

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Warren Mayors Project

Robert Dunstan

O. H. 341

ROBERT DUNSTAN

Interviewed

by

James Manross

on

December 2, 1975

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INTERVIEWEE: ROBERT DUNSTAN

INTERVIEWER: James Manross

SUBJECT: One-way Traffic System, Urban Renewal Program

DATE: December 2, 1975

M: Today is December 2, 1975, and this is James Manross for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program. Today I am interviewing former Mayor of Youngstown, Mr. Robert Dunstan.

Mr. Dunstan, can you tell us a little bit about when you first came to Warren?

D: I came to Warren in 1956 from Lubbock, Texas, where I had been in the insurance business. My wife was originally from here and for a change of circumstances I sold my business in Texas and came here in 1956.

M: What occupations did you do?

D: The only thing that I've really done outside of being mayor is the insurance business, in both life and dental insurance. I was in the insurance business part-time while I was going to college at Texas Christian University. When I finished at T.C.U., I was already making a good living as an insurance man so I never practiced my profession as an engineer. I've been in the insurance business all of my life, until I ran for mayor. Being elected mayor was the only other thing that I've ever done.

M: Could you tell us a little bit about your family?

D: Well, I've been married and divorced. I have, as you might say, two families. I have a son who is a graduate of Purdue University from my first marriage. My wife and I never had any children so we adopted an eight year old from County Children's Home and a year later we adopted another one. We have two boys who are fourteen and fifteen years of age.

M: When did you first aspire to become involved with politics?

D: Well, I don't think I really ever aspired to it. It was sort of a chain of circumstances, or the leadership of the Holy Spirit. I belonged to a Christian group when I first came to town here and they were quite disturbed about what was happening in Warren. Those who remember, we had quite a scandal here in about 1960 with bribes and payoffs and so forth. We were quite disturbed as a Christian group. As a group of Christian businessmen, we were concerned with what was happening in our community. One morning during the prayer meeting--since 1956 we always got together for a prayer or a little bit of bible study on every Thursday morning--someone said we should run one of our people for mayor. I happened to be the only one who had ever had anything to do with politics out of that group of five men. I had been a Republican and precinct committeeman in Texas, and that's when Republicans were a dirty name in Texas. If you weren't a Democrat then they didn't even know that you existed.

The reason I was a Republican precinct committeeman is because I felt the ideas that they stood for were much better than the socialistic programs of the Democratic party. Since I had been involved in Texas when this question came up from that little bible study group, I was the only one who really had anything to do with politics. Former Mayor, Bill Burbank, has asked me to be his kick-off speaker for his last campaign, so I was the only one who had remote association with anything political. Out of that meeting, we decided that I would run for mayor. I was, literally, an unknown. To run for an office like that when you're unknown is not an easy task, but the five years that I had been in the community I also had been active in many civic affairs. I was really, in a sense, not unknown, particularly from the business world, and at the Civic Club I had been the Optimist Man of the Year. I had been active in my church, and I had been active in the Chamber of Commerce, and some of the other things. I was on the board of a couple of associations, like the hospital board, and some other things. Boy Scouts, and some things like that, had helped me to be known.

I recall very emphatically the day that I went to the newspaper and told them that I was going to file for the office of mayor. They had known me at the newspaper because I had handled publicity for a number of the organizations in which I was associated. I remember that the editor of the newspaper, never even looking up from what he was doing, saying, "Bob, you will never make it." I was sort of astounded. He said I would never make it without an issue. The scripture says that, "Out of your body shall flow rivers of living water." Without even

giving it a thought, I said, "Well, praise God, Stan, I don't know what the issue is going to be, but I'm going to be the next mayor." And surely I was. I was elected.

M: You mentioned you were displeased with the bribes and stuff with the government. Is this referring to the sewer scandal?

D: Yes, this was the sewer scandal of 1959, 1960, and 1961.

M: I was going back to the papers and according to them nothing seemed to break right before the election.

D: That's right.

M: Did most people of the community, the way I assumed you knew, like the stuff that was going on before . . .

