the declaration and took it to talk to the UN people about it. So, it was that sort of thing that Ramphal did and did very well, and I think that his strength was in

his genuine personal interest and commitment to that diplomatic approach: his capacity to grasp the nub of the issues, and his readiness to use people like Peter Marshall – real, respected professionals who knew their way around multilateral diplomacy.

**SO: Not only did they know the ropes, they knew the people...**

HC: They knew the people, correct.

**SO: They were phenomenally well-placed in the networks. Peter Marshall emphasised not only that he knew the world of New York, but he also knew the world of Washington, and he knew the world of Geneva.**

HC: Yes, that's right.

**SO: So, his particular appointment as Deputy Secretary General Economic was enormously important.**

HC: Absolutely, it was, and he was a diplomat – a true diplomat. He understood the diplomatic world.

**SO: A diplomat, and his relationship with Number 10 as well.**

HC: That's right. But, you see, it was always going to be pedestrian after Sonny. Emeka was always going to be pedestrian. He had his own qualities, but he didn't have the flair and the political insights. I don't want to be critical of Emeka, but that's just the case.

**SO: I'd just also like to suggest that this was the context of the Cold War, but it's also the context of decolonisation, state transition and nation state building; and, therefore, there was a coherence of emerging state agendas – particularly in the African states, although not exclusively, also in the Pacific Island states – of needing to build state capacity, of accelerating their economic and human development. So there were, if you like, the components of a collaborative exercise. They also shared the problems of their asymmetrical economic power relations, their developmental agenda in a context of an international political economy, which was not shaped according to their needs. So, the Commonwealth had a coherence and identity with that.**

HC: And it accorded with its original role as a handmaiden to the emergence of newly independent states, particularly in Africa which was like a flood descending on the world in those early days. That's where Arnold Smith and Sonny were very good. And Emeka, to give him his credit, proved himself over and over again in dealing with the Africans as they emerged to independence and in interpreting their views. The role of the Secretariat was deliberately tailored to accommodate its member states in a way which aided economic development, gave them a status in the world, gave them an international voice at Heads of Government level – which also provided a vehicle to pursue their collective international interests, like in Southern Africa. It gave even the

smallest of them a voice in shaping policy that ultimately did have some sort of impact on wider global developments. That was a deliberate policy in the '70s and the '80s. In the '90s, the world changed, and Anyaoku was dealing with a different world: a world that was giving increasing importance to good governance and democratic government. The Commonwealth under Anyaoku's leadership made a huge contribution to a global position on democracy as a normative expectation in responsible societies.

Jon Sheppard said the other day that he led 13 Commonwealth observer missions. In my day, we had Zimbabwe, and later we went off to Uganda – both in 1980. For all sorts of reasons, it came to a stop after Uganda.

**SO: I've read Commonwealth Secretariat files on the Ugandan election. That was really quite a hairy election observer mission.**

HC: Well, I was up to my eyeballs in that exercise and shared a room with Raja Gomez, in that dreadful hotel in Kampala: 'The Speke', as it was in those days. That was really a hairy mission.

**SO: The violence that was going on in the ground...**

HC: It was occurring right outside our front door. Secretariat staff were scattered in the field. I didn't go to the rural areas, being in the central group – the core group – which included Patsy Robertson, Moni Malhoutra, Jeremy Pope, and Raja Gomez. We were the core people, but we had people all over Uganda in dreadful situations. Yes, that was really, really a difficult one. Violent? Yes, in the extreme. I vividly remember leader Museveni surrounded by his AK47-bearing bodyguards, straight out of the jungle, coming into the Speke to see the COG [At the time Museveni was Defence Minister in the Military Commission for the interim coalition government, tasked with routing Idi Amin's troops.]. Do you want to talk about that?

**SO: Yes, I would like to. Was it because Zimbabwe had been such a success, which encouraged the replication in Uganda?**

**But, if I could just go back to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings. You mentioned Small States and obviously the New Delhi meeting where the Small State issue was under the spotlight...because of the American invasion of Grenada which had taken place three weeks beforehand. Do you recall the intensity of feeling?**

HC: I do, very much so, yes. I was Conference Secretary in New Delhi sitting in all the meetings. I didn't go to the retreat, but was in on all the key meetings. Feelings ran very high, and Bob Hawke – when you see him tomorrow – will relate to you the tensions of that meeting. They overflowed out of that into other things. For example, Hawke's confrontation with Mrs Gandhi.

**SO: Argument?**

HC: Rather nasty exchange with – well, nasty on his part – with Indira Gandhi on the Middle East paras in the draft communiqué. That was very unfortunate, and that's one of my enduring memories of that meeting.

**SO: Indira Gandhi had hosted the Non-Aligned Movement meeting in March of that year, as well as the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in the October. It would seem that the overriding agenda of India at that particular point was to try to be a soothing factor in high politics: particularly because what came out was the Goa Declaration on International Security. I know that Trudeau was on his way to visit Moscow immediately after the Delhi CHOGM.**

HC: Yes, the Trudeau initiative.

**SO: The Trudeau initiative to try to re-inject some energy and dynamism in the START negotiations. So, the background of this Commonwealth meeting was very much the Cold War and [the] nuclear arms race. Is that your recollection?**

HC: That's true. Trudeau got very little support out of the Commonwealth for that.

**SO: Oh? That's not what Patsy said, as Commonwealth Information officer, to *The Sydney Times*?**

HC: Oh, well my recollection is that he didn't get a lot of support. Trudeau certainly stirred a lot of press interest and a flurry in the multilateral community. The formal reception in the executive meetings was supportive but cool. In any event, the initiative went nowhere in the end.

**SO: That's interesting.**

HC: There were three things, really, that came out of that meeting in my memory. One was the Middle East paragraphs – where officials had agreed to a line that Hawke discovered overnight and that he didn't agree with. So, he had to press for a change in the final executive meeting. And quite apart from the procedural matter of altering what had been already been agreed, Hawke had a very decided pro-Israel view – always has had – [and] was very quite rude with her [Indira Gandhi] in expressing it. Rude in the way that only Hawke could probably be. But that was very embarrassing among fellow leaders and a setback to Australian/Indian bilateral relations. In later years, I think, Hawke tried to make up for that by his very, very close relations with Rajiv [Gandhi]. But that was a very sour note and she, of course, was gracious about it to the very end. The second thing was the small states debate that – as you know, without going into the details now – had caused divisions right through the Commonwealth, even with Mrs. Thatcher and Reagan. And Sonny Ramphal's article in the latest Round Table, I think, is very enlightening here.

This is where the various silos in the Secretariat were happening. I mean, Neville Linton was working for me then and he knew the situation very well. I've seen the reference to Neville going to Grenada, I don't recall that. But

Neville – because of his regional expertise, and this was Sonny’s way of doing things – was involved in all of the discussions. A bit of a leg man in all of this.

**SO: Well, that was entirely appropriate, as he is from the Caribbean.**

HC: And it’s the way it should be. So, as I said, Sonny had his own way of dealing with these things and would pick people to do things for him – especially when it came to the Heads of Government Meetings and the discussions there. We were all involved, but Sonny’s diplomatic method was one thing that struck me very clearly. Of course, the Delhi decision to create an Expert Group on Small States was very good, and the report ultimately became seminal and historic. It’s one of the important documents of the time. I remember John Compton’s words – and it has always stuck in my mind – when he said that what had happened in Grenada could happen in his own country [St. Vincent], a small island state, if half a dozen people with automatic weapons were to confine the Prime Minister to his residence, take control of the broadcasting system and the control tower at the airport. That was all that was needed to take over the country without blood being shed.

**SO: Because small islands had police forces, but they hadn’t got the arms or training to deal with insurrection?**

HC: That’s right. They are vulnerable on many levels. Compton’s intervention was very perceptive and powerful and prescient. For, lo and behold, prior to the Vancouver Heads of Government meeting – after we’d dealt with the Vulnerability Report that highlighted the vulnerability of small states – leaders were confronted with, Fiji where exactly that had happened. Rabuka with his rifles had walked into the parliament and taken over the country. So, it was not only relevant to what had happened in retrospect in Grenada, it actually became an agenda-shaping issue for the Commonwealth – despite the fact that, in Delhi, there were these conflicting views seriously impacting on the meeting. But what came out of it was a brilliant piece of diplomatic marksmanship by the Commonwealth in producing the Vulnerability Report and in anticipating a debate that would evolve in subsequent years.

**SO: So, at New Delhi the issue was Grenada. At the next CHOGM, at Nassau in 1985, the issue of sanctions was starting to ratchet further up the scale. Sonny had made a public statement, which was reported in the press, supporting the issue of sanctions earlier in the year and so putting down a marker. It is very much part of the folklore that Mrs. Thatcher was deeply antagonistic to the Commonwealth at this particular point – on the question of sanctions. Does that accord with your...?**

HC: Well, yes and no. I’ll be interested to hear what you say tonight, but I was privileged, I guess, to be sitting on the edge of all this as Head of the Political Division in that whole period leading up to Nassau. There were a number of key factors: the deterioration of things in South Africa and the intransigence of P W Botha, the increasing volatility in the region, the American position on

'constructive engagement', and the heightened and precarious position of the Front Line States – in particular Zambia and Zimbabwe – and their security needs in the face of the spread of apartheid. It became an issue that really just absorbed, almost, the total energy of the Commonwealth. I can remember hour after hour being spent in the Commonwealth Committee on Southern Africa – of which I was secretary – and the Brits were fending off the increasingly strident position of the rest of the Commonwealth. In this context, I give great tribute to Moses Anafu, who was our principal advisor on Southern Africa – the officer in my division that worked on Southern Africa. His work on those preparatory papers over the the nine years I was there – and before and beyond – was absolutely remarkable in my view.

