

**Interview with Hazel Gluck by Michael Aron
June 2, 2010**

Michael Aron: It's the afternoon of June 2nd, 2010. We're at the Eagleton Institute at Rutgers for the Rutgers Program on the Governor. I'm Michael Aron of NJN News. We're going to talk this afternoon first with Hazel Gluck. Hazel was a member of the legislature. She then went on to serve in the cabinet of Governor Tom Kean, wore a number of hats during that period, was Commissioner of Insurance of Transportation, she ran the lottery, she would later go on to share the Transition Committee of Governor Christie Whitman, with whom she was quite close. She has been a prominent lobbyist in Trenton ever since the Kean era came to a close. We're going to talk to her about her experiences in Trenton. Hazel, good to see you.

Hazel Gluck: Good to see you, too.

Michael Aron: Where were you born?

Hazel Gluck: I was born in New York City. Raised the first seven-and-a-half years of my life in Brooklyn, in case you can't hear it.

Michael Aron: What did your parents do?

Hazel Gluck: My parents were British. Never believe it, would you? <laughing>

Michael Aron: That's what they did, they just--

Hazel Gluck: No, they came here and got married.

Michael Aron: --being British?

Hazel Gluck: <laughing> Oh yeah, they did that well. Got married here. My mother was a secretary at times when women didn't work. My dad fell ill. He had TB. In those days people with TB went to sanatoriums, which was really probably the part of Upstate New York that wasn't-- after Harlem that had never

been developed, and unfortunately died at 33. So yeah. She was a tough broad, a tough English lady, very gracious, very charming.

Michael Aron: How old were you when your father died?

Hazel Gluck: About 8.

Michael Aron: Brothers, sisters?

Hazel Gluck: Huh-uh.

Michael Aron: Only child?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah.

Michael Aron: Where did you go to high school?

Hazel Gluck: Mount Vernon, New York. My mom remarried and we lived in Mount Vernon. I went from being poor to being very comfortable, adjusted immediately <laughing> and we lived in Mount Vernon for a long time until he, my stepfather, got the idea that he wanted to move to Toms River because he's of Russian descent and he wanted to be a farmer. There's something about people who come from Russia. They can't quite get it out of-- it comes out of their pores. They want to be farmers. So we did that and I hated it and my mother hated it and then I went off to college.

Michael Aron: Where?

Hazel Gluck: The University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Michael Aron: Good experience there?

Hazel Gluck: Wonderful. Absolutely wonderful.

Michael Aron: What was so wonderful?

Hazel Gluck: Well first of all the education was great but I can't say that I focused as much on that as I should have, which I really don't ever want my grandchildren to know but that's the truth. And what was wonderful was that I could do some of the things I wanted to do. I don't know, there was something in me that wanted me to be part of government and I did that. I was ahead of the independent women, I never joined a sorority, and then I went on to become the head of all the women on campus at the University. It was great. I had a great four years.

Michael Aron: Had you gotten involved in politics in high school?

Hazel Gluck: No. Only in school. Not politics, you know-- with a small p.

Michael Aron: But at Michigan you became political would you say?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah but again with a small p. I wasn't Republican or Democrat, it was college stuff.

Michael Aron: What did it mean to be the head of independent women at Michigan?

Hazel Gluck: Well there were thousands of us and there were activities and there was a governing structure and we were the opposite of all the sorority gals. So we were right in there fighting for what we thought was the right thing or all women, we thought, and they were fighting for whatever they thought was right for the Greeks, and it was fascinating. And then actually what happened was the gal who was going to step up and become head of all the women on campus, both the sorority and the independents, got pregnant, even in that day, and so she left and they asked me to take the post and of course I took it. The first semester I was there I almost flunked out because they put us in a dorm for the first time at the University of Michigan that had three-- actually it was like a series of four buildings, had three male buildings, male students, and one female dorm, and there was no structure to the dorms so I became head of judiciary, well that whole thing, then became head of the dorm and I got called in by the Dean of Women who said to me, "Look, you've got to learn to juggle both balls in the air or else you're not going anywhere and you've got talent so make up your mind

and get--" I went on academic probation and she said, "Make up your mind and get off academic probation so that you can do the things that you are capable of doing." So I got off in the semester and it was a good lesson and I loved it there. It was a great experience.

Michael Aron: Did you ever run for an office there at Michigan?

Hazel Gluck: No. Yeah, the independent women I ran for but not the other one.

Michael Aron: What did you do after college?

Hazel Gluck: I was offered a scholarship, a Woodrow Wilson scholarship, which was you come and get your masters and then you go out and teach for a couple of years but I had-- met my ex, fallen in love, and I got married. You know, my day that was-- the career was not number one. It was you should become a teacher in case, in case was in case you ever needed to make a living <laughing>, which I couldn't stand. I took a couple of courses and I call up, I said, "That's it." My stepfather said, "Well you better take shorthand and typing," which I didn't do either, and I got married.

Michael Aron: Who was he?

Hazel Gluck: Medical student at <inaudible> state.

Michael Aron: At Michigan?

Hazel Gluck: No. I met him in Lakewood, New Jersey, Downstate.

Michael Aron: Downstate, New Jersey?

Hazel Gluck: Downstate, New York <inaudible>.

Michael Aron: Downstate, New York Medical Center.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, their SUNY system.

Michael Aron: And where did you and he set up a home?

Hazel Gluck: Well after he did his internship when he went into service, we came to Lakewood, New Jersey, and lived there a very long time.

Michael Aron: How long?

Hazel Gluck: Well let's see. I was married about 21 years. I bet I lived in Lakewood close to 30 years.

Michael Aron: Tell us about Lakewood.

Hazel Gluck: Lakewood was a great town at one time. It was a destination. It was where the Gould's had an estate and the Rockefeller's had an estate and there were hotels and people came from all over to go to the hotels and the air was supposed to be pine air and pure and so you came down there for the air, whatever the hell that means. It was a wonderful town and then slowly but surely the decay started setting in and once that happened people started leaving and it was very sad. I think Lakewood missed the boat because there was a fellow who wanted to build a shopping center in Lakewood and the hotel owners were hysterical because they didn't want any competition of any kind. So he went to Brick, the town next door, and built the shopping center and Lakewood wound up with no base for taxes at all. The thing that saved Lakewood, literally saved Lakewood, is the Hasidic community, and they're there in great number today and you can't find a parking space in town. They're the ones that saved it.

Michael Aron: How did they save it?

Hazel Gluck: Well they came in, they filled the residences, they built new residences, they came in and they opened stores and supermarkets and just commerce, small business. Amazing. Real estate, just amazing, and now I think the yeshiva's probably the largest yeshiva in the world. They're about-- I guess they have about 8,000 students now and the young guy, who's the CEO, Aron Kotler, is probably the most modern-- I met him when he was 40ish, and he became the CEO of the yeshiva. Very bright, bicyclist, great sense of humor, and he runs this whole thing, whatever that is, and they've done a pretty good job. They're sometimes difficult to deal with but then who isn't?

Michael Aron: How did you get involved in politics in Ocean County?

Hazel Gluck: Actually I started with the League of Women Voters, which when you say that today everybody says, "Who?" <laughing> but that's how I started. I started with the League and voter registration, became the President of the Lakewood League. When Ann Klein was the president of the National President League, Ann Klein became a cabinet officer under Brendan Byrne, and it just sort of snowballed. From there I decided that's really what I wanted to do. That was my passion, government. I had two kids but I was comfortable and I just decided that it was something I wanted to pursue. I lived in Ocean County, my dad was a Republican, my mother used to read *PM*, which was a very liberal newspaper in the old days and the conversations at dinner were unbelievable sometimes but I decided that I was in Ocean County and I better actually believe in the free enterprise system, not the way it is today <laughing> and decided I would register as a Republican.

Michael Aron: When you say "not the way as it is today," what do you mean by that?

