

CPM Reviews

Transcript: Research Interview

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| Mr Haggar: | Mr Clive Haggar, Former Secretary | Interviewer |
| Dr Price: | Dr Barry Price, Former Senior Director | Interviewee |

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Mr Haggar: It's 9th July and I'm meeting with Dr Barry Price, formerly the Head of Curriculum in the ACT Schools Authority. Barry's kindly agreed to talk to me about his early years as a member of the New South Wales Teachers Federation, and as a teacher in the ACT.

Barry, if you're comfortable, we could perhaps begin by you telling me something of your early years as a teacher.

Dr Price: Right. I taught at Corrimal High School in the New South Wales system from 1960 to 1965, and then at Findlay High School in the Western Riverina for the next four years. I came to Canberra in 1970 and I was a teacher at Campbell High School from '70 to '72.

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As far as New South Wales was concerned, I wasn't prominent at all in the New South Wales Teachers Federation. I think the main memory I have was when they had a strike in 1968.

Mr Haggar: **That was the first industrial action?**

Dr Price: That's right. Now in that case, in Findlay, the primary school people weren't interested in striking and so the secondary school people, I persuaded them to go to Albury for the day where there was a meeting down there for people in the area. I think that was about my main activity in the New South Wales Teachers Federation. In fact, I regarded the New South Wales Teachers Federation as being a little bit too rigid in a lot of its attitudes.

When I came to the ACT, I was quite in favour of setting up a separate Teachers Federation here. Now, in those first three years when I was at Campbell High School, I got involved in the movement for setting up the ACT Schools Authority, probably in my first year there. I was associated with people like Mick March and so on in that kind of thing.

The Campbell Committee was established, it was the body that was going to more or less design the ACT school system from the point of view of the teachers and I was an alternate member of the Campbell Committee for about 18 months. And in fact, I suppose during that period I had probably attended as much as any of the full members of the Campbell Committee and I had virtually the same right to put my views as anybody else that was on that committee.

I was on the Campbell Committee until about the middle of 1973 when I applied for the Teachers and Resources Centre position and that meant I had to resign from the New South Wales Federation and the Education Department in doing that.

Mr Haggar: **Because it was a public service position?**

Dr Price: It was a public service position. In fact, it was really set up by the Commonwealth Department of Education rather than anybody. Alan Foskett was probably the key person. He was a senior member of the commonwealth public service Education Department at that time. I suppose

he, more than anybody else, steered the Campbell Committee. Richard Campbell came onto it as an academic and of course it was eventually named after him because he chaired it.

I'm just trying to remember, Lance Chapman, I think we were both alternate members in the early years. When I pulled out to do other things Lance went on to the committee at that stage. I think Peter O'Connor pulled out about the middle of 1973 to become more or less the secretary in waiting and Lance took his position as a formal member of the committee. I said that I wouldn't stay on the committee after that time because I was looking to do other things.

Mr Haggart: **In terms of that involvement what level were you holding at Campbell High School?**

Dr Price: I was history master.

Mr Haggart: **History master, and Lance would have been a master as well at that time?**

Dr Price: I think he would have been at that time, yes.

Mr Haggart: **So, in fact we're talking about two – whilst you're in promotions positions, it was at the lower end of the scale.**

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggart: **So still teaching in the classroom you had access to this high-level committee that was going to be actually designing, in many respects, the system to come?**

Dr Price: That's right. Now, when Peter O'Connor left to more or less set up the local federation, it wasn't formally set up for a year or so, but he acted as if it was. I left at that time and I worked with him to a certain extent in the next couple of months until I actually resigned from the place.

Now, we were very keen to set up a federation which was not as rigid as the New South Wales Teachers Federation was. At that stage it was probably the most rigid of the Teachers Federations across Australia on a whole

range of things. We were determined not to have quite the same amount of rigidity here in terms of setting up a local one. We also wanted to be able to set up a local one.

We cultivated the preschool teachers from the very beginning. The preschool teachers were already part of the commonwealth system and we got them in from the very beginning and built an organisation around them because of the fact that they'd already been part of a commonwealth system.

Mr Haggar: **Now under the New South Wales Teachers Federation you'd been separate associations of primary and secondary teachers as well?**

Dr Price: We were but it wasn't a complete separation. I mean, Len Childs was actually – who was a local teacher in Queanbeyan – he was the head of the federation in New South Wales in this early period.