But the British position, reflecting Margaret Thatcher's position, was to stall any move against the South African government and to promote the reform of the system – not to eradicate apartheid. I'm interested to see – [as] acknowledged in Anyaoku's writings – that there was a softer side, if you like, to the Thatcher position. It wasn't as if she personally was in support of apartheid. I think there's sufficient evidence on the record, particularly if you go into the Heads of Government meetings, to see that she really didn't like P W Botha and she didn't like what was happening in South Africa. She was certainly beholden to pro-apartheid elements in her party and government and it would be interesting to see what sort of advice she was getting from the UK mission in South Africa. But I think that varied over time as well. I remember reading somewhere some time that she was surprised that Peter Jay was more accommodating to her position on South Africa than some of the other professional diplomats. But, there's no question that, in these meetings – including the post- EPG review meeting in London – where she was just one of six or seven around the table, that she held out to a remarkable extent on the position that enunciated the need to secure the future of South Africa economically and in a way that didn't damage the totality of the South African people, the black population. Adopting sanctions does tend, in the international community, to become an easy, formulaic way of solving problems in a non-military way. But it isn't, really. It is an instrument, but it's not the only instrument; it's got to sit alongside all sorts of other initiatives.

**SO: Well, indeed. In fact, I'm going to make reference this evening to the open letter that General Obasanjo wrote to Thatcher after the EPG visit and after the review meeting in London in 1986, setting out his sense of moral outrage and his demand that Thatcher acknowledge that – if she was going to use sanctions against Argentina, against Chile, using them against Eastern Europe at that particular time – that there was a moral imperative to use sanctions again as a diplomatic demonstration of repugnance against the apartheid system. Obasanjo's sense of distress and anger really radiates off the text of this letter. It's a very, very powerful appeal to Thatcher. Yet, as you say, she didn't see that sanctions, indeed, would be helpful in the longer run.**



HC: That meeting in London was very interesting: sitting around a small table like this, just six or seven people there, chaired by Pindling of the Bahamas. There were very few people in the room. I was privileged to be there as one of the very few officials with responsibilities for arranging and recording the meeting. Mrs Thatcher was subject to an onslaught, and one saw at first hand how she had acquired this reputation for resilience and stubbornness. And, like her enemies, one had to admire her for her tenacity. So, while finding her policy on apartheid repugnant and her diplomatic skills sadly wanting, I could see the rationality in her position as it stood in great contrast to the highly-charged and determined position adopted by the Commonwealth, generally. I think that she wanted it believed that she wasn't prepared to give any quarter to apartheid and to the system. These concerns were being overturned by her seeking to protect wider UK interests. At that meeting, there were Mulroney, Hawke, Rajiv Gandhi, Kaunda, Mugabe, Thatcher and Pindling, and the Secretary-General, Ramphal, sitting at the table. I remember so clearly. It was like friends sitting around the table, making a last ditch appeal to one of their number who was being recalcitrant and petulant. Hawke and Mulroney delivered the most emotional and personal reflections on their experience of racism. I thought Hawke was a bit made up, if you like, but Mulroney was absolutely brilliant – and, you'd think, how could anybody stand against this personal appeal? Rajiv Gandhi was absolutely superb: modest, thoughtful, gracious and compelling, and Thatcher obviously took more notice of him than anybody around this table.

**SO: Why?**

HC: Well, because she liked him, I think. I think she felt desperately sorry at what happened with his mother.

**SO: With whom she got on very well.**

HC: Yes, that's right, and Rajiv Gandhi was such a gentleman. I'll tell you a story in a moment, if you want a little anecdote. Such a gentleman: when he spoke, she was obviously listening. I don't think it was just personal liking or the fact that she felt the loss of his mother; but I think she recognised in him a statesman that would see good sense and not be personally carried away with the emotional importance of sanctions. But, let me give you the story. At the subsequent Vancouver CHOGM, the South African debate, of course, was intense. It was after that meeting that she [Thatcher] said she was only giving up "teeny weeny" ground on sanctions.

**SO: She gave in a teeny tiny little bit...**

HC: A teeny, tiny bit. And then she's going on to talk about the ANC as terrorists and things like that.

**SO: That comment about the ANC as a "typical terrorist organisation" was at Vancouver, yes.**

HC: Yes, that's Vancouver.

**SO:** “Typical terrorist organisation” was how she described the ANC – in response to a question from a journalist on the ANC announcement [that], if British companies were going to deal in South Africa, they were legitimate targets. She said, “Well, in that case, it’s a typical...”

**HC:** Well, you see, at the conclusion of Vancouver, Hawke and Mulroney called that press conference which was obviously to rub it into Thatcher. I got this urgent call from Patsy Robertson, the Director of Public Affairs, saying, “You’ve got to get down here to the press conference, you’ve got to listen to this”. In fact, she said, “I want you sitting up there on the platform with me, co-chairing the press conference. I want the head of the Political Division to be there to answer questions”.

But, to finish the anecdote. At that meeting, the discussion of Southern Africa proceeded in a pretty predictable way, with the Africans being very strong and insistent on strong measures being adopted. Getting towards the end of the debate... As Conference Secretary, I sat in the room directly behind the row of two seats and the SG at the table. I first had a visit from [the] UK Foreign Secretary, Geoffrey Howe, who was sitting behind Mrs. Thatcher, and he said, “Hugh, Mrs. T would like to be the last speaker before the lunch and adjournment”, and I said, “Fine”, and I conveyed that message to Sonny, sitting beside the Chairman, Brian Mulroney.

Shortly after that, Natwar Singh, the Indian Foreign Minister, came to me and said, “Hugh, Rajiv would like to be the last speaker in this debate”, so I said, “Fine”, and passed that on to Sonny, and I said, “Well, we will need to talk to Geoffrey Howe”, and things like that. Anyway, both Ministers got into the corner – Howe with Robert Armstrong, Natwar Singh with a senior Indian official – to work out who would say what and when. Nothing was resolved. When it came to the very end of the debate, Brian Mulroney cleverly said, “Look friends, we’re coming to the end of this discussion. I’ve got two speakers on my list: Rajiv and Margaret. Who’s going to be first?” Rajiv said, “Well Mr. Chairman, in my country, in my government, chivalry is still very important. So, I will I stand aside and let the lady go first...”

[*Laughter*]

Mulroney said, “Over to you, Margaret”. And, as sharp as a rapier, Margaret Thatcher said, “Mr. Chairman, thank you Rajiv. But in my country, and in my cabinet, things are done rather differently – the lady always has the last word.”

**SO:** [*Laughter*]

**HC:** Mission accomplished!

**SO:** Yes.

HC: But, a nice little touch and playing on the friendship and the admiration both had for one another. At the same time, she was going to have the last word. Of course, she won. After the London review meeting, the British exception clause would always work into the communiqués: and so it happened in Vancouver.

**SO: I've talked to Stuart [Mole] about this. I've argued [that] the South Africans had a particular regard for Thatcher because they felt that she was one of the few remaining friends of South Africa – not of the apartheid regime, but of South Africa – and so she helped keep lines of communication open when they were increasingly embattled, having painted themselves in a corner. And Stuart's reflection was that she failed to understand the sense of moral repugnance towards apartheid, and that she gave the impression that she genuinely didn't appreciate quite how appalling the situation was in South Africa – the living conditions, the squalor that was all too common among the black communities. And his implicit suggestion was that she could have played it better while still remaining, shall we say, true to her intellectual beliefs.**

HC: I respect that view of Stuart's – and there is probably some truth in it – but I'm not sure how she could have done that. As the EPG's opening sentence said, "Nothing could have prepared us..." I think you've got to take three things together, probably, in assessing Thatcher on South Africa, apartheid, or the Southern Africa context. You must take into account the distance she had travelled on Zimbabwe and what that meant. I understood that her position on Zimbabwe was, "Look, we've held the hands of all of these African states and we've helped them happily to democracy and independence and autonomy. What did we do right in respect of all the others that we've done wrong on Southern Rhodesia?" And there are instructions to officials: "Get it right on Zimbabwe, you know, tell me what we can do to get it right on Zimbabwe". Now, that's an over-simplification of the case, but I think that what she was driving at was, eventually, that there should be this major British initiative to convene what became the Lancaster House discussions.

So, she travelled a huge way on that – particularly when you go back to the discussions she had in Australia before she became Prime Minister, when she put herself so badly off-side with Malcolm Fraser. And, you could say that she wasn't aware on Zimbabwe – or, she was aware, depending on what position you take on Thatcher. She was aware of all the killings and the dreadful conditions that the Smith Regime perpetrated on the African population. I don't think there's any way that she wasn't aware of what was happening there; and there was no way that she wasn't aware of what was happening in South Africa. Everyone knew the appalling state of the townships. Everyone knew the role of the South African military. Everyone knew the cries of anguish from Tutu and the leaders – Allan Boesak and all of those good people, the Black Sash movement. People knew about that. The Commonwealth Committee on Southern Africa meetings in London were replete with that sort of information. We majored on getting that sort of

accurate data to put before the committee, from a whole range of sources, and confronting the British with it. She knew about it.

So, something else was driving her, and I think it was the fact that here is an industrial state that's been created – that is the most powerful industrial state in Africa – and they're doing pretty well. The way of life that they're promoting...if only that could spill over into the general populace, then things would be better in South Africa. And part of that was getting rid of apartheid, but getting a responsible black regime in power. And that wasn't the ANC, because they were terrorists. In my view, that was the position that seemed to be moulding the British approach to all of this.

**SO: And, of course, the British were aware by this time that the South Africans had developed nuclear capability.**

HC: Yes, that's right.