Hazel Gluck: Well I think it's unfettered and it's just run wild. BP is a perfect example. The corporations today, I mean, the guys on Wall Street, the guys out in Detroit with the cars. It's like they're unfettered and they are-- and they have very little regulation at this point because over the years frankly the Republicans have deregulated a lot of stuff, probably starting with-- I don't know if it started with Nixon but Reagan sure did a lot of it and it's like anything else, you know. When you don't have any boundaries in which to live, whether you're a child or an adult or a corporation, you tend to start going out of those boundaries and I think that the free enterprise system in the United States and the right wing has been their spokesperson really. I think they're past the pale right now.

Michael Aron: You say that the conversations at the dinner table were something. Were they contentious between a liberal mother and a Republican father?--

Hazel Gluck: Well it was a bit--

Michael Aron: --is that what you mean?

Hazel Gluck: Sort of, yeah. I mean not nasty, never nasty. She had a British accent, he had a Russian-- Americanized Russian accent. Like sitting with Lucy and Dezi, you know <laughing>. It really was a riot but it wasn't contentious. It was just that she had much more of a liberal bent and as I said she had worked for a period of time in her life and he would say to her, "Look, I'm in business and I'm telling you this about the unions," or "I run a business and I'm telling you this about cutting dresses," or "I run a bu--" you know, that kind of thing.

Michael Aron: At some point you ran for Ocean County Freeholders. Is that correct?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah but first it was the Consumer Affairs Director. I got appointed--

Michael Aron: By whom?

Hazel Gluck: By the Board of Freeholders. A dear friend of--

Michael Aron: Oh, Consumer Affairs Director at the county level?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah. Started the office, a dear friend--

Michael Aron: What year was that?

Hazel Gluck: Oh my God. Early 70s and Joe Buckelew who sat on the Board of Freeholders, he was an old, dear friend, helped me get the job. He was one of my mentors actually.

Michael Aron: He's still involved, isn't he?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, he is. He's wonderful.

Michael Aron: He was the Ocean County Chairman for a while?

Hazel Gluck: He was. He was a great Chairman.

Michael Aron: So you were Consumer Affairs Commissioner of the county--

Hazel Gluck: Right.

Michael Aron: --and then you ran for County Freeholder?

Hazel Gluck: Correct. Boring.

Michael Aron: What was boring? Running or serving?

Hazel Gluck: Serving.

Michael Aron: What was boring?

Hazel Gluck: I don't know. It was not-- there wasn't enough action for me to tell you the truth. You know, roads, very nice, I mean I wound up being DOT Commission but there was a lot more action in a DOT, and whatever else we were doing, all nice people and in those days there were two Democrats on the board, one was a conservative. My two colleagues were both conservative so the three of them would vote together and there were two of us, a Republican and a Democrat, that would vote the other way because we were more moderate and of course the party was slightly hysterical but that became sort of my mantra <laughing>, a hysterical party and me <laughing>.

Michael Aron: I know from my many years in Trenton you were perceived as a pretty liberal Republican.

Hazel Gluck: Well if you think I was perceived then as a liberal Republican, you should ask some of them now <laughing>. I'm absolutely-- well what's the acronym for a--

Michael Aron: A RINO.

Hazel Gluck: A RINO. That's it.

Michael Aron: A Republican In Name Only.

Hazel Gluck: Absolutely, and I wear that label proudly.

Michael Aron: How long did you serve in the county legislative office before you decided to run for state legislative office?

Hazel Gluck: I served one term and I said, "I'm out of here." <laughing> "I'm out of here," and they said, "Well you can run for the Assembly." "I'm fine, I'm out of here." And I was lucky enough to win. I happened to get the NJEA backing the county because they were upset with one of the Democrats that were running and Jimmy Weinstein, who is now the head of Transit in New Jersey and who was Commissioner of DOT and was my business partner, I met him and he did my campaign. He was doing PR then and he did my campaign. We had a great time.

Michael Aron: What year was that?

Hazel Gluck: I want to say '79, and then I was in the legislature for one term.

Michael Aron: In the assembly?

Hazel Gluck: Uh-huh.

Michael Aron: Never in the senate?

Hazel Gluck: I loved the House. I didn't want to go to the Senate. But I was convinced, stupid, but I was convinced that I should be running for Senate against John Russo. Now John Russo was-- absolutely represented our area. I didn't. I was the anomaly. I was pro-choice, I mean you could rattle off a million things he was not and he had done a very good job, and his constituent services were phenomenal. So there was no reason to throw John Russo out and I lost, and I lost big time, and I was really upset because I thought--

Michael Aron: Was that in '81?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah. Yes, that's when Tom ran.

Michael Aron: And you were really upset because why?

Hazel Gluck: Because I really liked the House. I didn't realize then that that was the best thing that could've happened to me. I really liked the House and I figured I'd like to stay and whatever.

Michael Aron: How did it become the best thing that ever happened to you?

Hazel Gluck: Well I wound up with the administration and that is a funny story because I was broke and I was out of work and I was divorced and Frank Holman, who was our administrator, went to become the State Chairman, the State Republican Chairman, and we had no administrator in Ocean County. So I called Joe Buckelew and say, "Hey, Joey. I'm home and I'm broke and I need a job. How about putting me in as administrator?" "Oh sure!" So he put me in. I was there two weeks and I got a call from Tom Kean, because the guys were hysterical. I mean, that's putting it mildly. To have a woman administrator in Ocean County? I'm still the only woman that's ever been on the Board of Freeholders in Ocean County. Give you some idea of how much progress has been made over the last 150 years <laughing>.

Michael Aron: When did you first meet Tom Kean, do you remember?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, I met Tom Kean in '77.

Michael Aron: What were the circumstances?

Hazel Gluck: He was running in the primary against Bateman That's the first time I met him.. And then I did a really stupid thing. In '81 I backed Pat Kramer. Really clever.

Michael Aron: That didn't seem to cost you.

Hazel Gluck: Well it almost cost me a lot. In the long run it did not but man was I taken to the woodshed. "You didn't campaign for him, you didn't do this, you

didn't--" and it was all a bunch of garbage and I knew it. And then they sent me off to be interviewed. I guess Tom Kean had an executive search and I went up there, two people, a man and a woman, and they were interviewing me for Human Services Commissioner and I said to him, "You've got to be kidding."

Michael Aron: Why?

Hazel Gluck: And they said, "What do you mean?" I said, "I can't be Human Services Commissioner!" and they said, "We never interviewed anybody who said they can't do the job." I said, "Look," I said, "I'm smart, I get it when it comes to politics, but I do not have the managerial background that it takes to be the Human Services Commissioner. It's a big deal. Twenty-three thousand people, or whatever the devil it was. Maybe that's what it is now. And they couldn't get over it. So when I refused the job and came back home, that's the only time Joe Buckelew ever picked up the phone and called and yelled and screamed at me, "How could you turn down a cabinet post, yadda yadda yadda--" I said because I don't belong there. And then I got this phone call from the governor who said to me, "How would you like to be the Lottery Director?" and I said, "Oh my God, I don't know how to play the lottery." He said, "I didn't ask you that." <laughing> I said, "I'd love to." I have no job, I'm broke, "I'd love to." So that's how I got the job. On-the-job training.

Michael Aron: Who did you support in '77 for governor, do you recall?

Hazel Gluck: You know what, I've been thinking about that and I think it was Bateman.

Michael Aron: But you're not positive?

Hazel Gluck: No, I'm not. I could've supported-- I just can't remember.

Michael Aron: And why did you support Pat Kramer in the Republican primary in '81?

Hazel Gluck: Interestingly enough he came out of an urban area and I always thought that Republicans didn't have enough sense, street smarts, didn't have

enough sense about urban areas and street smarts in general and we have a very interesting state, complicated, and I thought he could do the job.

Michael Aron: So he was the mayor of Patterson?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah.

Michael Aron: I think he finished second or third. Second, I guess in the primary.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah.

Michael Aron: So Kean called you personally and asked you to be his lottery director--

Hazel Gluck: Right.

Michael Aron: --and you accepted right away?

Hazel Gluck: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Michael Aron: Needed a job and--

Hazel Gluck: I needed a job, I had no idea what I was getting into. I didn't have a clue.