D: Well, we assumed that it was, and we began to do some research work on it. The Grand Jury was appointed, which was headed by a man who later became county commissioner, a Republican. We were able to dig up enough to make it worthwhile for the Grand Jury to come in and investigate it, which they did. Then, of course, there were some convictions. I really think there should have been, perhaps, some people of the Republican party also going to jail. But I had no basis for that, only the assumptions of my own part. Certainly, the Grand Jury did prosecute a number of them; the chairman of the Democratic party and three councilmen went to the penitentiary. But I'm not sure that was all who should have gone. I think that perhaps there were others, but either we lost the momentum and we were not able to push it further, or something had happened in court to grind it out rather slowly. But nevertheless the Grand Jury seemed to be satisfied that they had enough and that was all that there was.

M: From reading the papers I had no idea about the organizations which were behind you. I just thought it was a thing that broke . . .

D: No. I have a strong feeling that the Lord had something to do with it. We needed an issue. An unknown could never have been elected. We were so unorthodox in our political maneuvering and everything that among our own party I can remember the chairman of my party coming in to my office on a number of occasions just insisting that I have a campaign manager. We had made an agreement that we would not have a campaign manager unless we acquired one who was a Christian. If we didn't find one, we would just do without, and so we did without. We went all the way through the campaign without any campaign manager as such.

M: Not many people were elected under those circumstances?

D: No, no, it was rather interesting. Then, of course, when it came up to the time for reelection, I felt that we had been doing a good job, even though the newspaper was against me. They were supposedly Republican oriented. I felt that we had been doing such a good job that the people would recognize it and reward us. So I kept on working at my job as mayor and didn't do too much about politicking the second time around. And, of course, I lost by about 1,200 votes.

M: Do you think you lost because you were so involved with your work?

D: I think so. I think that if I had been doing like most politicians do, tending to the store, I probably could have been reelected. There were some mistakes that we made. If I had openly taken on the newspaper, I think I would have had the backing of the people. The people of the newspaper used their innuendoes and half-truths. They do it constantly.

M: If the newspaper was public oriented, why were they against you?

D: They were against me for a couple of reasons. I'd rather not like to go into detail but some of my projects were contrary to their desires. Very often these people hold themselves up as benefactors of the public and so forth, but in many instances they have an axe of their own to grind.

M: I was amazed during the sewer scandal. I was amazed to read there was money for two different corporations. I could not see how they intended to award the contracts for both of them.

D: I don't think they had any logic, really. Everything was sort of what happened, and it's a little bit of insight into what has happened to America today. The wrong gets to be so acceptable that it's no longer wrong. The great evil in America today, the great sin in America is innuedces and half-truths. This becomes an acceptable way of life; one has to pay more than the insurance is worth in order to get it or one has to pay back ten percent in doing business with someone else so that they can get another contract. This is apparently the accepted way of living today. This was Mr. Nixon's downfall. It's the greed of man, and, of course, this is pathetic. When we talk about these things, well, people laugh at us. But the Bible talks about it much of the last days there. The things that we accept today are not only among business but among the young people and our moral standards and

everything else. As short a time as ten years ago, they would not have been exempted. Who would ever think that the president of the United States would be going to China and not even have the chief officer of the state come to recognize him as he arrived. This is the low spot to which we have fallen.

M: In the sewer scandal . . .

D: Sure, oh yes. The only time I ever had my life threatened when I was in public office was when I found that certain people were operating a gambling house in Warren, just after I was elected. When I found out who was running it-- this person was a high person in my party and he was inclined with some high police officers--I called him and his associate into my office and told them I would give them two hours to get it closed or else they would both be in jail. Right after that I called a meeting with the police department, the entire police department. That night when we called for the meeting, we called for the change of shift, the three o'clock shift in the afternoon. We left one car on the street and one dispatcher on the radio. We wanted everybody to be there because I wanted to tell those police officers, straight from the horse's mouth, that I wouldn't tolerate any kind of police business.

The next day after that there was a big headline that the mayor said, "I'm the boss." I told those police officers in their vernacular that nothing goes in this town. I'm the mayor. I'm the boss, and I'll tell you if anything goes. Don't you believe your police captain or your partner or your chief or anyone else. If he tells you to close your eyes to something, don't you do it. If I find out about it, you and he will both go to jail. I'm the boss and nothing goes in this town. The next day, after the headline came out in the newspaper, I was sitting in the mayor's office around six o'clock in the evening waiting to go on the Banquet Tour and someone called me. This person had called me once before and I had put a stop to it. Then this time I recognized the voice and I wasn't nearly as fearful as I had been the first time. The man said to me, "Mayor, you don't listen very well." I recognized the voice and I said, "I'm sorry I don't understand what you're talking about." He said, "You know what I'm talking about. We told you you would end up in the river if you didn't lay off." And I remember very vividly saying to this man friend, "I don't swim very well with sandbags around my neck." You could hear the silence out on the end of the phone and the man finally said to me, "You really are nuts." I said, "No, my friend; I'm not nuts, nor am I afraid to die, for me to live with Christ and to die is gain." The guy hung up the phone, and I never heard from him again; nor did I, to the best

of my knowledge, ever have any trouble like that again. I think that they honored my sincerity that nothing was going to go.