**SO: And that this was a powerful state – the leadership of which was increasingly adopting a *laager* mentality, so...**

HC: And, the third thing is retrospective and asks – in the light of governance problems in post-colonial Africa – whether she was right to be cautious on some of these things. When you look at what's happened, for example, in Zimbabwe...

**SO: Did you know, at the time, in the Secretariat, about the Gukuruhundi killings in Zimbabwe between '82 and '85?**

HC: You know, no. Well, not as much as we should've known, and I feel very badly about that. Stephen Chan will probably have a view on this, because he was based in Bulawayo for the observer group. I was based in Fort Victoria, which is now Masvingo, and I saw enough of what was going on in my area. No, we didn't; and it's always puzzled me why. I guess it somehow dropped below the radar and was not really a major focus of our attention, because we were so enamoured by Mugabe.

**SO: Well, he was the Commonwealth's success story.**

HC: We were so mesmerised by him.

**SO: I remember talking to Margaret Ling, who, of course, had been a leading member of the Anti-Apartheid Movement and IDAF in London. She became very emotional – understandably – when we were reflecting on the Gukuruhundi Campaign and what that meant for compromised transition in Zimbabwe, post-independence. I wondered whether there was a case for an assumption that this was South African subversion – support for Super-ZAPU, the extent to which it may have been assumed to be misreporting – and a resistance to believe what could have been**

**happening, precisely because it was against the narrative of a successful transition.**

HC: Exactly. A bit of both, but the latter predominantly, I think. I encountered South African incursions into Zimbabwe when I was in Masvingo. I and my ComSec companion, Ned Amarasinghe, could have been killed. His brother, Shirley Amarasinghe, was the great advocate of the Law of the Sea – as Sri Lankan Ambassador to [the] UN [in] New York. Ned, a former businessman, worked in the Secretariat in a fairly lowly position. [He] subsequently passed away.

I went to Zimbabwe almost immediately after I joined the Secretariat. It was when the Lancaster House discussions had concluded and they'd moved across to Marlborough House to sort out the details. That's when I arrived at the Secretariat as an Assistant Director IAD and almost immediately whipped off to Zimbabwe for the elections.

I was deployed in Masvingo – or the Fort Victoria, as it was then – which was probably the most active in terms of warfare, because it went right down to the Mozambique border on one side and the South African border on the other, so it was very interesting. On this particular day, I went to the election rally at which Robert Mugabe was to speak, and I guess I must have been the only white man in sight in this huge arena, enveloped in dust with [a] mass of excited people doing traditional dancing. Mugabe arrived in great splendour and gave a very rousing speech. He was certainly charismatic, and the whole place was bursting at the seams. I had to leave the rally about three quarters of the way through the speech because my companion, Ned Amarasinghe, was arriving at the airport. So, I drove there about half an hour out of town. Having picked up Ned, on our way back to town, we passed the Mugabe cavalcade about five minutes from the airport. Momentarily, after we passed, there was an explosion.

**SO: Yes, it was the attack on his life, yes.**

HC: Yes. A bomb had been planted in a culvert by the Selous Scouts who were out in the bush there somewhere. Ned and I had driven across this bloody culvert... [*Laughter*]

**SO: You'd driven across it?!**

HC: Well, yes, we were coming back as they were going – Mugabe and his motorcade, travelling at great speed to the airport, and...boom! An explosive in a culvert under the road: planted and detonated, as [was] established later, by the Rhodesian military [Selous Scouts]. So, that was a close shave. You know, you put your life on the line with the Secretariat in these situations! There was no doubt in my mind that all our electoral activity throughout this region – including the couple of assembly points in our area – was all being monitored by the South African military. And I've got no doubt that it happened later in Bulawayo and in Matabeleland. But throughout the ensuing decade we did tend to give Mugabe the benefit of the doubt. I travelled with

Obasanjo after the Eminent Persons Group on the security exercise Sonny set up... Have I got that listed?

**SO: Yes, you do. You were part of the Senior Member Secretariat Support Team in South Africa at the EPG, Southern Africa. I know that you toured the region with Obasanjo. You also went to Botswana, in addition to going up to Lusaka.**

HC: Yes, and then into Tanzania and Mozambique – looking into the security needs of the Front Line States. We were in a Nigerian military aircraft and Moses Anafu and my PA [Pindra Kaur] made up the team.

**SO: So, police training...**

HC: And military equipment. And we then went off to Lagos to write the report and that was looking specifically at what their needs were to counter South African aggression.

**SO: Yes. You list Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Botswana.**

HC: We didn't go to Angola on that occasion, but Mozambique, yes. No, that was very hairy too. This was soon after Machel's aircraft had been shot down. And we're over South African airspace.

**SO: Whether that was a South African beacon or whatever. Pik Botha argues that it was nothing to do with South Africa. Well, maybe it was nothing to do with the South African Department of Foreign Affairs, but it could have been a decision within the South African military. With the idea of the security mission: was this Sonny's initiative, or was this in response to a request from the...**

HC: That's a good question...

**SO: Because this is kind of 'out of area', in terms of Commonwealth activity...**

HC: It was very different and very unusual. It was, indeed. It was a bit like the Commonwealth initiative we took in Uganda – to prop up the military and the police. The CMTTU, it was called. Military training. It was very out of character.

**SO: Yes, because the Brits had done it with BMATT in Zimbabwe. But that had been a British bilateral initiative...**

HC: Yes, that's right.

**SO: But, this was a Commonwealth initiative in Uganda.**

HC: Yes, it was. It followed upon the Zimbabwe success. It emerged from discussions with Obote. Ramphal, Malhoutra and I flew into Kampala from

Arusha for a day, during the Tanzanian military occupation. The security mission to the FLS was a follow-up to Nassau, but it was one of those things we put on ice until after the Eminent Persons Group was done. The report was written and I think it was a good report, and it led to some sort of assistance. But it was a massive problem. The Commonwealth could hardly scratch the surface of what was needed. But we were ushered into the presidential palaces of all these states and had very good discussions with them. Obasanjo, again, proved himself to have marvellous rapport with all of the Africans.

**SO: Were you liaising with the British Foreign Office at all about this?**

HC: Very little but we did generally liaise with the Foreign Office and the Commonwealth desk in particular, but I don't remember anything significant about on this exercise. The Commonwealth Committee on Southern Africa was the main source of exchange on all these issues.

**SO: As you say, it's unusual that you were doing a Security Mission.**

HC: Yes, that's right.

**SO: Rather than economic development, state capacity building, [or the] training of diplomats. This was a hard power issue, and the Commonwealth tends to stay in the soft power area. Just another question associated with the Eminent Persons Group to South Africa: you were a senior member of the Secretariat support team in Southern Africa. What did you do in Europe and North America?**

HC: Well, the EPG travelled. Fraser and Obasanjo travelled after the EPG to Europe and to North America and into Southern Africa. Stuart would've been involved in some of this as well; Jeremy Pope was involved to a lesser extent. But, we went off to Bonn and to Paris, and we met all sorts of influential people. And then to Washington...

**SO: So, this was a briefing tour?**

HC: Yes, it was. It was to brief them on the findings of the Eminent Persons Group in a first hand way and to get to the decision-makers. So, we were talking to foreign ministers in Europe, and my involvement in the North American trip was more marginal than it was in Europe, where we met people like Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt in Germany, and similarly in France.

**SO: So, was this part of a drive for international recognition...?**

HC: International recognition and support.

**SO: But also a drive for economic and financial sanctions.**

HC: This is where Fraser is very important in his account of what happened in Washington. I wasn't there for that part of it, but later, in New York. But Washington was very important because the EPG got to the key

Congressional leaders and managed to have the Reagan administration's position on sanctions significantly changed. Not immediately, but it certainly flowed as a result of that visit. Did Fraser talk to you about that?

**SO: Yes, he did.**

HC: And then, of course, in Southern Africa we went to Lusaka to see the ANC, and to Zimbabwe, Tanzania and beyond.

**SO: The ANC had not been particularly supportive of the idea of the EPG to start with.**

HC: No.

**SO: Why not?**

HC: Well, let me give you another often over-looked dimension of the initiative that Sonny Ramphal took. I remember Emeka dealt with it in his book. Post-Nassau, a few things happened. At the Nassau meeting, Heads had appointed seven countries to oversee the EPG exercise. As the final session was breaking, Sonny grabbed me and said, "I want to see Rajiv, Hawke, Mulroney, Kenneth, Robert and Pindling. You've got to get them now before they get in their planes and go." So, we walked out of the Executive Session room and I had to muster these people, and we stood – I can remember this as clear as it was yesterday – in the executive lounge and there was Bob Hawke, Rajiv Gandhi, Brian Mulroney, Lindon Pindling, Robert Mugabe, [and] Kenneth Kaunda. And he said to them, "We've now got the green light to go ahead with this without delay. How are we going to do it, and who are the Eminent Persons to be?"

Now, Nigeria was under Babangida at the time, so they weren't there. Thatcher wasn't there – two key countries central to operation. They talked about it, and I remember Sonny turned to Hawke and said, "Who could you provide?" And Hawke said to him, "I think I could deliver either Gough Whitlam or Malcolm Fraser, depending on persuading my cabinet and who's available." And he turned to Mugabe, standing there just in a random circle... I don't think even Moni or Emeka was there, it was just Sonny and I. Sonny turned to Mugabe and Kaunda and said, "What do you think? Who would you prefer?" and they both said, "Malcolm Fraser." And Hawke said, "That's going to be a little more difficult. I'm not sure if I could deliver him, given it would not be popular with my colleagues. But I'll take it to cabinet and I'll argue it." And he delivered Fraser. That's the origin of that.