Mr Haggar: **And organised and supported particularly by Canberra teachers is what I understand.**

Dr Price: Yes. And so from that point of view we set out to – and we also made a link with the Northern Territory because the Northern Territory had just broken away from South Australia. And I know the – the interesting thing was that – I forget who it was – somebody and myself went to Sydney to meet them. There was the national meeting of representatives of all the various federations from around Australia.

Mr Haggar: **This would have been under the banner of the Australian Teachers Federation?**

Dr Price: Yes, I think so. We went to Sydney to meet the Northern Territory people and we were most irate when we were deliberately steered away from them. The New South Wales people, George Smith I think it was, or George somebody at the time, George deliberately gave us wrong information as to where the Northern Territory people were. And we just happened to meet them by accident in the corridor and sat down with them and talked things through with them about setting up a separate federation. But New South Wales Teachers Federation deliberately hindered us at that very early stage.

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- Mr Haggar:** I understand that there was opposition in the New South Wales Teachers Federation in relation to the establishment of secondary colleges, in relation to the establishment of a separate service, and in relation to the establishment of a separate union.
- Dr Price: I think you're right in all of those respects.
- Mr Haggar:** So, from that meeting that just, I assume, reinforced your determination to have a separate organisation. I have been told that there was a discussion after a formal meeting of one of the bodies, at the Wellington Hotel, with four members of a group which included Mick March, Peter O'Connor, Dick Lee and yourself.
- Dr Price: I think so. I don't remember much about it, except that I remember meeting there.
- Mr Haggar:** And that was where a decision was taken that the ACT needed to break away and you began to work on that basis.
- Dr Price: And that meeting there we discussed getting the preschool teachers in because they weren't part of New South Wales Federation, they were already separate.
- Mr Haggar:** And would give you a little something of a membership base to begin with?
- Dr Price: Yeah.
- Mr Haggar:** Right. So that – I haven't got a date for that meeting yet, but the key gathering in terms of the development of the organisation would have been on the 3rd August 1972 when there was a mass meeting at the Workers Club in Civic.
- Dr Price: Yes.
- Mr Haggar:** And the decision there was formally taken by the members of the New South Wales Teachers Federation present, that they would break away and establish a separate ACT union.

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Dr Price: Yes. I think I seconded the motion, I'm not too sure whether I moved it or seconded it. I'm just trying to remember who was the other person that was probably the proposer of the motion. And it passed very easily at that meeting.

Mr Haggar: And that was, again, a gathering of both the associations of primary and secondary in the ACT.

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: Were there any voices against the creation of a separate organisation?

Dr Price: Not really. I mean, there was a certain amount of wanting to know what we could do when there wasn't a separate system in place, but I think from that day the planning went ahead.

Now, I wasn't involved in it for very long because I was interviewed for the position of head of the Teaching Resources Centre, I think it was about September, and I knew that I was going to get that position even though I didn't move into it until December. And so, I pulled out at a very early stage, but I was on the original, if you could talk in the executive, I was on the original executive of the new organisation, but I didn't stay there for very long.

Mr Haggar: No. And of course, you then found yourself eventually as a senior executive in the interim authority when it was established.

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: You might like to sort of educate me in terms of the authority and the Commonwealth Teaching Service which was a parallel organisation, and the relationships from your perspective as a senior executive, with the Commonwealth Teachers Federation ACT as it then was.

Dr Price: Yes. Well, 1974 I think the Teaching Resources Centre was probably the most active part of a new system. Because it wasn't until 1975 that Hedley Beare came in as the first chief education officer.

Mr Haggar: Of the interim authority?

Dr Price: Interim authority. Now, during '74 Frank Smith was the head of the interim authority, but the key person by all means was Brian Peck. And, I mean, Frank Smith had very little to do with what went on in that year he was just the – because he was a senior member of the Commonwealth Department of Education that was his role, but Brian Peck was the person that was the most active person in setting up the new authority in 1974.

Mr Haggar: And of course, in '74 you would have had – was it Kim Beasley Snr as minister for education?

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: But the original decisions to establish the system were undertaken during the period of Malcolm Fraser as minister for education?

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: And then of course you had the '72 election of the Whitlam government.

Dr Price: Yes. So that not a great deal happened in that year. Well, in a sense, in 1973 I was probably the only member in a position that was going to keep a position. Because I was, in that year, either the Teaching Resources Centre didn't really get underway until about the end of 1973 and so I had plenty of time on my hands and most of the meetings concerned with the new authority were held in the Teaching Resources Centre at the old Canberra High School, which had a special conference facility, from the beginning. So, in a sense I was the key connection between the New South Wales system, which still existed in '73, and the new system which was in the process of being established.