M: If you have Christ you have nothing to fear?

D: That's right.

M: You don't have to answer this if you don't want to, but do you believe the former mayor had anything to do with the sewer scandal?

D: No, I think he was used. I think that he was in a position where, perhaps, his friends were doing things he didn't know about.

M: Frank was the head of the Democratic party, sort of the ring-leader of all of this. After he was already indicted the Democrats held their annual meeting and he was elected unanimously to act as party chairman.

D: Not only that, they also elected one of the indicted men to councilman-at-large through the primaries.

M: The one guy who almost won reelection was already indicted. He only lost by about one hundred votes or something.

D: He almost beat the Republican at the general election.

M: I can't understand this.

D: It's pathetic. Well, it's the same way for me, the man who beat me for public office had been safety service director for the city of Warren when there was a slot machine on every corner. Secondly, he had been involved with a scandal in the Post Office Department, which was public record. They gave him the opportunity to resign as postmaster, resign or go to the penitentiary. Yet, he was elected in public office over and above my character, and my ability.

M: I didn't know that. When was this?

D: Just three or four years prior to the one when Mr. Dennison was in Congress. They brought charges against him.

D: Like I say, it was the same thing ten years ago or fifteen years ago. A divorced man would have had no chance at running for a public office. Now, today, it doesn't matter. These are the ways times have changed. We don't look at the things of moral principle as being essential today.

M: You said that when you campaigned in 1961 that we didn't have a lack of a continued program for policemen, or something like this?

D: Yes.

M: What did you exactly mean? Was this accomplished?

D: Well, they never had a training program for policemen so I tried to build up the department. I maintained, and I still maintain, one of the best public relations. Probably the best public relations group for any community is the police department. I maintained that if we wanted to have a good police department we had to have a well-trained one. So we established the first school for policemen. This didn't just mean for new policemen, this meant for all of them. We went and searched and we found an outfit in Toledo, Ohio. We brought them in here and we trained our policemen. We were also the first to give our policemen a clothing allowance. It used to irritate me as I would go about my business downtown to see some policeman nonchalantly leaning against the building, The Union Savings & Trust Building, with a cigarette hanging out of his mouth and red socks on, and so out of uniform. It certainly was a disgrace to the city so we provided for the first clothing allowance for our policemen so that we could put them in good service uniforms. We wanted to make them look like something, and give them some pride. Today we have as fine a police department in the city of Warren as any community in America. We have our problems, just like any of the rest of them, but we have a fine police department.

M: A person becomes skeptic of all the instances of police brutality.

M: That's absolutely foolishness. It's the same thing like so many criminals, you're mistreating me and so forth. There was an excellent article in the Youngstown Vindicator in the letters to the editor last Sunday relative to the Sheriff Ray Davis and his jail. They were saying how filthy the jail was. Well, who made the jail filthy? The inmates who were in there. See, we forget the criminal and blame the law officers because they yell the loudest. There's an old adage that says, "The squeaking wheel gets the most care and attention," and this is what happens. We get all roweled up and we want to defend the poor, the down and the out. But why was he in jail in the first place? It wasn't because he obeyed the law. You see, we've just twisted our values in America today. Patty Hearst and all the rest can say they had bad parents or parents who didn't care for them, or they were concerned because people were oppressed, so they got a machine gun and mowed some of them down. Or people

say we love everybody that's why we want to do this, and they're not even good Robin Hoods. At least when Robin Hood robbed somebody he took and gave it to the poor. I'm not advocating this, but I'm trying to point out how false the doctrine is of many of our people.

M: With the sewer scandal, most of those guys were out within a couple of years. And if I did something like that and I was a nobody . . .

D: You would be in for life.

