

## **D208/06 The making of The Open University**

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### **Harold Wilson:**

I'd been thinking about it before I was even leader of the party, Leader of the Opposition. And I used to go every year to Chicago to give a course of lectures and on this occasion I said can I spend a couple of, just a couple of nights lecturing, I want to spend the rest of the time looking into what they do about, I think they called it distance learning or something, sort of night school work. And while I was there, Hugh, I heard that Hugh Gaitskell was very ill, came back and by this time I was leader of the party, elected leader of the party. But I still went on with this idea, but there was so much to do as leader we had to formulate policy ready for what looked like an early election. And I didn't, in fact, announce my ideas, which I made purely personal, until several months later.