Michael Aron: What were you getting into?

Hazel Gluck: It was great. It was one--

Michael Aron: What was great?

Hazel Gluck: --of the best jobs I ever had.

Michael Aron: How so?

Hazel Gluck: Well because you try and do good when you're in government and now he's giving people money and it was the happiest day I've <laughing> ever seen people. They give them these big checks and they were slaphappy and so was I. They had some-- the Deputy Commissioner, the Deputy Director of the Lottery, was a longtime civil servant, Joe Mule, and he was my deputy. He knew it like the back of his hand. He taught me everything, which was wonderful- I mean, in those days you could make those kinds of relationships and they worked really well and I think he'll probably do it today too. But he taught me everything about the lottery and it really worked well. One of the funniest things that happened was somebody won-- this was way before we had the kind of lottery that we have today. It was just straight. There was no annuity. There was nothing and I wanted to change it so I went into the Treasurer's office and said, "Look, we've got to do something about this. We're not making enough money," and they said okay, go ahead, and we did whatever it was we had to do and of course we made a lot of money. So when we were giving out checks I'd call, check in every once in a while, and I call and say, "Does the Governor want to give out the check?" In this particular instance they said yes, so we all marched down there one day with one of these big cardboard things and I'm standing there and Andy Baglivo used to do the PR for the lottery, love Andy, and everybody's standing up there and waiting for the governor to come out and all of a sudden I hear, "Psst, psst!" and I go over and I said, "What's the matter?" He says, "That guy that's going to be standing next to the governor, I think he's been in jail." I said, "Are you kidding me?" He said, "No, I swear to God," and he said, "I think he's a jailbird." So it's--

Michael Aron: The guy who won the lottery?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah. So I said to myself, oh my God, this is worse than death. I want to shoot myself. What was I going to do? So what I did was I went up, inserted myself between-- I thought Tom-- Tom Kean probably thought I was out of my mind, inserted myself in between Tom and this guy so that he couldn't take a picture of this jailbird with Tom. So we got through that one. <laughing>.

Michael Aron: Do you recall much about the period of the recount between Kean and Florio? Were you just a bystander at that--

Hazel Gluck: I was a bystander but I-- a little bit, but I was a bystander. The night that we were all called to the hotel in North Jersey, I forget where it was, Millicent Fenwick was there. This is like a sidebar story.

Michael Aron: Is this election night or subsequent to it?

Hazel Gluck: No this was like a month later after the recount. She was there. She comes into the room smoking a pipe and of course all the photographers and everybody goes straight over to Millicent, the pictures, the flashbulbs, I'm saying to myself, oh my God. That passes and we're waiting and waiting and waiting for Courter to come out, Jim Courter to come out on stage and make the introductions and--

Michael Aron: This is a victory declaration?

Hazel Gluck: Yes. Sorry, this is a victory declaration. It was going on and on and on so she lit up again. I thought <laughing> I'm going to kill myself, and again all the flashbulbs went off in the room, I went up to her and I said, "Congresswoman, you can't do that." Now I hardly knew Millicent Fenwick. Maybe met her once <laughing>. I said, "You can't do that," and she looked at me and she said, "Why not?" I said, "You know why not." She said, "Okay."

Michael Aron: Because it detracted from Tom Kean?

Hazel Gluck: Tom. From Tom. That's all she had to do was be smoking a pipe when he came out to accept the-- oh my God <laughing> it would've been disastrous. She had beaten him in an election so there was not, you know, there were still some hard feeling <laughing> there.

Michael Aron: She beat him in a congressional primary--

Hazel Gluck: Mmm-hmm, mmm-hmm.

Michael Aron: --in '75 I guess. (I think it was 76)

Hazel Gluck: Yeah.

Michael Aron: Yeah. How long were you Lottery Director?

Hazel Gluck: I was the Lottery Director for about three years and then they called and said to me the governor wants you to be the Insurance Commissioner. This was right after my mother passed away, and I said, "What?" And they said, "He wants you to be the Insurance Commissioner." I said, "You're out of your mind. I don't know anything about insurance. I can't even read my own policy." "Well that's what you could do there." I said, "Give me a break <laughing>. Come on!" Well that's with Frank Holman Greg Stevens, who was Chief of Staff at that time. I said, "I don't believe either one of you and besides which I just lost my mother. Leave me alone." Like I'm going to call ? <laughing> and asked me to be the Insurance Commissioner. I said, "Of course." <laughing> I said, "Why do you want me?" He said, "Because you're the best communicator I have in the cabinet. I'm running for re-election and insurance is a real problem and we've got to get through this." I said, "Okay."

Michael Aron: Is it that simple?

Hazel Gluck: No.

Michael Aron: --that when a governor's aide calls you can say no and when a governor calls you can't say no?

Hazel Gluck: No, no, I was just being-- no. I mean, they indulged me but it's not that simple. Actually I think it should be. I think if an aide calls and says the governor would like you to do this and you say well I'm inclined to do it, then the governor should call and ask you. That's how I feel about it but I wasn't inclined at the time so they knew if he called, I'm not going to say no to him, of course I'm not going to say no.

Michael Aron: I guess what I'm really asking is, is it possible to say no to a governor?

Hazel Gluck: Well I didn't become the Human Services Commissioner but he didn't ask me directly. Is it possible? Yeah, I think under certain circumstances it's possible. Certainly if you don't think that it's the right thing <laughing> to do, yeah. I mean, I don't think you follow anybody blindly. I really don't. That's the

excuse that's been given through history. I did what I was told to do. If it's not ethical or it's not practical or whatever, you don't do it.

Michael Aron: Tom Kean's first year was a bit rocky--

Hazel Gluck: Yes.

Michael Aron: --as I recall. What do you recall about his first year?

Hazel Gluck: I recall that his Chief of Staff had a huge pile of papers on his desk that never moved.

Michael Aron: That was Lou Thurston?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah. Nicest guy in the whole world but couldn't get from point A to point B and it was really tough, it was really tough. Of course I was involved in my own little thing and the lottery and Tom came to see all of us because we raised so much money that they had never anticipated we were going to raise and I was in a shopping center with leaks in the ceiling and buckets on the floor so when he was there I said to him, "They're all great people, you'd think we'd get a new office" <laughing> until we got one but yeah, very rocky. It is for most governors interestingly enough because as good a legislator as Tom was or as good a United States senator as Corzine was, or as good a mayor as you might say McGreevey was or whatever, they still don't know what it means to be governor. First of all it's a huge bureaucracy that you're responsible for and second of all we don't have a product. We have services. We don't have a product, and we have people who've been there. The attitude of the people in the departments that stayed for the most part is we were here before you came and we're going to be here after you go. So you really have your work cut out for you and it is not easy. It is very, very different from what they expect. Very different.

Michael Aron: So Kean changed Chiefs of Staff after one year, is that correct?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah. Maybe less than a year, I'm not sure.

Michael Aron: He also was forced to raise taxes in his first year, I think unhappily so, by a democratically controlled legislature.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah.

Michael Aron: Does that ring a bell?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah. Yeah, unhappily so but he probably knew that we needed it anyhow. You know Tom <laughing>. Smart guy.

Michael Aron: Tell us about Tom a little bit.

Hazel Gluck: I loved the man. I think he is without a doubt the sanest and the kindest and the most centered politician I know. Anytime I presented him with anything, Department of Transportation, whatever it was, he always reached for what was the right thing, not what was the expedient thing. I'd give him all the pros and cons from a policy point of view and then from a political point of view and I never, ever saw him reach for the wrong thing. He's an amazing guy and we had this Gang of Five, we called them, of five women and we used to go in to see him once a month and he loved it.

Michael Aron: Who were they?

Hazel Gluck: Ming Hsu--

Michael Aron: She ran International Trade?

Hazel Gluck: Trade. Oh no, yes with my memory, shoot--

Michael Aron: Jane Burgio.

Hazel Gluck: Jane Burgio, the Secretary of State. Help me with this, Michael. Barbara Carl --

Michael Aron: I just gave you one.