M: And like in Youngstown, the incident with that patrolman at that football field, the parents and the teachers got together and said they didn't want any more police protection. They were cutting our own throats.

D: Right, yes, absolutely.

M: You created a committee of ethics. Why did you do that and what was its successes?

D: It wasn't too much of a success because people . . . Unfortunately, something like this dies out. The need for it dies out, you see. I think somebody way back in history has said this, that the world will struggle to obtain something and then after it obtains it, it gets fat and complaisant. Then it falls back into the same cycle again. And this is what happens and so people cry for reform. Then you give them reform and they go right back in the same cycle again. So, in a sense, it did its job at that particular time, and the people who I appointed on it did a good job of it. Again, you have to be able to see a little bit below the surface. There are so many people and so many do-gooders with axes to grind and so forth like this. They tell you that they are interested in you and the general public, but when it gets down to the real nutcracking we're all basically selfish. Often times what we're saying is not what we really mean. I think this happens, and so you'll have the cry for reform and after you get the reform everybody sits back and says well now it's done. But it isn't. See, evil has the ability to recognize that sooner or later things will quiet down. So they lay back and play dead for a while until they can rise again.

M: Would you say the same thing is true for obscene literature?

D: I think so. I think that the times were a little bit different then than they are now. You see, the things that we were fighting against are accepted now. As I recall, we had no problem with the obscene literature. The two main stores were selling it. We went to them and told them we would not put up with it, and they agreed

to remove it from their shelves. We had no problem with it. But you have a different problem today. You have the X-rated movies and everything else that I say have now been accepted. They've been able to go to court and win it, so your children and my children are subjected to this sort of thing.

M: Even on the television.

D: Yes, that's right.

M: You supported the one-way traffic system.

D: I built the one-way traffic system, and I also built the markings on the streets. We had no markings on the street such as you're aware of today. I served on a traffic commission in the state of Texas in a very forward city. We had hired consultants who recommended the same things that I recommended here. The newspaper was against the one-way traffic and they incited certain other people who had axes to grind. One-way traffic would have benefited our community. It would still ease some of the problems that the merchants have downtown. There were too many of them who were interested in themselves to really be concerned about moving that traffic through.

M: Did the merchants complain it was hurting their business or something?

D: Yes, they did, but none of them could prove it, none of them. Nor would they let it be tested, but the merchants were not the main ones, the owners of the newspaper were against it.

M: Why were they against it?

D: Because one of them said that they had to drive a couple of extra blocks to get to the office.

M: Didn't it help to control accidents?

D: Sure. I tried to tell them how many cars would be on the streets by 1970 and 1980, how congested those streets would be. They wouldn't listen. I also wanted to build overpasses and underpasses over South Street. They accused me of building a bridge to nowhere. I told the councilmen, "Build a four lane bridge and we will build the road." The people of Israel would have never reached the promised land had they not put their feet in the water first. The newspaper was against building the overpasses and the underpasses because, again, it would have infringed on some of their rights. Now we still have the congestion every time a train comes through town. The traffic is backed up clear across South Street

and Market Street, just as it always was. So we spent a quarter of a million dollars in those days to move tracks 250 feet, which was absolutely useless.

M: When did the one-way system go out?

D: As soon as they got me out of office.

M: Really?

D: Yes. That was one of the promises which was made.

M: What effect did the Cuban Missile Crisis have on this area? Were the people really scared of war?

D: I don't think so. I don't think it did. I've always thought that was a farce with Mr. Kennedy, that this was one of his blunders. This was the start of the downfall of our nation. The other people learned that we would not live up to our word, where always in the past years we had had courageous leaders who would live up to their word. Even Mr. Truman, who I had no great love for, but has since grown in high-esteem in my thinking, at least Mr. Truman had enough guts to do what he believed. To me this is important in a politician, not to do what someone else believes or what the pressure groups want you to do. I'll always remember Mr. Truman saying, "If you can't stand the heat, get the hell out of the kitchen."

M: This has nothing to do with your mayorship, but in 1962 there was a lot of scandal up in the Democratic county commissioner's office. What really went on there?

D: Both parties were involved in that, I believe. I don't know exactly too much of what happened. I went through the Grand Jury, and I think it was soft-soaped a little bit. There was some cattle being passed back and forth between the County Home and the home of another high Democratic official, which was adjacent to the county property.

M: Were they really mistreating the children as they claimed, or were they just using that as an excuse?