People like Mick March and so on were probably more active. Mal Lee was very active during that period too. And I'm just trying to think, Lance Chapman who was still involved of course. But in a sense, I had a new role which left me closely connected to my old role.

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Mr Haggar: I mean, what's striking about this is that early period was the dominance of males both in terms of the formal hierarchy, but also to the activism in the union. But there were active women at that time.

Dr Price: Yes. Well, Julia Ryan would have been one. The second thing was that it was largely secondary people. I find it hard to remember anybody who was a primary school teacher that was very active in that setting up of the new system.

Mr Haggar: Ian McPhee?

Dr Price: Ian McPhee was in as far as the Federation, but in terms of setting up the new Schools Authority Ian wasn't particularly prominent.

Mr Haggar: Right. And people like Julie Biles, Cheryl O'Connor, they were to emerge a little bit later.

Dr Price: Yes. Well see, Peter and Cheryl were still a couple at that stage, and Peter was the key person. Once it was decided that Peter would move out of the Campbell Committee and become virtually the key figure...

Mr Haggar: De facto...

Dr Price: De facto head of the new union, he was easily the most important person in it.

I'm just trying to think, there was another man that went to Sydney with me when we went to make contact with the Northern Territory people. I'm trying to remember his name. Yes, he was a male but he was a secondary teacher as well.

Mr Haggar: And of course in the very early period Keith Lawler wasn't particularly active at that time.

Dr Price: No, not particularly.

Mr Haggar: But became...

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Dr Price: He came in later. I think that Peter O'Connor knew Keith Lawler pretty well and he would have been the one that got Keith involved, I think, because Keith wasn't on the Campbell Committee.

Mr Haggart: No. And Dick Lee's involvement at that time?

Dr Price: Dick was very much involved, yes.

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Dr Price: Now of course, once the interim authority was set up my role was not a close one with the Teachers Federation for obvious reasons. I was involved in setting up a new organisation and I had cut my ties, really, with the – I knew a lot of the people and since a lot of them were also involved in setting up the Schools Authority we weren't distant from each other, but equally I was mainly concerned in 1974 and '75 in just getting the Teaching Resources Centre running. In '73 not much happened. '74 it became a key meeting place for a lot of the people concerned. And by the end of '76 we were so occupied – we occupied so much of our space in the old Canberra High School that we were running out of space. And it was then I negotiated the move to Griffith Primary School where we took over one of the two buildings of Griffith Primary School until, I think it was '79, when it moved to Stirling.

Now, as well as that, I was a key figure in the curriculum branch under the new Schools Authority from '74 on. The other two, there was Ian Collier and Fred Jones.

Mr Haggart: Both of who became secondary college principals.

Dr Price: Yeah, we were the other two people in that for those first two or three years. Now, at a very early stage I got David Dillon in to work mainly in the inservice education part of it. And inservice education basically became a separate entity even though it was also mainly located in the old Canberra High School. That was quite deliberate on my part. It was to make it a separate entity and give David a free reign to establish most of the things that he did. Now he was in that position for a year-and-a-half, I think it was, and then John Wills came in as head of the inservice education area until the end of '79.

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In 1979/1980 I went to London and I did my PhD over in London on an imperial relations trust fellowship, and when I came back I took the first term, which was the last term of the school year, to get my thesis finished, and I didn't go back until the middle of the next year to actually do my oral examination for that.

So, I was out of the system for about nearly a year-and-a-half at the end of the 1970s. But other than that, I was closely involved with it right through until I left in 1990.

Mr Haggar: **Right. 1990 you retired?**

Dr Price: Well, I retired from that system in 1990. I went to work with St John Ambulance national office at the end of – it would have been the end of 1989, but I think I was technically still part of the Schools Authority for a few days in 1990.

Mr Haggar: **Right, okay. Well one of the most significant elements of the union's history of course was when, under Malcolm Fraser as prime minister, there was some rather draconian industrial relations laws passed and they particularly restricted actions that unions could undertake faced with the prospect of having to campaign for salary increases under what was colloquially known as the CEEP Act. Under this Act there were over 2,000 members of the teaching service suspended from duty in 1982. And whilst the union has covered its own history of the actions – why particular actions were taken etc – I was wondering if you wouldn't mind giving me a perspective of what it was like to be on the employer's side at that time.**

Dr Price: Yes. In the curriculum branch I didn't have a great deal to do with the union as such because it was the staffing branch that more or less handled the negotiations with the union. I was acting chief education officer for brief periods during that period and also into the 1980s. But I think overall I wouldn't have spent more than six weeks as acting chief education officer. My main negotiations with the union occurred after 1984 when I became senior director Resources and had direct responsibility for relationships with the union.