Hazel Gluck: Barbara Carl-- no, Barbara Carl wasn't on the bench by then. The gal who was-- Elizabeth Lyons who was head of small business or something like that. The gal who works for J&J now who's---

Michael Aron: Joan somebody? Joan Haberly? No.

Hazel Gluck: No, it wasn't Joan Haberly. There were two others. There were five of us.

Michael Aron: Joan Wright?

Hazel Gluck: Joan Wright,--

Michael Aron: Joan Wright.

Hazel Gluck: --Joan Wright was one of them and the last one who was just brilliant, I've forgotten her name, she wound up as his Chief of Staff, she was with DEP for a while.

Michael Aron: Oh I know who you mean. Not Brenda Davis--

Hazel Gluck: Yes.

Michael Aron: Oh, Brenda Davis?

Hazel Gluck: Yes.

Michael Aron: Yeah, she was Chief of Policy and Planning for a while.

Hazel Gluck: Right. I don't know if she was one of the Gang of Five. Yes she was but we used to go in and see him and tell him <laughing> that we thought there were certain things that he - I don't know what they were at this point but that he should or shouldn't be doing with regard to women and he loved it. He had a love for women and he loved it. He just loved it and he always saw us which was really very sweet and he probably <inaudible> oh my God, these

women. But I'll tell you something really interesting. The day that Christie Whitman was sworn in as the first female governor of the state of New Jersey, Tom Kean, this was in the War Memorial Building, was standing over by himself in front of those big heavy curtains, all by himself, and I went up to him and I said to him, "I hope you realize that if it weren't for you, she wouldn't be here," and he looked at me, got a little embarrassed and he shuffled his feet and I said, "It's true, Tom. You gave all of us--" he did, these wonderful opportunities including Christie, who was up at BPU. I said, "And here you are. This is one of the fruits of your labor." It was labor for him. She was the governor of New Jersey and I really believe that. I think you have to have somebody who doesn't care about whether you are straight or gay, male or female, White or Black. I think you have to have somebody in the governance position, the power position, who wants you there because he or she thinks you're really good and nothing else matters, and he was like that. When he wrote the book, *The Politics of Inclusion*, which the Republicans after he left immediately forgot about but-- and he was serious about it. He believed it. He lived it. I think he's a very special man.

Michael Aron: Was there some kind of Bipartisan Coalition for Women's Appointments?

Hazel Gluck: Oh yes, that's right. It was right here in Eagleton.

Michael Aron: How did it work?

Hazel Gluck: Well I don't know, we kind of threw it together and when Tom was running and then later on, now we didn't do it this year which is really interesting. Just a bunch of Republican and Democrat women who came together, made up lists, and started banging on the heads of the people in power and their parties. If a Democrat won we all would get behind the Democrat women to make sure they got appointed and vice versa. It was wonderful and Eagleton facilitated that and that was great. That was a fun thing to do. We didn't do it this time. You kind of lose that kind of stuff which is-- I think people think because we're beyond it, but we're not. We're really not.

Michael Aron: You still have to fight for what you get?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah. I think so. I think so.

Michael Aron: When you were Insurance Commissioner, was no-fault auto insurance a large issue?

Hazel Gluck: No. Interestingly enough, no. I had a bottle of aspirin this high on my desk. It was the liability crisis when I was there, for the year I was there. It was unbelievably horrendous. It was insurance companies who were going to cancel day care centers and Atlantic City Insurance and the whole state of New Jersey was being affected by it and I had a guy from the Public Advocate's <laughing> office and a guy from the Attorney General's office because I didn't know what was-- I knew but I didn't know how to handle it and we lived together literally in my office for about eight months and we finally got a piece of legislation passed that said they couldn't do this summarily, you just couldn't cancel and it went to the Supreme Court here and we won, and by the time that happened, the liability crisis was over. But I often wonder sometimes whether people remembered that we have that in our back pockets. I mean, Tom was great with a-- that we have that in this state in our back pockets and other states were watching us at the time because they would do the same thing but then the liability crisis was over so nobody bothered. You know, it's like everything else. It's the crisis du jour and then instead of going ahead and doing it-- so in a decade when it happens again you have the tools to work with you just say oh well, forget about it. One thing we did though I'm very happy about, we made it possible for ordinary people to read their insurance policies. I always like-- I was like death on that. I don't know what the hell they're talking about. Plain language.

Michael Aron: You said that that's what they told you to do when you--

Hazel Gluck: Well yeah.

Michael Aron: --said you didn't know anything about your own insurance policies? Or you took them seriously and--

Hazel Gluck: Yeah. Yeah and interestingly enough I had help from Christy Jackman who could not speak <laughing> as you well know, a wonderful man. "You's guys, sit down over there."

Michael Aron: Former Democratic Speaker of the Assembly.

Hazel Gluck: Correct, and he helped. I said, "You know, I'm going to put this in plain language." "That's what I got to do. I got to be able to stand when I got my insurance policy." I said, "You're right"

Michael Aron: So do we have plain language insurance policies today in New Jersey?

Hazel Gluck: Well yeah. I have a great insurance company so I understand what they're sending me and I think it's better. I do. I think it's better.

Michael Aron: Did you change anything at the lottery in your three years there?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, there was no annuity then and we changed it almost immediately.

Michael Aron: How does that work? Explain what the annuity is.

Hazel Gluck: Well it's a build-up of money and you pay it out over 20 years or you get less cash. So when you see that it's 150 million dollars, that's over 20 years. If you have asked for cash, instead of getting paid out over a period of time it's less money but then you get the money up front.

Michael Aron: So did that end up saving the state some money to go--

Hazel Gluck: The state does well. The state, it's the fourth largest revenue source in the state and they weren't doing it because Brendan Byrne didn't want to do it. You know, I said well the hell with it, I'm going to try and we did it and oh my God, I mean the largest jackpot we had, we changed vendors because there were long lines of people who were waiting to buy lottery tickets and the machines kept breaking down so in the middle of everything else I had to worry about that, and the first-- and I know you're going to be speaking to him, the first person that I spoke to and went to a meeting with over in the Attorney General's office was McGlynn.

Michael Aron: Ed McGlynn.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, because we had such problems with the machine guide. And he may not tell you this story but he pulled me aside and he said, "You're not going to believe this but my wife won the lottery." I said, "Get away from me <laughing. Get away from me, I just got here!" <laughing>.

Michael Aron: So about three years into the administration you went from lottery to insurance--

Hazel Gluck: About a year.

Michael Aron: --in part to help Tom Kean get re-elected in '85.

Hazel Gluck: Mmm-hmm.

Michael Aron: Tell us about that election. What do you remember about the campaign of '85?

Hazel Gluck: Well it was a blowout. I mean everybody knew it was going to be a blow out. I mean, Tom had decided to divest our interests because any interest that we had that had to do with South Africa, that was a huge, huge move and the right thing.

Michael Aron: Symbolically a huge move more than dollars and cents a huge move.

Hazel Gluck: Maybe. Maybe but symbolism sometimes is better than the actual money that you might--

Michael Aron: I think we were the first or maybe second state to take this action.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, Coretta Scott King came here to thank him and as I remember correctly that sort of blew the lid off everything, and the teachers, NJEA had been fighting with him for four years and gotten nowhere. He would beat them at every turn so they decided to throw the towel in, so it was a runaway and the insurance never came up, thank God. Only in the sense that nobody wanted to lose the insurance whether it was Atlantic City or a daycare

center or whatever it might have been. So we were on the side of the gods, with insurance we were on the side of the people. So it never became an issue because car insurance was like somewhere over here on the background. So it all worked out well.

Michael Aron: And as I recall five Democrats ran for the privilege of running against this popular governor. Peter Shapiro won--

Hazel Gluck: Peter Shapiro, nice man.

Michael Aron: Did you know right away that Peter Shapiro would be trounced in the poll?

Hazel Gluck: No. Not right away but it started to, you know, as time, as it evolved it became evident I thought. I didn't know how big it was going to be. It was huge but--

Michael Aron: I think it was the largest margin of victory in New Jersey history.