D: Well, I think you always have some mistreatment in county homes and children homes because educational and salary requirements are so low for the people who take those kinds of jobs. Unless you have a super dedicated person, you're going to have this type of person who will mistreat someone else.

M: From what I heard the county commissioners were using that to get who they wanted in there. Also, weren't you able to cut drastically the cost of installing the sewer system by maintaining the same quality?

D: Yes, we cut costs tremendously. We cut all the fat out of it. I got myself in problems with the city employees and all because I believed that if a man was paid for eight hours, then he should work eight hours; and if he was paid for eight hours and he only worked four, and he accepted the pay for the eight hours he was stealing. I told the employees this and tried to set up regular work schedules, and they were not accustomed to this. Plus the fact, all the people who we were doing business with were able to cut their price down, bid prices down, because they knew that they didn't have to pass anything on to anyone else.

M: This was the new pay scale?

D: Yes. It worked the same way with pay scales. We tried to bring the city employees up to a liveable wage. We tried to rate the jobs. We wanted to provide a nucleus of people who would be loyal to the community and give a good day's work.

M: I noticed during this the policemen and firemen were complaining that they wanted higher wages. They were like sixteenth on the list and all this. Were they underpaid?

D: No. Those figures are always . . . You can take any figures of the firemen group and the policemen group-- and they are very famous for doing this--and adapt them to do almost anything that you want them to do.

Right now, and even in those days, we were as well paid as many cities our size. When we came in, we were one of the first ones to come into the communities in Ohio with clothing allowances and all of these benefits for them. I don't know how they could judge our pay scale with those of other cities, but this is a common way. They come to a city council meeting and say that we are the lowest of sixteen cities they chose, then those other sixteen cities take it back to their council and do the same thing. It is an endless, vicious circle.

The minimum starting wage for a fireman is somewhere around \$8,500 or \$9,000 a year. It's the same way with the policemen. I think the firemen have a very unfair hold on the city. The firemen's lobby is the biggest lobby that a mayoral administration has to contend with. Every once in awhile, someone will get killed, of course. It's a hazardous occupation. But some people get killed just driving down the street. The firemen in this community work 25 hours on and 48 hours off. I have a friend right now who, by the accumulation of eight days, is able to take off and have vacation clear until the twenty-first day of December. If they would ever tell you the true picture . . . They complained about school-

teachers only working nine months out of the year, but they work much less than that. The firemen work one day out of every three, yet they are the biggest complainers. And the city administration has to put up with this. This is true all over the country.

M: If firemen had to work six days a week or something, do you believe then that their salaries should be higher?

D: I believe their salary is high enough right now to work forty hours a week. Their pay scale is about the same as the policemen, and the policemen have to work five, eight-hour days.

M: That has always been a pet peeve with me.

D: Yes, me too. I tried to put the firemen on a forty-hour week. That was one of my goals.

M: I've always felt that people who risk their lives should get high salaries.

How important was it for Warren to have additional fire stations?

D: I built two. It was an absolute necessity. The one over on Parkman Road was built because there was no way to get from downtown to Parkman Road with the trains blocking Tod Avenue into St. Joseph's Hospital. Also on Palmyra Road, we built a new one over there. It was a necessity. Now, with the advent of those fire stations, they can get to any place in the city within two and a half minutes. I felt this would save lives.

M: Did you have good rapport with council during your administration?

D: Very good, yes. I practically ran the council. Joe was the president of council.

M: While you were mayor I noticed that there was a big controversy between the Warren churches and Reverend McIntire. Reverend McIntire even came here to try and answer things. They wanted him off WHH and WHH didn't. Then WHH eventually did take him off.

D: I had some interesting experiences relative to that case. Number one, I was a Methodist at that time, and I was very active in the First Methodist Church. Reverend McIntire was the young man whom they threw the snowballs at, which were made by the National Council of Churches and the Warren Ministerial Association. The young man was the

assistant pastor at the Methodist Church. They were all down on McIntire. I've always been his supporter. At that time I wasn't, but since then I've been a supporter of Carl McIntire because of his willingness to stick his neck out for what he believes. When the Ministerial Association called for the local radio station to abandon Mr. McIntire's program, Mr. McIntire offered to come down here and debate with them, or he offered to come down and present his views firsthand so that they didn't have to use innuendoes and half-truths.