Immediately, [when] we got back to London, Sonny was very keen to get the EPG together. Emeka claims credit for delivering Obasanjo. I'm not going to query that. Relations with the Nigerian government were very delicate at that stage and Obasanjo was still held in great regard by his military juniors, who were now running the country. I had personal experience of that when I went with him to meet Babangida in Lagos. So, the group assembled in London but



not without considerable in-house difficulty. Emeka tells a story about the Africans threatening to withdraw. Thatcher tried to get Geoffrey Howe to lead the mission. The South African mission in London were predictably cool about the whole idea. There were lots of obstacles to the project even getting off the ground.

The Africans were very wary, and Emeka tells a story of going off to Africa to deliver the EPG. I frankly don't recall that; I wasn't with him. Stuart Mole perhaps was with him. I doubt it - it would be unusual for him to do that by himself. The South African government, Winnie Mandela, Allan Boesak, the ANC, the UDF, the PAC, everyone – all of the key players came out against it, basically saying, "This is something we ourselves have got to solve." There had been European attempts at bridging the gap, and the word out of South Africa was very negative, right across the board. The crucial thing in the end was that we were able to negotiate with a South African government that didn't want the EPG. In the full likelihood that the SAG would not issue visas to the EPG, Sonny was able to negotiate that Moni Malhoutra and I would be accepted as special Commonwealth emissaries to visit South Africa in advance of the EPG, to explain to all the parties on the ground the mandate and approach of the EPG. We went for a couple of weeks, with the view to meeting as many key players as possible and explaining to them the proposed nature of the mission. Special visas were issued: as an Australian, I couldn't get into South Africa, especially diplomats.

Anyway, I had to get a new passport and all of that to go, but eventually we went to South Africa as the EPG special envoys. We moved between Cape Town, Pretoria and Johannesburg and saw all of those key players. The visit didn't receive much attention in the end because of all the drama associated with the EPG. But it is written up, and I actually quote it in my thesis. Many people claim credit for all sorts of things relating to the EPG, but there is no doubt in my mind that this visit broke the barrier. Subsequent to this, the South African government agreed that a limited number of the EPG should visit the country and – as a result – Fraser, Obasanjo and Dame Nita Barrow went, supported by Moni, Emeka, myself and a few Secretariat staff.

**SO: That's right, because they went on a preliminary tour.**

HC: Yes, it then occurred in stages. But, importantly, in getting to see key people and to explain what the Commonwealth's position meant, the total group were eventually able to visit. But the important thing about [this] was – in my view – that we got to see some very key, important people; just Moni and I. Perhaps most important of all was Winnie Mandela. I remember it was through Ismael Ayoub, who was Nelson Mandela's lawyer – since discredited, like Winnie, I guess. We were secreted into the suburbs of Johannesburg somewhere. I've got no idea where, because we seemed to be driving for hours and ended up in a Boer-type motel and Winnie, under house arrest at this stage, suddenly appeared. We sat and had quite contentious but a good conversation with her; that's just Moni, me, Ismael Ayub and Winnie. The next day we were travelling from Jo'burg to Cape Town and at the airport there was a cluster of press surrounding Winnie, who was going down to pay her monthly visit to

Nelson. As we walked past she caught sight of me – out of the corner of her eye – and said, “Wait there, I want to talk to you.” We waited behind and walked onto the aircraft together. I was sitting in my seat and had a tap on the shoulder from a steward who said, “Mrs. Mandela would like you to come and sit next to her on the flight.”

**SO: It’s a two hour flight.**

HC: That’s right. So, of course I agreed, and she had asked the guy sitting next to her to move to my seat, so I went down and sat next to her. When Moni found about this and saw me sitting next to Winnie he insisted on having half the flight. Well, I don’t really blame him for it. We built up this beautiful relationship with Winnie and that was very important. Her support for the EPG was really important. The other important thing that happened on that visit – again, just Moni and I – was that the Canadians facilitated our access to another very important dissident who was under house arrest and couldn’t leave his house in Cape Town. We were taken to the Canadian Mission in Cape Town, sat in a back room and, again, seemingly waiting for hours. Who was to walk in through the back door and up the back steps but Trevor Manuel, later a major figure in the ANC government. We had a good talk to Trevor about the purpose of the EPG mission and its objectives. That built up a relationship with Trevor that Emeka speaks very highly of in his book – you might remember – in establishing productive EPG links into the UDF and the ANC.

And the third person who was absolutely crucial in all of this – and drawn in on that first visit by Moni and me – was Rev. Allan Boesak, who was a brilliant, colourful and high profile anti-apartheid exponent, very influential in UDF/ANC leadership circles. We also met a wide circle of others: South African officials, the Executives of the UDF, PAC and COSATU, and many of the key bodies and individuals. As a result of that visit, the EPG mission was able to go forward. I was very closely involved in all of that preliminary preparatory work and then in every aspect of the EPG’s work.

**SO: Let’s see... the Nassau CHOGM was October, and the EPG mission itself began in February...**

HC: Yes, so this was in January some time. I remember everyone went on home leave except me. I had to stay in London to continue the contacts with the SAG and, hopefully, to await a positive response – which eventually came. That would’ve been in January some time.

But, one other story, and [then] I’ll stop the anecdotes...but they’re important in terms of showing you how the Secretariat operated. Moni and I came back and wrote up a very short report on that visit and that was injected into the next meeting of the EPG. It was from that stage forward that we got official messages from the South African Embassy, giving a green light for an EPG visit – in minuted form – to go to South Africa. Had I come to the Witness

Seminar in London – I had my speech prepared, by the way – my remarks would have been under the title, “I never met Nelson Mandela”. You might ask why is that significant, you know, when millions of others haven’t either. I’d say, well, it is important, because in every stage of those nine years that I was involved in London, I believe that I played an instrumental role, a back-stage role, because that’s what officials do and diplomats do, at every important point in the process that eventually led to the release of Mandela and the breakdown of the apartheid system in South Africa. I’ve got photographs on my wall from Winnie with expressions of her personal thanks written on them. There was an occasion when we went out to her house in Soweto – Moni, me, and Dominic Sankey...

We went out at a later time to deliver the Third World Prize of a million dollars to Nelson Mandela [and] to Winnie, in the garden of her home in Soweto – where, presumably, all these necklacing were alleged to have taken place. And we’ve got a photograph of that occasion – with her daughter, with Winnie – saying, “To Hugh, with love and thanks for all that you’ve done”, and then Christmas cards written to my children saying, “Your father’s done wonderful things to help South Africa.” I never met Nelson Mandela: didn’t even lay eyes on him. Even all the staff met him when he came to Marlborough House. There, on their desks, are photographs of them with Nelson. It doesn’t really matter to me, but it was important that the EPG got to see him in prison. Obasanjo had been seeing Nelson. He saw him twice at least, before the EPG itself. Once, on that preliminary visit, I think they whisked him away, and then secondly, during another time when we were in Jo’burg, they whisked him away to see Mandela, and then later the full group got to see him.

When the word came through that the group were to see Mandela, the two key people in this whole process in the Secretariat – besides Emeka and Moni – were Jeremy Pope and me and we were left behind. You’ll probably gather from some of the writings that that was a very tense relationship – between Anyaoku and Malhoutra – that I got caught up in. Emeka mentions a particular confrontation that he had with Moni, which involved me – I think, unfairly, but that’s happened. When the word came through to the EPG at the Cape Sun Hotel at Newlands everyone came down. We used to travel in white Mercedes cars. Jeremy Pope and I were present as usual. What a pity you can’t interview Jeremy, because he was such an important person in all this. We came down to the foyer, all ready to go, and the Eminent and Emeka and Moni piled into the cars and left Jeremy and I standing on the curb.

*[Laughter]*

**SO: Right.**

HC: But, why do I emphasise that? Because it reflects on the type of Secretariat we’re dealing with, right? Where rank is important and where important people seek rank – and they exploit it, right?

SO: Yes.

HC: And, I'm not critical of that, because they were the two senior people there. But they had a bit of a contest going between themselves. In every other case, Jeremy and I, as key persons, were there setting up the meetings, making the contacts, taking/editing the record, even in the one-on-one meetings. So, I never got to see the man – and it's been one of those regrets! ...You've probably met him, haven't you? *[Laughter]*

SO: No, I didn't.

HC: But, those garden parties at Marlborough House to which he came later...Everyone met him, had dinner with him. Even when he came here to Canberra, I was out of the country, but there you are.

[END OF AUDIOFILE PART ONE]

PART TWO:

SO: **Sue Onslow talking to Dr. Hugh Craft on Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2014, Part Two. Hugh, you had made a reference earlier to the comparative aspects of the Grenada crisis of 1983 – John Compton's remarks that there could be an incident like that in his own island state. And then the events in Fiji, in 1987, when General Sitiveni Rabuka ousted the democratic government of Prime Minister Timoci Bavadra. Please could you reflect on the Fiji crisis of '87?**

HC: Well, what followed was the establishment of the Expert Group on Small States at the Delhi meeting, and their report to the Nassau meeting. The course that this took was very interesting. In putting the group together and also in shaping the report, I must give credit to Neville Linton, who worked in my division and who was a key writer of the report. The report – provoked by the situation in Grenada – dealt with hard politics involving American influence in the Western hemisphere. The project gave rise to outcomes that were really quite unrelated. Essentially, this was a case of an internal conflict that almost invited third party intervention by the US and the Eastern Caribbean States. But the report did not deal with the bigger geopolitical issues – like great power rivalries, US hegemony etc. The result of the consultations led to quite different outcomes on the vulnerability of small states, which have been all important in the latter day success of the rise of Small States as an important actor in international diplomacy.