Hazel Gluck: And I think the people of this state, not that they knew him, they didn't know Peter. They knew him and Tom Kean is a really decent human being and he comes across that way and I think the people in the state really liked him and that-- you know, no matter what you say about anything else, that's very, very important.

Michael Aron: How important were those tourism that you did in terms of--

Hazel Gluck: New Jersey and you perfect together?

Michael Aron: Yeah.

Hazel Gluck: It was hysterical. I think everybody probably across the country laughed but that was okay. Better they laugh at that than our corruption <laughing>.

Michael Aron: What turned it around from rocky-- you say every governor has a rocky first year or many do. What turned it around in years two, three, and four that would enable him--

Hazel Gluck: Well Greg Stevens was smart and tough.

Michael Aron: Greg Stevens.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah. Smart and tough and he just took charge and he did it well. I think when you've been in the-- well you know, in the newspaper business or television, whatever, you've got to be versed in so many things and if you're not you have to find the quick way to become versed and he did a fabulous job. He really did. He was a good man, and I think Tom had a lot of confidence in him. That's also important.

Michael Aron: Who else were the key people in the administration in that first term?

Hazel Gluck: Well the media, Carl Golden, was key. I mean, Tom Kean got up every morning and called Carl Golden who he already knew had read the newspapers or whatever. Yeah.

Michael Aron: What was Carl's skill?

Hazel Gluck: Well Carl, pretty good at analyzing things. He had a good political sense I think and you have to understand a governor's personality. Tom is not the kind of a guy who's going to shoot from the hip, and I think Carl knew it. And Carl gave him good advice.

Michael Aron: The counsel in those days?

Hazel Gluck: There were a couple of them.

Michael Aron: Cary.

Hazel Gluck: Cary, who was jus-- I love Cary. He was terrific counsel. He really was. And then Mike...

Michael Aron: ...Cole...

Hazel Gluck: ...yeah, was also a hell of a guy, bright, substantial. They had a really good front office after the first eight months. They had a really good front office, and that is really important. But Tom Kean was the kind of man that gave you your head. In other words, he put you in a job and he let you do the job. He didn't micromanage you. If you did not know how to present yourself or if you didn't have the instinct for the things that were important, the things that he should know about, you were in trouble. But if you had those things, he let you go. I mean, any other governor in their right mind probably would've said, "Enough already with you and the newspapers." Me, at DOT, I was in the newspapers all the time. He never said a word.

Michael Aron: Let's go to DOT. When and how did that happen?

Hazel Gluck: I got a phone call.

Michael Aron: From whom?

Hazel Gluck: I don't remember. I don't think it was the governor. And I got a phone call. And they said, "We promised you..." because they promised me they'd get me out of insurance, "We promised you that we would have something else for you, and we'd like you to be DOT commissioner."

Michael Aron: Was this shortly after the reelection?

Hazel Gluck: This was not long after the reelection. This was in '86-ish, yeah, '86, maybe '87. And I said, "That's terrific." Then I hung up, and I picked up the phone. I thought about it. I called Barbara Curran, who was a judge at that time, a former assemblywoman and former director, first and probably only female director of the Republican State Committee years and years ago. And I said to her, "You know, Barbara, I think that I can really, really do something here to make a difference in insurance. I don't know whether I should do this." She said to me, "Are you out of your mind?! Get out of there! You never want to be in a regulatory department of state! Get out!" So I figured, ah, she's probably right. Of course, it was the best job I ever had.

Michael Aron: What made you think that you could manage a large operation like the DOT, in 1986, when you thought you couldn't handle human services in 1982?

Hazel Gluck: Good question. I had experience, and I felt a lot more confident in myself. I ran the consumer affairs office. Maybe there were 15 people in there, from 15 to 35,000, however many people in human services. But I can make the leap from insurance to the Department of Transportation. And by that time, along the way, I had met wonderful people that I dragged with me from department to department and that I would trust with my life. And you have to have people like that around you. And it worked, whatever that means, while I was there.

Michael Aron: Did you serve through the whole second term?

Hazel Gluck: No. I left in '89, in the summer of '89.

Michael Aron: About six months before the administration. What did you do as DOT commissioner?

Hazel Gluck: I'll tell you a funny story. I was asked to come to the governor's office after they had asked me to be DOT commissioner, and I went. And there was a-- don't ask me who all the people were. Because my memory is not what it used to be. But Peg Howard was in the room, and the governor was in the room. Roger Bodman was in the room. I was in the room and a couple other people. And Roger, who had been at the Department of Transportation for one year, says to me, "Well, Hazel..." He starts it off, "Well..." and I knew it was a setup as soon as he started it off, "Well, Hazel, you know, you're going to take over the Department of Transportation. I know you're going to do a good job, but there's one thing you have to do that I didn't get to do." Maybe it wasn't the right time because it was an election year. And I said, "And that is?" He said, "Raise the gas tax." I said, oh, god. And I said, "Oh?" He said, "Yeah, and you got to go out." And other people chimed in, "You got to make sure that public is persuaded," and on and on and on. And I said, "Okay." And then I looked at Tom Kean, and I said to him, "And where will you be?" And he looked at me and smiled, and he said, "I will be there whenever you need me." I said, "Okay." And then I went back to my office. And about 45 minutes later, got a phone call from Peg Howard, "Are you out of your mind?!" I said, "Why?" She said, "Nobody ever talks to the governor like that." I said, "What are you, crazy? I have to know that." I said, "Since you're all in the room, I think when am I going to ask him the question, I'll ask him then." And he was. And we spent a lot of time, maybe two years, mostly because of John Russo who just wanted to give me a hard time. But we spent every-- I mobilized the whole department. We went to every Lions

Club. You name it. We were there and spoke all over the state of New Jersey, myself included. And then, when it came time to negotiate, they threw me out of the room because I wanted to kill Brad, the lobbyist.

Michael Aron: Brewster.

Hazel Gluck: Brewster, I wanted to kill him.

Michael Aron: Why?

Hazel Gluck: Because I asked for a nickel, and he didn't want to give a nickel. We wound up with two-and-a-half cents after two years. I wanted to kill him. They threw me out. Administration threw me out of the...

Michael Aron: What was Brewster at the time? Was he a lobbyist?

Hazel Gluck: No.

Michael Aron: Or was he executive director of the Assembly Republicans?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, yeah.

Michael Aron: Was this in conjunction with the creation of a transportation trust fund, or had that been done already?

Hazel Gluck: That had been done by John Sheridan who did a wonderful thing. John Sheridan, Jim Weinstein, actually, created the transportation trust fund.

Michael Aron: In the first term of the Kean Administration.

Hazel Gluck: Right. We didn't have enough money. So we needed to raise the gas tax in order to-- it was supposed to start-- was a ten-year program. You bonded and you took all the things, Federal Government stuff. And you put it all together and did the bonding and had a program. And by the tenth year, the first-year bonds were paid off and you started over again. Don't ask what's going on now. By June of 2011, all we can

do is pay the debt. It's been bonded to death. So, yeah, that was that. We did a lot of things that had-- that was at the beginning of the changing of what the Department of Transportation considered itself. We never talked about a road when we didn't have a transit up at the same time to see if there were ways that we can enhance transit rather than build a road. I mean, that was just at the beginning of that kind of talking and that kind of understanding, that planning and access and mobility and safety and clean air. That was just at the beginning of all of that being factored in to what the department was going to do. As it turned out, they've done a pretty good job. We don't build roads anymore. Because they're all jammed, but we don't build them. We really need to get on with transit now. Because the more transit we have the more people get off the roads.

Michael Aron: In retrospect, was two-and-a-half cents a mistake? Should it have been five cents?

Hazel Gluck: Absolutely.

Michael Aron: Why?