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And, for example, I think it was 1988, I was in a situation that I attended the meeting in Sydney with whatever the national body for not just teachers but for all people, was about their salary negotiations. Because the interesting thing was that I have actually got better salary conditions for the teachers in the ACT in 1986 and '87 than they had around the nation. From that point of view the Teachers Federation people came back with me, people like – I think Peter O'Connor was still with it at the time, but if not, it was somebody like Keith Lawler. And they were told by the national union that they weren't to actively participate, and so I finished up doing most of the negotiation for the salary agreement that they got about 1988/1989 because the local federation was basically unable to participate because of the national union.

Mr Haggar: **What you're talking there about is essentially the accord process.**

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: **That was under the Hawke government at that time.**

Dr Price: That's right. And I mean, it was interesting that – I'm trying to remember, again, names. I could probably look them up if you really – in that I was the one that did more talking for the union in the sense, as well as my own education system, in that series of negotiations.

Mr Haggar: **With that negotiation, given the outcomes that the ACT had enjoyed, essentially, they were benchmarking for the benefits for others.**

Dr Price: Well, particularly – I mean, in the ACT the union was never involved really in curriculum issues in the same way as it was in other systems. I found that on many occasions I did as much taking as the actual union people did in that period.

Mr Haggar: **So, can we come back again to the ceeping of the ACT workforce, the suspension, and what it was like to see a situation where, you know, over 2,000 teachers were essentially locked out of their schools.**

Dr Price: Yes. Again I think anything I've got on that will be in that article I wrote at the time, but I just remember working around the clock because we – first of all the senior officers in the Schools Authority were non-teachers and we

deliberately kept the negotiations in that senior officer group rather than trying to involve anybody else. And so from that point of view we were working directly with the commonwealth in terms of trying to remedy the situation and the commonwealth was determined – whoever was in New South Wales at the time, it would have been the fellow that was prime minister briefly at the beginning of the '70s, he was the member for Lowe in New South Wales at the time (Billy McMahon).

Anyway, he'd been briefly the prime minister when the commonwealth was still in non-Labor hands and by this time he was very much involved in New South Wales system on it. And I remember we had to try and persuade him of a lot of things.

But yes, the whole system was locked down for about three or four days, I think it was, where there was virtually – well, there were a few schools were technically still open, but there were so few teachers in them that nothing much happened there.

Mr Haggar: **So, in the end the matter was resolved by arbitration, by the Industrial Relations Commission.**

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: **And now I've got the history from that element. But were there concerns within the authority of how the aftermath might have...?**

Dr Price: We were so busy in just keeping the system alive that I don't think we discussed anything much more than that.

Mr Haggar: **Right, so it was day to day.**

Dr Price: It was day to day. I mean, and I remember spending 18 hours one weekend, the weekend that was in the middle of it, 18 hours doing nothing else except work that would have normally been done by teachers further down the hierarchy.

Mr Haggar: **This is in preparation for the arbitration under Justice Cohen?**

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Dr Price: Yes, and things like that. So that we were so much engrossed in just trying to keep things going without involving the local federation in it, that I don't think we did much else.

Mr Haggar: Had there not been an intervention by the Industrial Relations Commission and the dispute had dragged on, had you given thoughts over the years to how that might have wound up?

Dr Price: Not really. We were all so glad to get out of the situation that we didn't – once we got back to normal, whatever normal meant, normal was what we were interested in rather than going back to that situation.

Mr Haggar: Right. And of course, that was under a different chief education officer, that was under Greg Hancock.

Dr Price: Greg Hancock, yes.

Mr Haggar: In terms of his role, he was very young when he got the position, 37.

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: And I can remember formal negotiations with him on a range of issues that I was peripherally involved in as a junior member of the union staff. Would you have described him as a hands-on chief executive?

Dr Price: I think probably yes, except that he wasn't very – I mean, whereas Hedley Beare was in close relationship, on a personal basis, with a lot of the federation people, Greg wasn't. And in fact, it got to the point, I think Greg Hancock probably resigned eventually because his relationship with the federation had deteriorated to such an extent.