Let me explain. We had three or four consultative meetings in various regions – including in the Seychelles, the Bahamas and in Wellington – in putting that report together. What came out of it was the belief that Ramphal eventually refined in our internal consultations, on what emerged as the key vulnerability impacting on all Small States, particularly the Island States: the question of

their vulnerability to economic deprivation, or institutional deprivation, if you like. In other words, that the Commonwealth would do best not to focus on the military dimensions of security, but on the administrative and economic vulnerabilities of Small States.

**SO: So, this was 'human security'?**

HC: It's latterly described as 'human security', yes. And, I can remember the discussions in the final days of putting that report together focused on what the sharp point of the report should be, and the ultimate catch-cry around which you can rally your main recommendations, and we, in our division, came up with the title of the report: 'Vulnerability: Small States in the Global Society'. And the 'Vulnerability' label has stuck. I think it's been a good one, because it does describe – I think, very well – the predicament of Small States as being about vulnerability above all else. Now, the Compton prediction was absolutely right: not in respect of his own country, but in terms of the South Pacific. Having had a posting in Suva, I knew Steve Rabuka quite well, because he was the military liaison between RFMF, the Royal Fiji Military Forces, and the Australian government on matters relating to security. So, he used to be in and out of the Australian High Commission quite a lot, and had been a guest in my home on a number of occasions. So, I knew the man well and I couldn't really believe that he'd come to this point. But the Fiji situation brought together a number of problems, as we look back on it. One was the deficiencies of the 1970 constitution, which really institutionalised racism in the Fiji-broad community.

**SO: Because of the land question?**

HC: The land question, the voting question, the way the parliament was constructed and so on. It was obviously meant to concede *primus inter pares* status on the indigenous Fijian population and their systems of governance – namely, the Great Council of Chiefs. When it was seen that [that] was brought to nothing by the victory of Bavadra and his support from the Indian community, then things began to unravel. Rabuka was caught up in that, believing himself to be the knight in shining armour, coming to rescue the situation of the indigenous Fijians. The subsequent story, I think, has been a sad one, but may yet prove to be important.

**SO: How did you learn of the coup? Did it come over the wire?**

HC: Yeah, that's right. I mean, via public broadcasts...

**SO: Was this a crisis for the Secretariat to confront on behalf of the Commonwealth? Or, because of the position of the Governor General, was this a constitutional crisis within Fiji, and its relationship to The Crown?**

HC: Oh, it certainly was that, no question about that. There were two elements. We were notified by the news broadcasts. I was able to make a phone call to my successor as the Deputy High Commissioner in Suva and talk to him about it. So, that's the way it built up our information, and we were seeing it in

two bits, really. Even in those days, when we were dealing with military governments and military take-overs, where Sonny had a fairly flexible view of military government, he certainly didn't like it. But he always believed in the old view and UN principle of non-interference, and that "this country's got to solve its internal problems itself". So he'd be urging – from the outset – the return to democratic rule and good governance as being a valued cardinal principle. So, that was the first point – and that really fell on deaf ears in a way, because the concerns of the Fijians were over and above that. They eventually involved the Governor General, whose relationship with the Queen was seen as a lifeline, really, in terms of restoring stability. But even that became complicated by the fact that, in the end, he and Ratu Mara went over to the dark side, if you like.

**SO: The Governor General was Ratu Penaia, wasn't it?**

HC: Ratu Penaia Ganilau, yes. It all came on the eve of the Vancouver meeting as well, and so the Australians and New Zealanders were very exercised by it. You can talk to Gareth Evans about this. He, at one stage, was contemplating an activist Australian intervention. Exactly what form that might take or whether Gareth really wanted Australian intervention is another matter, but it was being touted as a possible Australian and New Zealand response. That's the way they saw it; that's the seriousness with which they viewed what was happening. People like Mulroney who already were seeing – by the time of the Vancouver CHOGM – the influx of Fiji Indians into Canada... Many of the Fijian intelligentsia had settled in Canada... He saw it as a worrying trend, not only for Canada but also for the future of Fiji.

I don't think Sonny had a great deal of influence on the Palace on Fiji. You would need to talk to him about that. While he had very close relationships with HM and the Palace, the Queen felt very keenly about Fiji. As you will know, having served there with the British, there is a soft spot in the heart of the royal family for Fiji, for all sorts of reasons. And I think there was a huge amount of disappointment and disillusionment about Fiji that was enveloping the situation about then. But in terms of the Commonwealth's role, I don't think Sonny overplayed his hand in the Palace. He would have spoken to and listened to William Heseltine. Bob Hawke, on the other hand, who'd been at university with Heseltine in Western Australia, was on the phone to him urging the Queen to take a particular line, and you might like to talk to Mr. Hawke about that. I think the Secretariat did what it could. But it was caught in a pincer movement between very strong, bellicose, threatening, regional members (Australia and New Zealand), an Indian government overly protective [of] the Fiji Indian populace, and an overly sentimental palace. The Fiji situation could not have been played out the same way a decade later.

**SO: One of the people I spoke to has commented that they felt that Sonny Ramphal was influenced as being part of a wider Indian world, and that nationalist Indians had been thwarted in various aspects in Caribbean politics. This person's argument was that Sonny was influenced by this**

**formative background and believed that they shouldn't be so thwarted again. Now, I don't know if there is any truth in this perception...**

HC: I didn't ever see any of that in Sonny's approach, and certainly not on Fiji.

**SO: Thank you.**

HC: But Sonny was very conscious of his roots, very conscious of the implications of indentured labour in the Caribbean and the Pacific. I always thought that the Indian problem was a wider one for the Pacific than just [for] Fiji. Can I just go to an aside? I don't think the Commonwealth ever did very well in the Pacific. One of the reasons for that is that they always seem to be too distant: they're a long way away. Fraser recognised this when he wanted to establish a regional Secretariat office in Australia. But also, in my view, the Secretariat had been sending the wrong people there – mainly officers and experts of Indian origin – and not getting the right response. I don't want to seem racist in this sense, but, in my assessment, the Pacific islands themselves looked aghast at Fiji's ethnic problems, and were very conscious of this in the Secretariat's approach.

**SO: They're very sensitive?**

HC: Yes, to the problems that indigenous Indians had caused for Fiji. Also, because the ruling political classes in Fiji are basically Polynesian rather than Melanesian. The whole Lau group, as you know, have particular loyalties: they have royal status in Tonga. And Ratu Mara (who was from Lau) became an outstanding leader – internationally, but also in the Commonwealth. The region in those years identified very closely with him and his cohorts. During the 1987 crisis I think Sonny's principal concern was to see him still involved and not disadvantaged by all the things that were happening. But, at the same time, [he was] insisting that the elections were throwing up a particular result and that this had to be recognised as representing legitimate Indian political interests.

**SO: Do you remember Timoci Bavadra coming to London and trying to see Sonny?**

HC: Yes, I do.

**SO: Did you meet him?**

HC: No, I didn't. No. Did he ever see Sonny? I'm not sure if he did.

**SO: No. Michael Fathers wrote a particularly critical piece, saying that Sonny should have seen this elected leader, who'd effectively been ousted.**

HC: Yeah, and I think that Satendra – the other day, at our meeting – was very critical of this.

**SO: Yes, he felt that passionately.**

HC: Very passionately, yes. Again, I think Sonny seems to have been caught in the pincer movement here. And I don't think his 'Indian-ness' had any influence on the way he thought, but who knows? He's very passionate about all of this stuff.

**SO: Were you aware of any particular sensitivities, particular interest and input, from India?**

HC: Oh yes, very much so. Even going back to my posting in Suva. The Indian High Commissioner was very exercised by the political claims being made by the Indian community [in Fiji] on running the country, basically. And, you know, even in our day [late 1970s], they had those outstanding Indian leaders like SM Koya, Jai Ram Reddy and, Mrs Irene Jai Narayan. These were very powerful people that Ratu Mara successfully integrated into his Alliance Party government. It became the political way of doing things in Fiji – either in opposition or in government – but the thought that the traditional Fijian and indigenous leadership would no longer be in control of running the country was a bridge too far, obviously, for the military, and basically for the indigenous community.

**SO: You and I both know that by the late 1970s the community percentage was 44% indigenous Fijian...**

HC: 52% Indians. With the balance were mixed race and so on. That's right. They've reversed it now, you know that?

**SO: Yes I do. So, as far as the outcome of the Fiji coups in 1987 were concerned, you were obviously using the Australian High Commission down in Suva as a particular source of information. When Fiji was suspended at the Vancouver meeting, did you try to maintain any sorts of information links under the radar? Or was it the question of Fiji being suspended from the councils of the Commonwealth and all links being cut?**

HC: Let me tell you about the initiative that Sonny took. A special South Pacific Forum meeting was called in Apia. Sonny despatched me as head of the Political Division, Jeremy Pope as head of the Legal Division, and a New Zealander.

**SO: Straight after the Vancouver CHOGM?**

HC: Yes, that's right. Together with Neroni Slade – who is now head of the Pacific Islands Forum – and a Samoan, [we went] to Apia to sit on the sidelines of the meeting and to advise him on what might be the appropriate Commonwealth response, and also to facilitate any outcomes. Now, important in all this was Bob Hawke – and I'll relate one series of events that involve the Commonwealth very closely.



Bob Hawke was very keen to find an EPG solution to the Fiji problem, wanting to promote a Pacific EPG. Hawke was pressing for this and lobbying, but not with a great deal of support. But I remember his Senior Private Secretary – we were all staying at Aggie Grey's [Hotel] – saying that Bob Hawke wanted to see me about this. We set up a meeting, we talked about it, and as a result of that meeting he wanted me to facilitate contact with Sonny. So, in the middle of the morning – about five o'clock in the morning from memory, it was some ungodly hour – I was ushered into his suite where he and Hazel were still getting out of bed, still in their pyjamas, and set up this call to talk to Sonny. Clearly, it was in the pre-mobile phone days...