Hazel Gluck: Well, because we wouldn't have run out of money as quickly as we did. Although I must say a lot of governors took money from that. And, also, one of the mistakes we made, and I begged labor, begged them, was that it wasn't dedicated. I wanted it to go on the ballot and have the people of the state of New Jersey dedicate the money, the two-and-a-half cents, to transportation. Never did it. And, of course, it's been kind of fudged around. So we made a couple of mistakes. That was the time when Tom Kean was really exasperated with all the independent authorities. So he decided to put the transportation commissioner on all of them. That was wonderful.

Michael Aron: Talk to us about that. What authorities did you serve on or oversee?

Hazel Gluck: Parkway, where we ran into a whole brouhaha about credit cards, which you don't have enough film and enough time to go into. The turnpike, where, the first time I went there, there were lobster luncheons. And I thought, oh, my god, these people are out of control. The South Jersey Transportation Authority to which I think I sent somebody else. And, of course, I was on transit. I was chair of the transit board, anyhow, as commissioner of DOT. So eventually I wound up sending people to these things, because you can't do everything, to represent me. But it was an eye-opener.

Michael Aron: Give us the short version of the Parkway credit card issue.

Hazel Gluck: Well, we had a lady who was chair of the board.

Michael Aron: Judith Stanley?

Hazel Gluck: Judith Stanley. She was chair of the board.

Michael Aron: The New Jersey Highway Authority.

Hazel Gluck: Highway Authority.

Michael Aron: And it ran the parkway.

Hazel Gluck: Right, the Garden State Parkway. And we had a credit card issue come up with New Jersey Transit. And I'm sitting in the office. I'm saying, "Oh, my god, I wonder if there's anybody else." So I put a feeler out to the parkway and found out that couple people like credit cards.

Michael Aron: Oh, you mean credit cards for use by executives at the agencies, not using credit cards to pay your toll or anything like that.

Hazel Gluck: No, no, no, no, not at all, not at all. It was E-ZPass then. But, no, not at all. These are credit cards for people to use. God knows why. I didn't have one <laughs>. Can't understand why everybody else had one. And she had charged lipstick and some other, I mean, nonsense on it. And it became a whole big thing. But the situation that was even bigger than that was with transit and the executive director, Jerry Premo. I'll never forget that as long as I live.

Michael Aron: What did he do? I remember he was in the newspapers.

Hazel Gluck: Oh, my god, Tiffany's. And, I mean, he put everything you could ever imagine on the credit card and never paid it back. So that means you and I were paying for whatever his largess was, whatever he was-- I don't know what his problem was. But Jerry was very charming, very gracious and totally a BSer. He's not without talent. He had talent. But that became a big deal. Had to fire him.

Michael Aron: Did he stay in the transit field?

Hazel Gluck: I'm sorry?

Michael Aron: Did he stay in the transit field after he left...

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, he did.

Michael Aron: ...New Jersey Transit?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, he did.

Michael Aron: So that behavior didn't ruin his career.

Hazel Gluck: I don't think so.

Michael Aron: Just derailed it.

Hazel Gluck: Just got him a lawyer, me a lawyer. I mean, it was a pretty big deal. That's when my hair started turning really gray.

Michael Aron: Yeah?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah.

Michael Aron: But you liked being DOT.

Hazel Gluck: I loved it. I loved it. It was good stuff. And somewhere along the way there, was '88 probably, I got a telephone call from Tom Kean. And he said to me, "How would you like to serve on the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey?" Stunned. I was totally stunned. I couldn't find my voice. He said, "I have never heard you silent before." <laughs> So I started to laugh. I said, "I'd love to." I said, "I'm just stunned." He said, "Well," he said, "I want you to know this is for you." He said, "This is not because you're commissioner. This is for you." That, to me, said it all.

Michael Aron: Did that happen?

Hazel Gluck: It sure did.

Michael Aron: So as DOT commissioner you were sitting on the Port Authority board. That's pretty unusual. Is it not?

Hazel Gluck: Well, it used to be that the commissioner automatically sat on it, which is pretty-- it's not necessary. I think Sagner was on it but hadn't been for a long time. He said to me it wasn't because I was DOT commissioner. I was on there during Jim Florio's whole first term. See, the Port Authority is not a partisan thing. It's a New York, New Jersey thing, which is totally different. Because you can be a republican, a democrat, a independent. If you're from Jersey, you want what Jersey's supposed to get. The New Yorkers are always trying to outmaneuver the Jerseyans. So we were a band of people from Jersey, and they were a band of people from New York. It was entirely different thing. It was wonderful, was fabulous. The one thing I'm forever sorry for, I gave it up when Christie came into office. She asked me if I wanted to chair it. I thought about it, because I really did. So I said, "Who in the hell's going to take care of my business? You know, I got to make a living." I was stupid, very shortsighted.

Michael Aron: Why? How so?

Hazel Gluck: Because I could've done both. I could've done both. And at that point, I just wasn't sure that I could. And I also thought to myself, typically, really a stupid thing. I thought to myself, well, if they know that we're friends and I'm the chair of the Port Authority, maybe that'll make some difficulty for her. Baloney. <laughs> Never would've made difficulty for her. Just would've made everybody salute a little more. I mean, it was the wrong move, but that's the way it is..

Michael Aron: You talked before about Tom Kean letting you do your thing as someone who worked for him. To what extent do you think cabinet autonomy was greater under Kean than under other governors?

Hazel Gluck: I think there was no question that the autonomy of the cabinet, not all the cabinet-- there were some people in the cabinet didn't get the joke. And Greg Stevens knew who they were. And every once in a while, I'd get a phone call. They'd say, "How do you do this? I don't know how to do this." And how do you explain people about politics in five or ten minutes? Oh, Brenda Davis, called me up. She said, "Now, look, I

don't know anything about politics." She said, "So you're going to have to help me." I said, "Whatever you want." I said, "Sure. Whatever you need." I'm sorry. Your question was...

Michael Aron: My question was ,was there more autonomy?...

Hazel Gluck: There was more, yeah.

Michael Aron: ...in that administration than...

Hazel Gluck: There was.

Michael Aron: ...in any other that you've known.

Hazel Gluck: I don't know about Brendan Byrne's. I mean there could've been then too. But I think that there certainly was more autonomy then in the last two governors. I don't know about Florio. Actually, there wasn't much autonomy. I take that back, because he had his treasurer testify for everybody in the budget hearings. Crazy. It's crazy. If I went out and got in one of those crazy machines that they have to pave or whatever and got in there and they took my picture or something like that, I'd get people saying to me, "Ah! I saw you in the newspaper on that!" There has to be this touch between cabinet, governor and the real people. You have to be able to somehow transfer that feeling. Although Tom Kean was from the manor born, he got the joke. That's why he got dragged into a beer joint in Hoboken. Because everybody was afraid that, because he was to the manor born, that he would not understand the problems of real people and their lives, which actually was not true.

Michael Aron: That's the second time you've used that phrase getting the joke. Getting the joke means understanding the political landscape, right?

Hazel Gluck: Exactly. Lots of people don't. Lot of governors don't. I think Jon Corzine is one of the loveliest people I've ever met, but he did not get the joke. He just didn't. And charming guy. I had dinner with him. Just delightful. And Jim Florio nice man, but he also-- when you have the treasurer testify for everybody, you're sending a message that is really bad.

Michael Aron: That was, Doug Berman, his treasurer back then.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, bright. But so what?

Michael Aron: I remember something called GMIP, the Governor's Management...

Hazel Gluck: <laughs>

Michael Aron: ...Improvement Plan. What was that?

Hazel Gluck: Oh, I'll do it <laughs>.

Michael Aron: That was a government reorganization effort?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, every one of them d-- well, this governor's not doing it. He's just cutting, which he has to do. But I got a phone call and they said, "We're going to come see you. We're going to GMIP this." I said, "What?" "Well, we have to come in and see where you can lose people." I'm making money. So I pick up the phone, and I call...

Michael Aron: That's a lottery.

Hazel Gluck: That's a lottery. I pick up the phone. I call Al Fasola

Michael Aron: What's his position?

Hazel Gluck: I don't know what his title was. He wasn't treasurer. I don't know what his title was. I think he was head of GMIP as a matter of fact .