I remember very vividly the time that he came to the Music Hall and I, as mayor, was to go there and bring him greetings from the city and welcome him. One of the local liberal clergymen, who is still here in this town, used language unbecoming to a preacher when he talked about me because I would stand on the same platform with Carl McIntire. I said to this pastor that he has never complained when I sat on the platform with the Tavern Owner's Association or the Liquor Dealer's Association, yet here is a man who is trying to uphold the Christian principles and the principles of America and you are fighting him.

I had some flack from the other extreme, the people who brought him here. The night that he was to speak the Music Hall was already packed prior to the start of the meeting. The participants of the program were lined up backstage and they were waiting on me. I was late and they couldn't pull up the curtain. One fellow met me at the door and wanted to introduce me to Mr. McIntire. I said hello to him, introduced myself, told him that I appreciated him coming here and that out in that auditorium were over 2,500 people. I said, "Some people are Christian, some are atheists, some agnostics; some will never hear the word of God, and I trust that during your talk you will tell them about Jesus." A Baptist minister grabbed me very roughly and very indignantly and said to me, "Mayor, don't tell him what to speak. We know what we need to say; we don't need your help." Of course, all that was in Christian brotherly love. You see, there were bad parts on both side of that situation, but I thought that Mr. McIntire did an exemplary job. I have since had a number of contacts with him down through the years. I have had the privilege of helping him financially on a number of occasions. I don't always agree with him, but I admire a man who knows what he believes and is willing to say so.

M: Why did WHH take off the program?

D: Well, they have taken off most of their religious broadcasts. They are having some problems, as I understand,

trying to get rid of the remaining religious broadcasts that they have on the air. These are not great money makers for them and not, I suppose, the best kind of advertising for a radio station. I think they still have the policy of trying to eliminate all the religious broadcasts that they can.

M: You said that there were selfish special interest groups who were interfering with your urban development plan?

D: Yes, there were. There were people who were antagonistic towards my reelection because I wouldn't go along with stretching the urban renewal area, the first urban renewal program, to include their properties so that they could get exorbitant prices from the government for them.

M: What did you try to do as far as urban renewal?

D: I started the urban renewal program. There was no urban renewal program before I came. I was so well-known in the city of Chicago in the urban renewal department that they knew me by my first name. We had the first forceful program in the state of Ohio. If there was any value, real or economic value, I take credit for starting that particular program.

M: Would you say that you were satisfied with your administration?

D: Very much so. I felt that I did a good job, the best job. I say this without any fear of reprisal; I was the finest equipped, qualified mayor that the city has ever had. Not only was I a young man, I was a successful businessman. I also had a college education. We've had both types. We've had successful businessmen and we've had men who have been college graduates, but we've never had a combination of both. I was the best qualified mayor that this city has ever had, and I don't say that in boasting. I was qualified from an educational standpoint, from a business standpoint, and from having been brought up through an era of time when one had to work for what one got. I think I was the best qualified mayor that this city ever had.

M: What do you consider your greatest accomplishments in your administration?

D: I think there were a number of them. I couldn't hardly earmark any one particular one, but the public improvement programs that we started and initiated, capital improvement programs that we initiated, the civil service program that we initiated, all of these things helped to lay the foundation and enabled Warren to be in the

position that it is in today. Warren is in an enviable position. They are under good leadership again. Mayor Richards is doing a nice job.

I think we laid the foundation for many good programs. We lobbied for the urban renewal program, the Sal Street program, and the bypass. We lobbied for the law to forbid any community such as Howland, Champion--now Lordstown has been able to circumvent it--to incorporate within three miles of an already incorporated city. This prevented Warren from being a satellite city or being a core city with satellites around it, such as Youngstown and Cleveland. We prevented communities like Howland, who without thinking would go off and organize themselves into a community, from completely surrounding the core. I told these people if they kill the core, they kill the apple. There is no way it can survive. Look at Cleveland and the myriad of problems it has with the duplication of services. It's bad enough with the townships around the cities; can you think of the waste of material, manpower, and equipment in townships with the overlapping of services of Howland, Champion, Liberty, Warren Township, and Leavittsburg, and equipment sitting around for months at a time that costs the taxpayers thousands and thousands of dollars, whereas if they had one central city they could allocate it? It's the same way with fire departments. You get a lot of controversy from the trustees; they will tell you that their fire department is just as good as the fire department of the city of Warren. When a man in public office says this he is either saying that you are a fool and don't understand or he is lying to you. There is no way that a volunteer fire department could ever qualify to the standards of a full-time fire department. Look at the duplication of equipment as it sits hour after hour, and week after week, costly equipment, thousands of dollars. For instance, a machine which they use to clean ditches must cost almost \$100,000 today. There is no way that a township could use one more than three months out of the year.