Mr Haggar: Why do you think that was the case?

Dr Price: Mainly because he wanted – no, I'm not too sure. But I remember that he was not in good relationship with any of the federation people at the time that he pulled out.

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Mr Haggar: **The commonwealth of course, after the Whitlam years and when Fraser comes in with what could be best described as an austerity program, started to put some serious resource constraints on the system.**

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: **And, you know, in terms of your memory of those days, how did the system try to accommodate the requirements of the commonwealth government?**

Dr Price: Well, who was the fellow from Queensland that eventually became head of the – the Queensland union man that became leader of the opposition in the late '70s, was...?

Mr Haggar: **Are you talking about Bill Hayden?**

Dr Price: Yes. Now, Bill Hayden was the one who tightened up the strings.

Mr Haggar: **And that's '74/'75?**

Dr Price: And it was the budget in '75 that he really cut things back. And the people like Brian Peck had negotiated with the Labor government on the grounds that they would greatly improve the secondary staffing in '74, which they did, and that they were going to do the same for the primary staff in '75. But the budget restrictions of '75 meant that the primary schools never got the same value added that the secondary people did. And it wasn't really until the 1980s that the primary people started to catch up.

I mean, I was involved in bringing in what they call the point system of staffing, in the mid 1980s. And under that system we could say how many points each of the schools got. Now, well the primary schools got 100 points, the high schools got 166 points, and the colleges got 220 points. That was the situation by the mid 1980s, and then gradually we did improve the situation in the primary after that. But the secondary system got all the benefit of the improved staffing...

Mr Haggar: **Additional funding.**

Dr Price: Additional funding that came under the early Whitlam government.

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Mr Haggar: **And there was some benefit too for the colleges as well, the way the formula was conducted.**

Dr Price: Yes. That's when I say they were 120 to 166, was the way it worked out. And that was largely because under the New South Wales system they had had an advantage, but they had an even bigger advantage. And of course, they had people like Mick March who were already acting principals of the colleges that were in there talking all the time, and so they actually did better out of the post Whitlam years than the high schools did. As well as the fact that all the influential people moved to the colleges. I suppose the people that remained important in the federation were the ones that moved to the colleges when they were set up, and Mick would be a classic example.

Mr Haggar: **And Keith Lawler, Peter O'Connor.**

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: **That's an interesting point you're making there. I think it was evident to me when I began to work with the union in the early '80s, there was a substantial level of resentment in the primary sector about the staffing arrangements.**

Dr Price: Well in the late 1980s I tried to improve that situation, starting at the bottom of the primary school system, and people like Bill Donovan and so on, accused me of being one sided, which I probably was because I felt like saying to Bill Donovan you got all the prize, why are you opposing these people getting it?

Mr Haggar: **Historical memory could be very convenient.**

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: **Of course, there were improvements over time to primary and class size benefits etc, but one of the interesting elements through the '80s was – or '70s and '80s – was the differential in salaries between people in primary promotions positions and secondary promotions positions. And that was the cause for a campaign around primary parity.**

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Dr Price: Well a lot of that had come from the fact that the big improvements in 1974 went into senior staffing in the secondary system. And the colleges more or less picked that up.

Mr Haggar: So, they were getting more staffing but again it comes back to salary levels. So, there's more of them but they're being paid more at the same time than their colleagues in the primary sector.

Dr Price: Well the colleges and the high schools were paid the same. But certainly, the colleges were in a better position to bargain at that time because they had all the key people.

Mr Haggar: So just reflecting on that period as well, gender was a significant issue through the '80s as well. And there was a key point when you were holding down a senior director's position where there were no female secondary school principals, very few primary school principals, and very few women holding senior positions, if any, in the office.

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: And there was a cultural change that was quite dramatic within the office and secondary in particular, and primary principalships as well. But can you reflect on any, perhaps, key moments that led to that?

Dr Price: Well first of all it was about the mid '80s that I became chair of the Equal Employment Opportunities Committee. That was a key agitating group to get better position for women. And so, I think the improvement that came in the second half of the 1980s was largely because of that particular body.

Mr Haggar: And there was the appointment, of course, of an EEO officer in Rosemary Richards, who was jointly funded by the union and by the department.

Dr Price: Well there was Rosemary Richards, and I think – I forget the names of the other couple of people, but I remember that while I was on that committee, I think there were three separate people that had that role. It was certainly one factor in improving the situation.