Michael Aron: Yes, that's right.

Hazel Gluck: And I said to him, "Al," <laughs> "you really want me to do this?" He said, "Well, how are you doing?" I said, "We're doing great. We're making money, more money than the administration." He said, "That's it. Forget about it. You're not GMIPed." That was it. So I never had the pleasure of being GMIPed <laughs>.

Michael Aron: Other things that stand out in one's memory about that administration is the education reforms. Do you agree with that?

Hazel Gluck: Yes, absolutely.

Michael Aron: Which ones come to mind in your mind?

Hazel Gluck: Well, I guess the one that comes to mind is, when you graduated college, if you wanted to give a year or two of your life, I think it was two years, without a teacher's degree, God forbid, you could go into the school system, which the NJEA fought like crazy. But in the long run, a lot of talented young kids came into the school system for a couple of years and then left. But gave this wonderful experience, knowledge, whatever, to the kids. That was one of them.

Michael Aron: That was called the Alternate Route to Teaching.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, was a good deal.

Michael Aron: There was a minimum teacher's salary, Tom Kean said, at \$18,500, which doesn't sound like that much anymore.

Hazel Gluck: I know. But then it was.

Michael Aron: There was the school takeover bill that he shepherded through to enable the state to take over failing urban schools. There were a few more.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, and they were all well intentioned. I think that, for instance, the Newark School System, which the state took over, to me, when you're spending a billion dollars on educating kids and you got maybe 15, 20 percent of them graduating, we are failing by a wide, wide margin. So that may be the beginning of something, but we sure as heck haven't done anything that we should've done in my opinion. I don't mind paying for kids to go to school. I don't have any more kids in school, but I want them to get educated. And I think a lot of people feel that way, and I don't think you can just keep pouring money in. I'll probably get shot for this. I know it's the biggest patronage pot in Newark but too bad. If we don't save these kids, if we don't give these kids a chance to

be educated, if we don't do all the things we're supposed to be doing for children, then this country is going to be a third-class country.

Michael Aron: Was Tom Kean courted for national office when you were around him? Or did he aspire to national office?

Hazel Gluck: I think he wanted to be vice president.

Michael Aron: Do you?

Hazel Gluck: That off-year election stuff is a killer for any guy or gal who's governor. Christie went off to the EPA. She didn't ask me. I would've told her forget it. Who wants to be in the EPA? She left. She had a billion-dollar surplus. It was spent that whole next year, and she was the one that got the blame for it. Hello. That off-year election, first of all, it makes New Jersey have an election every year. I mean, you get so tired of the campaigning and asking for money and whatever. And the people turn it off. They tune it out after a while. And then, when you're in the governorship, it puts you in the situation where you have to decide, if you are approached, a higher office. You have to decide whether or not you want to leave, which is-- it's not a good thing to do in my opinion. Tom Kean also was touted for the United States Senate. He would have been a wonderful United State's Senator – he would've been a wonderful anything. But he would've been a great United States senator I think. He's a gentleman, smart, understands the issues. I think, when he cochaired the 9/11 Commission, some of the articles that I saw that were written about him was how different he was from everybody in Washington, who were all a bunch of climbing-up-all-over-each-other's-backs egomaniacs, and he was a gentleman and he carried himself as a gentleman and he brought a whole different set of standards and a whole different feeling with him as cochair of that commission. He would've been great. But I think, by that point, I'm not sure whether this was a family issue or whatever it was. But he passed up the opportunity, and I was always sorry for that. I think the state lost a great man.

Michael Aron: Is there a particular moment we're talking about? Was it 1990, after his governorship?

Hazel Gluck: It was after his governorship.

Michael Aron: The year that Christie Whitman got the nomination for U.S. Senate and ran against Bill Bradley.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah.

Michael Aron: Two years prior, when there was a presidential election and George Bush selected Dan Quayle, you're saying that you think Tom Kean wanted to be selected by George H. W. Bush?

Hazel Gluck: Well, yeah, they were friends. They'd known each other for a long time. And I'm sure he would've been absolutely delighted, and he knew how to spell potato. So that would've been a plus ..

Michael Aron: What do you think Tom Kean's strengths as a leader were?

Hazel Gluck: First of all, Tom Kean had a lot of confidence in himself, enough confidence in himself to be laid back enough. He didn't have any of these feelings of insecurity, which I think drive a lot of people, especially in politics, business. Could be your business, could be the tire business. Doesn't matter what it is. I think if your personality is such that you are not secure, you behave in a different way than you do when you are secure. And I think Tom Kean was very secure, knew who he was and was not unhappy with himself. And as a result of that, I think he led from strength. He could let you do your job. If you understood what your job was about and you knew this was a big deal, you called the front office, you called Carl Goldin, you said this is what I want to do, I think maybe the governor should do it. And they call back and say the governor wants to do it or he doesn't want to do it. He was able to let people perform. He thought he had good people. As it turns out, there were a couple people in the cabinet who really needed help. But other than that-- there was one person in the cabinet that he had somebody else follow around the whole time because he wasn't sure whether the guy was going to do something stupid or unethical or whatever. But having said that, he just had the ability to allow people to do their job. I mean, I think of me. I was probably in the newspapers just about as much as any cabinet officer, maybe as much as the governor. . I mean, we were busy all the time, and I was talking to reporters all the time. And I was in the papers, my picture. He never said a word to me. I never got any kind of hint from anybody in the front office that he was unhappy that I was doing what I was doing. I think he thought it was fine.

Michael Aron: Do you think that security sprang from a privileged upbringing or from many years of service in the legislature in Trenton or a combination of the two?

Hazel Gluck: All of the above. I really do. And he overcame stuttering. Yeah, all of the above. He's a very special guy I think.

Michael Aron: Was there a weakness in him as a leader?

Hazel Gluck: It's interesting. From my perspective, there wasn't. But I was not in the front office, and I think that's where you would see the weakness. I'll tell you one thing. You can never get him out of a meeting. He was always late. If he was talking to you, he'd be looking you straight in the eye. And I'd be or somebody else would be there saying, "Come on, governor. We got to go. 20 minutes late, governor. Come on, governor." It was almost a joke. We were always dragging him out of rooms <laughs>. He really enjoyed it.

Michael Aron: How would you characterize the eight years of Tom Kean in New Jersey's history?

Hazel Gluck: He was a superior governor. I really do. I think Brendan Byrne was an excellent governor. I think that's why they probably do that article together. I think they are of a vintage that maybe they don't have anymore. And I really do think he was an excellent governor. He cared a lot about the people. I think he was an excellent governor. I really do. He wasn't there for self-aggrandizement, and I don't think Brendan was either. But, subsequent governors, I think some of them were. Self-aggrandizement really is not the name of the game.

Michael Aron: You decided to leave the administration about six months before it ended to set up your own business. Is that why?

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, actually it was why. But initially I was offered a job at a lobbying firm. Was a terrific job. Katz, who was the original lobbyist, offered me this great job. And I turned it down <laughs>.

Michael Aron: Joe Katz?

Hazel Gluck: Joe Katz. And when I called my son, I said, Joe Katz gave me a great offer, "I'm going to turn Joe Katz down." He said, "Why am I not surprised?" It was a really stupid thing to do, but I decided I would start my own firm. And it was lean for a while because of the Florio years. But then, when Christie decided-- we had lunch one

day. And she decided she was going to run, and she asked me if I was going to run. I said, "Not on your life," <laughs> "I'm not running." I said, "I'm going to be joined at the hip with you. I'll do whatever you need me to do." And I actually left my business. And my partner, Judy Shaw, and a couple other people took over the business. And I was with her constantly, constantly. And when she won, which we weren't too sure about <laughs> and it wasn't by any great margin, when she won, it made all the difference in the world in my life. I had people in my office. I didn't know who the hell they were. I mean, I'd come into-- Arthur Goldberg, from Bally's, who's no longer with us, came down to my office one day. No appointment or anything. I walked in, and there he was. I said, "What can I do for you?" Introduced ourselves. "I want you to represent me." You want me to represent you. "Want you to represent me." He said, "I'm a democrat. I don't know anything about republicans," said, "I'm telling you straight up." I said, "Okay. Let's sit down and talk." As it turned out, I did represent him. He was a terrific man. So it was like my whole world opened up. I mean, I had never in a million years thought I would have that kind of a future. But I got lucky.