**SO: Well, there is a twelve hours difference between Apia and London.**

*[Laughter]*

HC: They had to pick the time carefully. Anyway, we sat around with Hawke in his pyjamas and he had this conversation with Ramphal and was to take it back to the executive meeting. It was only me in the room – not Jeremy or Neroni. They were, however, very important in this context with NZ's David Lange and the Samoan Prime Minister. Nothing came of a wider Commonwealth role, as Hawke had hoped, but there was a South Pacific initiative set up that did involve two or three of the Heads of Government, under Hawke, to work for a South Pacific solution. But that in the end didn't go anywhere much. You see, the problem was that there was a lot of sympathy in the Pacific region with Ratu Mara, less with Bavadra. Mara was always seen as a bit of a luminary and hero in the South Pacific. As you know, in our day, there was an indigenous political movement in Fiji involving 'radical' Fijians – always sitting on the edge of things, really. Bavadra was very respectable, there was no question about that, but a lot of the people supporting him were not held in very high regard by Pacific leaders. They were virtually on Ratu Mara's side, and this happened in Vancouver as well. It was Australia and New Zealand, again, taking the running.

**SO: Did Ratu Mara attend Vancouver around the edges?**

HC: No.

**SO: I know that they were peripheral players, and given his extraordinary authority and prestige in the Pacific, I wondered whether he had in fact come.**

HC: We had people working on his behalf there. Most of the Pacific Island's elders recognised his stature and deplored the way that things had moved and basically blamed the Indian community, really, for all that had happened.

**SO: Was David Lange regarded as something of a wild card within the Commonwealth?**

HC: Yes, he was.

**SO: I know that this particular time – between '83 and '87 – was when Australia and New Zealand were very much at loggerheads because of the whole question of New Zealand's drive to de-nuclearise the Pacific, and everything that meant for the ANZUS security umbrella. So, Lange was not seen as a collaborative soul?**

HC: No, David Lange was very interesting. I found him a very interesting character in the Commonwealth context. He was in Vancouver. My people who were transcribing the record – sitting up in the bleachers and taking it all down, and trying to make sense of it – had two complaints. This came officially to me from the people who were taking the record: they were parliamentary scribes. There were two prime ministers they couldn't understand. One was David Lange, and the other was Bob Hawke. Bob Hawke, because of his very marked Australian 'strine' accent, and David Lange, because he spoke in paragraphs, not in sentences.

*[Laughter]*

**SO: I'm sure the commas were in all the right places.**

*[Laughter]*

HC: But, you know, the interesting thing about David Lange was that he lost interest in things. He pursued some of these Labour party policies internationally with great passion and then, basically, lost interest. I remember going with Sonny to see him in Wellington in the Beehive – the parliamentary building there – and we went up to his suite on the top floor, and he almost said to Sonny that he was bored. He looked bored, and he acted bored, and it wasn't long after that that he pulled the plug, I think. But, any attempts by Sonny to engage him...

**SO: Were resisted?**

HC: Now, Chris Laidlaw – you should speak to Chris about this when you see him.

**SO: I know. I will.**

HC: He knew Lange very well. As did Jeremy Pope, I might say.

**SO: Please, Hugh, could I ask you about your view of the value of Commonwealth Senior Officials meetings? You attended Arusha in Tanzania in '82, Dhaka, Bangladesh in '84, Bridgetown, Barbados in '86... How far did they help to give continuing substance to the Commonwealth as an entity and as an international organisation? Or were they really a distraction?**

HC: Well, I've got a particular axe to grind on this, and I'm not sure if anybody else has. The change took place as a result of the Coolum meeting. The last Senior Officials meeting was in Apia, and that would've been in early 2001. CHOGM was set down for October, November. I went to that because, by this

stage, I was head of the CHOGM task force here in Canberra, in the Prime Minister's department, setting up the Brisbane meeting, followed by what became the Coolum meeting. The concept that had been established – well-established by the time that I arrived in the Secretariat – was that, in the off year, CHOGM Senior Officials would meet, at the very highest levels. Pitched at Cabinet Secretaries, or Heads of Prime Ministers' Department.

**SO: But not Foreign Ministers?**

HC: Not Foreign Ministers, because Foreign Ministers really didn't have any part to play at CHOGM. This is what was devised by Trudeau at the meeting in Ottawa. So, you had these very senior people coming to Senior Officials meetings – and coming relatively enthusiastically, because they knew that CHOGM was something involving their Head of Government, personally. So we would have senior people turning up at these meetings and playing a constructive part. In my experience – I went to three or four – they were like a management committee of the Secretariat, because they looked at things like budget and they had reports on all current political and administrative [activities] – like a stocktake on the functioning of the Secretariat. They looked at the outcomes of the previous Heads of Government meeting, and they looked forward to the next meeting in terms of setting the agenda and the priorities. It was a very productive arrangement. Meetings that did a multiplicity of things, that helped with the administration; the smooth running, the political focus, targets and the indicators of what was successful or not so successful in the Commonwealth association.

Additionally, they took the Commonwealth to places that it would not otherwise have gone. In Apia, for example, this collection of senior people from around the world would arrive – bringing with them the associated benefits of the Commonwealth presence, as well [as] levels of exposure which, for many of these member states, were relatively quite huge. These SOMs were almost always held in places where you were unlikely to be having a CHOGM, but focused local and regional attention on what the Commonwealth was doing. During the preparations for the Coolum meeting, or the Brisbane meeting, originally, one of the things that captivated the people on the political side – especially in the Australian Foreign Affairs – was the need to bring the Secretariat into line in terms of modern accounting, performance and transparency-type things. Additionally, they always felt the SOMs were a bit of an indulgence – and they might have been. The Secretariat has a tendency to take too many people, many of whom appeared to sit around doing not much, and it was no doubt inconvenient for people in Canberra to be heading off to, say, Arusha and places like that – stuck out in the middle of nowhere. So, the Australian government drove this agenda and successfully lobbied to have it all changed in the name of management efficiencies. Based on cash savings, really. And they've substituted in place of the SOM – and I don't know a lot about it because it's post my time – management meetings in London. Now, I believe that the diminution of the CHOGM which we're now witnessing is the outcome, in part, of that process set in place after Coolum – where you have expectations lowered, fewer

Heads of Government turning up, the lack of focus in the agenda where you get CHOGM producing 11,000 words of communiqués... Even in my day we tried to cut it back. And in terms of enlivening the Commonwealth in its most important parts, in its regions, [that] has been lost. What has been substituted is a management system based on committees, serviced by inconsequentials on the whole, because these meetings in London – I'd need to check on the attendance record, but my guess is that I am probably right – most of the people who turn up from the High Commissions in London are second or third secretaries, operating in most cases without any real brief from their capital. So, the whole operation has fallen victim to modern management methods, favoured by the ABC countries.

They run this very tightly managed agenda of basically controlling the Secretariat under a neo-liberal approach to management, with all the politically correct outcomes in modern 'management-speak'. As I said the other day at the seminar, sounding the death knell of the Commonwealth as a particular sort of political association. I don't think anyone's suggesting the Secretariat shouldn't be brought up to the standards of modern management practice. But it should be given the flexibility of movement that a soft power organisation needs to move in the areas and amongst the people and in the issues that they need to. I imagine my successors and others have spent most of their time producing endless papers about performance indicators and the like.

**SO: Showing that they're meeting targets and delivering efficiencies?**

HC: Yes, that's right. And that requires a special sort of leadership – to manage that in a productive way – and whether the current Secretary General has it or not is questionable. I give him full credit for being a fine and decent man, but it does take a particular sort of leadership to be able to cut through and to call the bluff of officialdom in influential member countries. The problem is that this system itself was being developed in the Secretariat over a period of years – particularly in the 90's and the early 2000's. For example...and I think Don McKinnon probably set it in motion when, in the Political Affairs Division, for example, they created various formal sections – like a Good Governance section and a Democracy section, etc. – whereas in my day it was done differently. And I'm not saying this is better but it was a different way of working, with the responsibility for subject areas spread across the division and between the officers who worked in their areas of strength, but it wasn't formalised. Establishing silos not only stifles the prospect of effective political outcome but equally results in poor management on the ground.

I found, for example, in the Maldives in late 2013, this was a real problem. You had a very distinguished group of eminent Commonwealth citizens in the COG – led by Lawrence Gonzi, who is outstanding in my view. There was a sense in which our work was being deliberately controlled by ComSec officers following a particular mantra on democracy. I'm not convinced this was a healthy way of operating. But never mind, that's another matter. But more seriously, the observer group – apart from the Chair, I'd say – was being kept

deliberately ignorant of what was happening at the same time on the good governance side, which was really the 'good offices' of Don McKinnon as the SG's special representative to the Maldives – as if the two areas of the Commonwealth's concern were separate and unconnected.

**SO: So, there was a complete divergence?**

HC: In my perception, yes. And it was only on my insistence and the insistence of one or two others that we were actually briefed on McKinnon's role, which intertwined with our role at several crucial junctures. How you could issue an interim report by the Commonwealth observer group without acknowledging the fact that there was another stream happening at the same time, under Don McKinnon? It defies belief. But, this was the line the Secretariat officers were pushing – successfully, initially – with Gonzi. With one or two others we were quite intolerant of this, saying that this can't be, saying we've got to be briefed. Don McKinnon eventually arrived in Malé on his mission and we had a good close working relationship with him, and he thoroughly briefed the group. But, initially, they were happening on two different levels.

**SO: So, did you know Akbar Khan?**

HC: No.