M: Are there any changes you would have liked to have made about your administration, anything you would have done differently?

D: Yes, I think that if I would have known then, what I know now, I would have campaigned for the last election. Then possibly I would have been reelected. I also have a strong feeling, as I said to one of my friends one day after election when she voiced her sorrow that I was not in office, that if the god I served wanted me to be in public office, I would still be there. So, I feel that the purpose for which I was placed in that position was accomplished, and whether I accomplished all the things that I had hoped to is beside the point. I feel that

it was for the good and that the city derived much good from it. There were times when I didn't think this way, but as I mellow in age a little bit, and some years have passed by, I can see the benefits of it. If it weren't for having had that high office, I probably wouldn't be as successful in business as I am today. I want to reiterate again that I am one of the few mayors who has ever been in office here who was in business before I was in office, and remained in business after I returned to private life again. I've always been proud to walk up and down these streets and hold my head high. I'd be willing to face anything. This is worth something.

M: Has the Lord ever shown you that you might want to get involved in politics again?

D: No, he hasn't.

M: So, you don't think . . .

D: No. I think that I gained what the Lord wanted me to gain from it. I have been able to speak to thousands and thousands of people, where I never would have had the opportunity had I not had the presitage of that office. I'm sure that through this learning experience I've accomplished what the Lord wanted me to accomplish.

M: That's why you ran, for his will, not what you wanted to do?

D: Yes, I have no aspiration for any public office. I'm not saying that I wouldn't, but at the present time I have none.

M: What various activities are you involved in now?

D: I am an associate with the Bolz Weir Insurance Agency. I just merged my agency with that one in July 1, 1975.

M: I understand that in your office you have a sign that says, "For life insurance, try Jesus."

D: Yes. I am still in life insurance and in the general insurance business. I am president of Tele-O-Cable Corporation. We build telephone communication systems all over the country. I am involved in a number of rental properties and real estate developments with some other people. Then, of course, I have my farm and my boys.

M: You have a farm?

D: Yes, I live on a farm, 105 acres in Vernon Township. I've lived out there for the past ten years raising horses.

M: Do you grow crops?

D: Not much, just hay, corn, and feed.

M: If the food keeps going the way it is, you are going to be more fortunate than most of us.

D: I better build a commune out there.

M: You wouldn't starve to death.

D: No.

M: Not like the people who live in the city and don't know how to grow food.

D: That's right.

M: You are president of the Full Gospel . . .

D: The Full Gospel Businessmen International, the Youngstown Chapter. I am also the past chairman of the Christian Businessmen here, and I am a member of the Gideon Society. Moreover, I am a member of Corinth Assembly of God Church. I am very active in religious affairs. I am on the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce. I'm trying to remove myself from all boards at the present time so that I can have some time to devote to my family and business. I have just finished my term on the Chamber of Commerce Board, and on the Boy Scouts Board. I'm up for reelection, but I wanted to get out.

M: Is politics a place for Christians?

D: Yes, it is. It certainly is. There are many Christians in politics, like Mark Hatfield. I could name some of the rest of them who are also friends of mine. It's a tough row to hoe. It's a tough row to maintain your principles. If I were ever elected to Congress, I would sponsor a bill stating that no man would stay in public office more than twelve years. No matter how good a man is, no matter how high his moral values are, he gives in a little bit at a time. He does a favor for this one and then a bigger favor for the next one and so on. People whom he's obligated to, people who have helped him, and people for whom it's very difficult to refuse to do something make it impossible for him. By the time most men have been in office twelve years or more they may no longer own themselves. That's why I would advocate that no man, from the lowest councilman to the highest Senate in the United States, should ever be allowed to stay in public office more than twelve continuous years.

M: Is there anything else you would like to say in conclusion?

D: Just that I am happy to be alive and that I am thankful that I know that all things work together for good for them who are called according to the purposes of God.

M: Thank you very much, Mr. Robert Dunstan, and God bless.

END OF INTERVIEW