Michael Aron: You said Christie Whitman asked you if you were going to run. Was it a thought, at one point, that you might run for governor?

Hazel Gluck: Well, yeah, sure. When I was in the transportation-- as a matter of fact, you asked me the question that set up the whole press conference for me.

Michael Aron: I'm delighted to hear that.

Hazel Gluck: <laughs>

Michael Aron: What was it <laughs>?

Hazel Gluck: I had this press conference. Everybody thought I was going to announce to run for governor, and I was announcing that I was not going to run.

Michael Aron: I remember that somewhat.

Hazel Gluck: Okay. And, a million people, couldn't imagine why all these people showed up.

Michael Aron: We all thought you were going to announce.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah. And you said to me, "Is it because you're divorced and Jewish and whatever?" And I said, "Well, I don't know. Is that like Frank Lautenberg?" The whole place cracked up.

Michael Aron:

Hazel Gluck: <laughs> It was really great. Have to thank you for that.

Michael Aron: You're welcome.

Michael Aron: Why did you choose not to make the run?

Hazel Gluck: I was very tired after seven-and-a-half years. I'd worked really, really hard. I was very tired, and I didn't have a secure future at all. Although, if I had run, I suppose-- I had a poll commissioned that my friends paid for. \$25,000, in those days, was a lot of money. Matter of fact, I think he charged me too much. And it said that my chances were as good as any of the other guys, and there were a whole bunch if I can remember correctly, we would call them the seven dwarfs or six dwarfs or something, that my chances were as good as any of theirs and it was no problem my being a woman. And then I spent the summer thinking really, really hard about it.

Michael Aron: Which summer?

Hazel Gluck: The summer of...

Michael Aron: ...'92.

Hazel Gluck: It was before then.

Michael Aron: Was it?

Hazel Gluck: Because I was at DOT when I decided I wasn't going to run. It was before then.

Michael Aron: Oh, so we're talking about running for governor in '89, then, against Jim Quarter, with Chuck Hardwick and Bill Gormley...

Hazel Gluck: That's right, the cast of thousands.

Michael Aron: ...and that group.

Hazel Gluck: And I would've been the only woman in the race. And that was, according to this poll, a plus. I would be the only skirt. In those days, we wore skirts. We wore skirts. Because I would've been the only woman. I had as good a chance as anybody else. Then I really got nervous and I had to think hard about it. And I just decided that I had to worry about my future and I had to secure my future. So I decided not to run.

Michael Aron: I'm reminded that there used to be a button, at one point in time, that said, "I'm a Hazel nut." Was that around then?

Hazel Gluck: That's right. A friend of mine, who was in an ad agency, had them made up for me. And I got a couple thousand in my garage if you want one <laughs>.

Michael Aron: If I were a collector, I'd grab one up.

Hazel Gluck:

Michael Aron: When Christie Whitman was governor and you were both her close friend and perceived, in the political community, as powerful, yet something before her or in front of her, you say that business took off. Is that a fair...

Hazel Gluck: Business took off, and I want to tell you something interesting. Having been in the cabinet, you do not go to the commissioner if you got something this big, all right? And you sure as hell don't go to the governor. I don't think there was one instance, in seven years, when I ever presented anything to Christie Whitman.

Michael Aron: Really?

Hazel Gluck: Mm-hmm. Never. I had a very strong feeling about that. I never wanted to do anything. She was my friend, but she was also governor. And I didn't want to do anything that might embarrass her or anything. So I just never discussed anything with her.

Michael Aron: So how did you get things done for people?

Hazel Gluck: I went to the Department of State, went to the front office and maybe spoke to, I don't know, the chief counsel or went to the commissioners. I had the commissioners' club and the legislative club. So I didn't need to go to her.

Michael Aron: What do you mean you had the commissioners' club?

Hazel Gluck: Well, once a commissioner always a commissioner. During the last administration, when people couldn't get things done, I'd pick up the phone and call and, "Ah, yeah, come on in, commissioner." It's a big thing.

Michael Aron: So you knew what door to knock on.

Hazel Gluck: Yeah, and I also knew what rose to be of concern, important enough to go directly to a commissioner, not everything. It's crazy. And as I said, I went into the front office. I never went to Christie. I wanted her to have that plausible deniability so if anybody ever started with her, she could say, "Hey, she's never come to me with anything."

Michael Aron: I can't resist asking you, even though we're focusing on the Kean years, how you regard the eight years of Christie Whitman.

Hazel Gluck: I think she has gotten such a bad rap, such a bad rap. I don't know how we're going to restore her reputation. She left a billion-dollar surplus. Donnie DiFrancesco, pardon my French, pissed it away. She got blamed for it. She cut taxes 28 times. She did some stupid things, yeah, that thing in Camden with that guy that she patted down. I wanted to go out and shoot myself when I saw that one. She did some stupid things. No question about it. She borrowed from the fund for the pension fund.

Hindsight's 20/20. But I think she's gotten such a lousy rap. I don't think she deserved it. She's a far better governor than people give her credit for.

Michael Aron: How would you compare her and Tom Kean, similar, different?

Hazel Gluck: Well, they're both to the manor born. They're similar right there. Christie's family was deeply in republican politics, her father and her mother. Similar in that sense, different times. But I think Tom Kean, to me, was the all-time number one governor during my time. That doesn't mean to say that Christie was bad. It's just that Tom was exceptional I thought.

Michael Aron: Would you say her two administrations overall were successful?

Hazel Gluck: I thought they were. But when the gravy started to run, he did something I don't think any other governor's ever done. And I could be dead wrong about this but not that I noticed. He kept hammering on her, hammering on her, hammering on what she did was wrong, hammering on this. And to this day, people believe it. I was at a barbecue this past weekend and somebody said something about Christie Whitman, "Ah, Christie Whitman was a lousy governor." I said, "Stop right there." I said, "She's my friend, and I don't want you to discuss it. Because you don't know what you're talking about." Everybody stopped in the room. But, I mean, to this day, the perception is there.

Michael Aron: So what should we remember Tom Kean for?

Hazel Gluck: Should remember Tom Kean for education, for the divestiture. I think environmentally he made some great strides.

Michael Aron: What was that era like in New Jersey?

Hazel Gluck: Well, we had money. We're probably the last group that had money. So great. I mean, we never met something we couldn't spend money on. It just got a little tough towards the end, because we had spent too much, which was not terrific. But things were good. If we needed something, we needed to hire somebody, we wanted to pave a road, you want to do this, we did it.

Michael Aron: How about the state's image? Do you think it changed during the Kean years?

Hazel Gluck: Yes, I do. Yes, I do. I think that the commercial that he made and his accent and the kind of guy he was-- I absolutely think it changed. We had a lot more pride in it and in ourselves. And I think it's been-- it's not great now.

Michael Aron: You're a half-time resident of New Jersey now. Is that fair to say?

Hazel Gluck: Yes.

Michael Aron: Are you hopeful about the state's future or pessimistic about the state's future?

Hazel Gluck: Well, I think that the governor has a hell of a job on his hands. He's got to do all the things that nobody wanted to do before in order to straighten it out. A little state like New Jersey that has 11-billion-dollar deficit, that's mindboggling to me. I don't know how you do that. I think if they call him every name in the book, if he's able to straighten it out, it'll all have been worth it. Whether he ticks off every interest group and whether he ever gets reelected again, if he straightens it out, it'll have been worth it. And if he straightens it out, he'll get reelected no matter what, personality. It doesn't make any difference.

Michael Aron: Hazel, I think you've told us a lot in about an hour and a half.

Hazel Gluck: I'll stop talking <laughs>. Thank you.

Michael Aron: Thank you.

<crew talk>

End of Hazel Gluck 6-2-10.mp3