**SO: He was working in the Legal Division of the Secretariat and I understand that he was involved in the 'good offices' role and supposed to be the Rapporteur of the observer mission.**

HC: I haven't seen him in the Maldives. He might have been there, of course. We didn't see him.

**SO: Who was spinning the policy line?**

HC: I expect it was to do with well established practice. The Secretariat has conducted so many COG exercises that I think they have established the best way of completing each exercise most effectively. This was the 'democracy' area at work. I, having been involved in a few observer group exercises and having seen them run by quite senior people, like Matthew Neuhaus and Amitav Banerji... In one case Stuart Mole and I were involved in Nigeria. I just felt it was totally bizarre and very strange, but, in the end, I think we got our way, and we were briefed by McKinnon who was very good. Mind you, I think the whole Maldives project has been overcooked. I don't know how the Secretariat can afford the resources.

But, in the end, I think the report was a good one. It was a very difficult, pear-shaped exercise. There was a lot of political and legal interference in the process. The electoral commission and the electoral commissioner, in our view, were impeccable in the way they did their work. He's since been dismissed, as you probably know.

**SO: Fuwad Thowfeek? Yes.**

HC: He's on a suspended jail sentence. I don't quite know what for, but it confirms our deepest fears. I've been in touch with Lawrence Gonzi about it: probably a bit of pay-back. With the amount of resources the Commonwealth has put into the Maldives over the years – particularly with Don McKinnon's exercise – member governments are asking with so little practical outcomes whether it is all worth it. Certainly, my own government is asking that question.

**SO: Well, the Maldives was seen originally as a Commonwealth good news story.**

HC: It was. But it's all tipped on its head now. As if nothing has changed, you know.

**SO: If I could ask you, as we move towards the end of our discussion, Hugh, about the Commonwealth and the United Nations Organisation. You were a delegate to the United Nations General Assembly between '79 and '88. Mark Robinson, of course, was instrumental in securing...**

HC: Yes. Observer status.

**SO: Observer status for the Commonwealth. I understand this group included the Commonwealth, the PLO and the Holy See?**

*[Laughter]*

HC: Sitting there on the sidelines.

**SO: So, you went every September to the General Assembly annual meeting in New York?**

HC: Yes, and we sent officers that covered virtually the whole of the Assembly. Various members of the International Affairs Division would go and spend their time there. So, every year that I was in the Secretariat, I would have been in New York for at least two or three weeks during the Assembly, and additional time when we were negotiating the small states office in New York; I would've spent longer. We would also be there on special occasions: like on the Law of the Sea Convention, where the Commonwealth had a special interest, as shown in the report of the Expert Group report on the Law of the Sea and its implications for the Commonwealth, facilitated by my division.

**SO: I've got 'Delegate to the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea, New York, 1980, 1981' in my bibliographic notes for your career. There is another reference to you writing a particular report on Ocean Management in 1984 – is that the one you were thinking of?**

HC: That's the report, yes.

**SO: So, had the Law of the Sea originally been a Commonwealth initiative?**

HC: Well, it's interesting. Not a Commonwealth initiative as such. But it had very strong Commonwealth origins. As I mentioned earlier, Shirley Amarasinghe, the Sri Lankan Ambassador to the UN, was very instrumental in the early days of the initiative, as was Fiji's Ambassador, Satya Nandan, who was very instrumental throughout the negotiations. He subsequently headed up the UN Seabed Authority based in Kingston, Jamaica. And, of course, Tommy Ko – the Singapore Ambassador of the UN – was the Chair of the Law of the Sea conferences. An absolutely brilliant negotiator and multilateral diplomat. They were all key Commonwealth operators. And there were probably others involved as they performed not a formal but a recognised Commonwealth role. We even picked up the implications of this in Fiji when I was on posting there. In the South Pacific Forum there were ongoing consultations on issues that had LOS dimensions, like on the Forum Fisheries Agency and Forum Shipping Line, both of which involved the exploitation and distribution of scarce resources in the South Pacific. The discussions that included a majority of Commonwealth members were always guided by what was happening in the Law of the Sea context. I think the Law of the Sea Convention was concluded finally in about 1982, and Ramphal set up an Expert Group based initially on the outcome of a CHOGRM meeting, to look at the implications of the Law of the Sea convention and the establishment of economic zones – exclusive economic zones – and what the impact might be on Commonwealth countries.

**SO: So, the negotiations for this were conducted primarily in New York, even though they may have been key Commonwealth actors?**

HC: Oh yes. We weren't over there doing [anything] other than monitoring the progress and talking to the key people involved, and then of course we went into this in our own way. Again, it was a consultative group – an Expert Group – and we had meetings in various places around the Commonwealth, drawing together that report.

**SO: One question from something on your CV: you had been Secretary General of the Government Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons, Canberra in 1989...**

HC: Just after I came back from the Secretariat.

**SO: Was that more of an Australian national policy, rather than a Commonwealth dimension?**

HC: Gareth Evans was very seized by the fact that the Chemical Weapons Convention in the UN context had been bogged down for about 25 years in Geneva and he was determined to do something about it. He saw the way of nudging forward was to get industry locked into consultations with governments. After my return from London, I had been put in the Americas Branch preparing a policy paper [on] Latin America. The new Foreign Minister Gareth Evans expressed interest. The only advantage that came out of my two months there was [that] I visited all of our posts in Latin America, including Cuba, which was great. And then they took me out of it straight away and put me onto running the chemical weapons initiative. The reason

had nothing to do with my Commonwealth background, but I guess they knew that I had a lot of expertise in running international conferences. It turned out to be a very successful conference and Gareth got his way. And in the end the whole of the convention was adopted in the UN. He brought to Canberra a huge range of people from around the world – UN ambassadors and Senior Officials, as well as senior figures in the industry – and straight from that I went into the APEC project, another new Australian initiative. Heading up the first ever APEC Ministerial meeting here in Canberra.

**SO: In '89, yes. Hugh, how far do you feel that the Commonwealth's success as a diplomatic actor in your time, at the Secretariat, was precisely because it was operating below the radar? I raised this on Monday at the Witness Seminar: this question of invisibility. It's been noted that this has been one of the Commonwealth's secret weapons for the Secretary General and his staff – that they haven't necessarily been high profile diplomatic actors – and therefore they have acquired an access and played a discreet but contributory role.**

HC: That's largely right. But it's forced upon them, I think, by the nature of the organisation. The calibre of the staff is so important. The SG is both hindered and aided by his senior staff. Sonny was very ambitious for the Commonwealth, and ambitious for himself. He saw himself as potentially an important player on the global scene.

**SO: Well, he aspired to be UN Secretary General.**

HC: Yes, he did. Although Ramphal was ambitious for the Commonwealth rather than looking beyond, and the Commonwealth benefits from having a person of ambition at the helm. Similarly, Emeka Anyaoku was ambitious for the sorts of things he was committed to. In his day, it was being on board in the global movement for good governance and democracy, bringing the Commonwealth to account on these issues. The 1990s was an era in world affairs where political priorities in the Commonwealth would've changed in any event. I don't believe the Commonwealth drove that issue, for the world was becoming intolerant of military dictatorships and authoritarianism and the Commonwealth very successfully adapted itself to that role. I think we have probably gone overboard on it a bit. But it was, again, essentially a role supportive of the international community. Others would claim the Commonwealth had more of an influence than is ascribed to it. I believe it has been a supportive role, a 'helping-the-world-to-negotiate' role, a Ramphal *forte*. But it has caused some imbalance in the Secretariat's political work, making more of it than it is really worth in terms of returns, 'brownie points'. It has left the present Secretary-General, I think, with a bit of dilemma, because he has come to a Commonwealth that has so many issues running with unrealistic expectations. I didn't agree, for example, with the Commonwealth going into the environmental side of things. You know, the project they have going in Guyana.

**SO: Oh, the Irokama Project.**



HC: Yes. I could never make sense of that. I think it's done good work, but these things are probably the job of the global organisation, the UN, and its specialised agencies, and we should be doing what we can to support them.

**SO: So, you feel that the Commonwealth started to ape the United Nations, with a fraction of its resources?**

HC: Yes, it has done a bit and, in so doing, it has neglected some of its areas of strengths, like the CFTC. I don't agree with those who say we should be rid of the development role. In the early days it saw its major role as a third world facilitator – a facilitator of third world aid to third world countries. Samoa getting a water engineer from Kenya, cutting through the red tape and getting results in record time, was a good thing. People involved in the hard-nosed debate would say, "Well, who is Samoa, where is Samoa? What's that really got to do with the total scheme of things?" In the Commonwealth context, it was important, because Ratu Mara could ring up and say, "Sonny, do you think you could get me an expert to do this? Or, on the Lome Convention, can you help me?" So, it has opted for other priorities and ways of doing things. It has overstretched itself beyond its resources and areas of advantage. The consequent damage done to its areas of principal resourcefulness are now beginning to show.

**SO: Hugh, I asked John Sheppard [this] on Monday and I repeated the question in my interview with him yesterday: how far is it true that the Commonwealth doesn't matter because it's not a hard power organisation? It has limited resources, it doesn't make any impact on big issues such as disarmament, such as security, such as counter-terrorism. Therefore, does it have any continuing value as a soft power organisation, in your view?**

HC: Oh, absolutely. Yes, I do, and I argue this in my thesis that it is one of a myriad of actors that has some unique features and characteristics that can put it at the disposal of the international community in certain key areas. I do believe it's got an ongoing role. I think soft power organisations are riding high at the moment: that is, soft powered, consensual, non-legally binding organisations that have dialogue at the summit, as their mainspring. You couldn't say that the G20 actually decides anything binding, but leaders talk about things, reach certain agreements and commitments to act, and then feed these 'soft' decisions into the other places where they do matter.

**SO: Part of a global exchange of ideas?**

HC: Exactly. That's right, and that's the way globalism works. It doesn't work by making the UN a world government. It works in our day and age by autonomous international and regional organisations contributing – both in terms of intellectual content and political muscle and influence, collectively and individually as countries – to what's happening in the more global scope. For example, some of the major problems facing the international community would be totally beyond the scope of the Commonwealth acting alone. We

talk about Syria, Crimea, Syria, Sudan and so on. They're totally outside of the Commonwealth's principal sphere of influence. But it's important to recognise that the Commonwealth as an institution and the Commonwealth Secretary-General have established pathways that can be used to influence the major actors and individual people who count. Sonny was good at this and, for example, was able to sit down with some of the movers and shakers in Europe and the Third World and talk about bigger things in the commissions in which he was involved: the Palme Commission, the Brandt Commission, the Brundtland Commission, and the Commission of the 'Two Princes' on humanitarian issues. He earned the Commonwealth a lot of respect as an institution worth dealing with.

My division, IAD, was involved in disarmament and humanitarian commissions that enabled the Commonwealth to flex its muscles in different, wider areas. The Economic Division under Vishnu Persuad supported Ramphal in the Brandt Commission work. That had an impact on the Commonwealth's individual contribution to global discussions on specific issues like in the UN, World Bank, and in regional organisations – say, the Caribbean community and western hemisphere politics, or fisheries discussions in the Pacific. Through all these avenues the Commonwealth could actually help its members to achieve their own goals.

**SO: So, this isn't simply process; this is, in fact, day-to-day diplomacy?**

HC: Yes. But the problem is, I think, the Commonwealth has been burdened by process of late.

**SO: Yes. Well, you made reference to those very lengthy declarations.**

HC: I can hardly believe it.

**SO: Indeed, what outcomes and impact are those genuinely going to have?**

HC: And I mentioned the Charter as well. I'm very disappointed about the Charter. I mean, it says all the right things, of course, but as an operative document it is in danger of becoming simply nice words.

**SO: As soon as you start signing up to a Charter, then the Commonwealth that you originally joined has become a rather different entity?**

HC: Correct.

**SO: If I could ask you two last questions about leadership, because that seems to be – in large part – the essence of the Commonwealth. The leadership of the Secretary General, and your view of Australian former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's attempt to be Secretary General in '88-89; and, lastly, the role and value of the Queen, as monarch and head of the Commonwealth, and as Queen of realms.**

HC: Sure.

**SO: What is your view, then, of the particular qualities and necessary characteristics for the leadership role of the Secretary General?**

HC: Well, it's interesting you mentioned Ramphal and Fraser. Fraser's competitor was Anyaoku. Now, I think Fraser would have made a good Secretary-General. He would have been difficult to work with because he can be abrasive; [he] is a very formidable character, with clear goals, impatient for positive results. You know he's not easy to deal with, but he was a politician, and I've always believed that the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth should best be a politician that knows how to move amongst leaders – not amongst senior bureaucrats. Now, Sonny was able to do that. Sonny was a hybrid politician, really. He was never an elected politician, but he was cast as a politician.

**SO: He'd been Attorney General...**

HC: Exactly.

**SO: ...and Minister of Foreign Affairs in Guyana.**

HC: So, he knew the game and he knew how to play it, and that gave him an edge. He was very good at it. Sonny has his own way. I don't want to deify Sonny, because he had his feet of clay, as we all know. But he was good in the role, no question about that. Emeka wasn't a politician. He was Foreign Minister of Nigeria for five minutes, but that didn't make him a politician, and he was essentially the archetypical international bureaucrat, which is not a bad thing. We all aspire to that, that's a good occupation.

**SO: Emeka bristled when I suggested that he was an international civil servant, and he said, "I'm an International Servant".**

HC: [*Laughter*] Okay. Don McKinnon...a politician, yes, but a Foreign Minister. Australia didn't get on very well with Donald McKinnon because...

**SO: He's a New Zealander?**

HC: One, he's a New Zealander, but he also beat us in our own backyard: he beat Alexander Downer on Bougainville. The New Zealanders always do better than we do in the Pacific and Alexander, for all his good intent with Bougainville, and Australia, with all their good intent in the Pacific, didn't do as well as McKinnon.

**SO: What was Alexander trying to push through on Bougainville?**

HC: Well, being a former Australian territory, we thought we were first off the rank there. But we didn't ever come up with anything that was innovative or progressive or – in the end – a sustainable formula for a settlement. Don McKinnon, on the other hand, did, and he got PNG leaders down into the

heartland of New Zealand and knocked out an agreement in the initial phase. That led to a way forward and he deserves full credit for that. I haven't read his book, by the way.

**SO:** 'In the Ring'?

HC: I should really get to do that.

**SO:** Unfortunately – and he reflected on this himself when I interviewed him – he wanted to make it more policy-relevant, but his editor said, “No, it should be in a much chattier style to appeal for a wider audience.” And I was thinking, it's a pity, because, as you say, he was a politician and he wanted to talk about the political stuff and the policy content.

HC: Yes. But he was very much a Foreign Minister as well. You know, he thought as a Foreign Minister, and that was good. Then, the current man, Sharma, is no doubt a good man. India was expected to step up to the mark and they did – but possibly with the wrong sort of person, because he's got a huge job, this man. He's been bequeathed a Secretariat in a Commonwealth that's sort of on the slide, and it takes a special sort of leadership in these sorts of times.

**SO:** The energies, also, that are required of a Secretary General are enormous – to have quite so much international travel – and Secretary General Sharma is a man in his 70's.

HC: That's right, but age should not be necessarily a handicap.

**SO:** He's also battling, as you say, the whole new neo-liberal management structure and delivery of efficiencies. He is expected to be the CEO of the Secretariat, as well as trying to respond to states who have ever-increasing demands, but with a Secretariat that has ever-decreasing resources.

HC: Yes, that's right, exactly. But, there's a couple of interesting stories here. Despite the fact that the Australians thought that Fraser would win the SG job, I always counselled them against that, knowing Emeka's style and huge reputation in the Commonwealth.

**SO:** Well, Emeka was an African too. With African votes.

HC: Since his day one in the Secretariat, Emeka had been genuinely and carefully cultivating his contacts – in the Commonwealth's spirit of friendship, taking a personal interest in Commonwealth people, following them up in their capitals, intervening for their countries where he could, taking them out for breakfast, lunch and dinner over many years. People who were third secretaries back in those early days – in New York or London – were now running foreign ministries and were foreign ministers themselves. He had an inside running. He also had very heavy support from the Nigerian government and the time had come for the appointment of an African. So he beat Fraser

and I wasn't surprised, but others were surprised and disappointed. I think that the role demands a particular energy, a particular incisiveness and political know-how, and not always enough attention is given to that I think.

**SO: Lastly...**

HC: I'd like to talk to you about that off the record as well.

**SO: Lastly, the role and value of the head of the Commonwealth.**

HC: Well, yes, we now have knights and dames reinstated here in Australia, as you have probably gathered! The Queen's role in Australia is obviously contentious and people hold views passionately one way or the other. But in terms of the Commonwealth, I don't think anyone disputes that she's been a binding force and an exemplary Head. It's unfortunate that the Monarch is being pressed into a latter day role in the Commonwealth that she didn't have in the early days. I think it was in Edinburgh in '97...

**SO: That she started to make her opening address.**

HC: Yes, that's right, yeah.

**SO: Yes, I raised this with Jon Sheppard and he had no recollection of it...**

HC: Really?

**SO: Which I found interesting.**

HC: Well, yes. I think it was a remarkably Emeka/Tony Blair sort of thing to do. Tony Blair, probably, because it was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary [of] the coronation and a special anniversary for the UK and the CHOGM in Edinburgh.

**SO: I'm sure it was a special anniversary.**

**[Laughter]**

**And Chief Emeka, because he's a confirmed monarchist and great respecter of the Queen.**

HC: Yes, absolutely. There was also the introduction of the Commonwealth Mace, symbolic of the formalism and a role for the monarchy. It brought HM out of the wings on to centre stage and introduced her to an upfront role in Heads of Government meetings. I'm sure there were some good aspects to all of that, but it certainly changes the role of standing by and being there in an advisory capacity.

**SO: How far do you think it gives an unfortunate impression that this is still the British Commonwealth?**

HC: Well, I think it does. Yes, it does, certainly in the minds of the general public. Here in Australia if people think about the Commonwealth they think about two things, basically, both of which involve the Queen very closely or the royal family. One is the CHOGM, and the other [is] the Commonwealth Games, in which the Royal Family has an important role to play. I don't think this upfront role needed to be replicated at the CHOGM.

**SO: What about the future of the headship, after she finally goes?**

HC: Well, I think she is a hard act to follow, and I'm sure the succession has the Commonwealth in very high regard.

**SO: Derek Ingram argued thirty years ago and still is very firmly of this view that the Commonwealth doesn't need a formal head – that it's grown up enough to do away with such an institution.**

HC: Yeah, probably. A lot of the anti-monarchist people in Australia would go along with that. I happen to think that it's not a bad thing. There's been a contest in the Canberra context of people who want to drop 'Royal' from the Commonwealth Society, and, as you know, it's been done in other places. But others have argued that having the Royal brand is a very desirable plus; the Royal Lifesaving Association, etc.

**SO: So, it gives it a distinction?**

HC: It does, yes, and that's worth millions, people say.

**SO: Well, it's a view! Hugh, thank you very much indeed for a fascinating interview.**

HC: I hope it has been helpful.

**SO: It's been more than helpful. Thank you so much.**

[END OF AUDIOFILE PART TWO]