Mr Haggar: I think Shirley Randall was the first senior appointment.

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Dr Price: She was the first senior appointment. She came in in 1984 and stayed until about 1988.

Mr Haggar: And that was as a senior – was it HR or resources position?

Dr Price: Yeah, she was in – well, let me go back and work it through. 1984 Greg Hancock stepped down. Eric Willmot replaced him, and under Eric – well first of all, in '74 David Francis and I, and Ian Seaton, had come on to the central executive. Now I'd been on it before the other two came on, and then about 1987 Eric Willmot decided he'd get rid of a few of the people. He got rid of Ian Seaton and David Francis, about 1986/87 and he brought the fellow, Max Sawotski.

Mr Haggar: Max Sawatzki.

Dr Price: Max Sawatzki, he'd been associated with Max Sawatzki in Queensland where he'd been at the university up there. Phil Sadler and I more or less held our positions and Eric Willmot and Max Sawatzki joined us at that time and Shirley Randall came in at that time too.

Mr Haggar: And subsequent to that there was the appointment of school focused directors, regional directors, there were six. I happened to be on the selection panel for that. But the interesting thing there was the pressure, or if you like, a recognised need to ensure that there was at least some female representation.

Dr Price: Yes, well Ann Murray would have been one of them.

Mr Haggar: Yes, Ann was certainly there, as head of the preschool area she always had been. Cheryl O'Connor was the second one, and then the others mostly came from the ranks of the senior secondary principals.

Dr Price: Yes.

Mr Haggar: That was interesting to see that role there, which was essentially lifting educationally qualified people, but still within the teaching service concept into those senior management positions, although they've become public servants and then they've gone back to the teacher ranks and they've become public servants over time.

- Dr Price: So, I was involved in most of the salary negotiations and so on from about '84, probably until about '88. And the culmination of that, as I said, was this meeting in Sydney where I probably did more for the salary increases than a lot of their own representatives did.
- Mr Haggar: Was that particular negotiation around the establishment of the advanced skills teachers classification?**
- Dr Price: That was part of it, yes.
- Mr Haggar: Yes, that's right. So that was one of the reasons why our salary increases at the top of the scale were held down but the vast majority of teachers at that level achieved the AST classification.**
- Dr Price: Yes, as well as the fact that the colleges got more than their share of advanced teacher positions.
- Mr Haggar: Yes, that was, you know, it was a follow on from the concept of the master teacher which had been tried and hadn't been particularly successful. And of course, the AST was eventually traded off, but we've now got the position of lead teacher.**
- Dr Price: Well put it this way, the master teacher – Greg Hancock wasn't very happy about the master teacher situation. I think even within the federation it was looked upon as the fact that you've got a master teacher position and you were there for life afterwards. You didn't have to necessarily justify that you were a master teacher when you got into the ring.
- Mr Haggar: So, you had a promotions position salary level but with no duty statement?**
- Dr Price: Yes.
- Mr Haggar: I've often wondered whether, had it had a defined duty statement whether it fact it would have survived, given that there were attempts to replace it or replicate it.**
- Dr Price: Well, it was eventually replaced with the advanced teacher concept, and I think there was more effort put in to...

Mr Haggart: **Specific roles.**

Dr Price: A specific role for that. By the time the advanced teachers started to come in, well I'd left the system, and I didn't keep in close contact with the system. I thought 20 years in a system was enough.

Mr Haggart: **One of the interesting elements of that '70s start-up was the enthusiasm for change and for innovation. And it wasn't just simply from leadership, it was from classroom teachers, parents, community members etc. And that was given some further drive from the early years, I think, by the authority with its parent/teacher community mix.**

Dr Price: Yes. That's certainly the case. You had the curriculum was probably the main area that that occurred. See under New South Wales you had school inspectors. We got rid of school inspectors completely from the beginning in the Schools Authority. You had peer assessment replacing the teacher promotion system to a large extent.

Now, in the curriculum, it was from the beginning, the Schools Authority said that the schools themselves were the main drivers of curriculum. When I became the director of curriculum in the early 1980s, Richard Campbell in particular said we can't have a system without a central curriculum. And I was given the job in my first term as director of curriculum, of establishing more control over the curriculum.

I brought out first of all a discussion paper which was called the Green Paper, and then we put another one which we called the White Paper, which came out about 1984. It was the basis of the system when the top positions were changed. So, it always remained a – well, put it this way, the colleges has always had curriculum control because they were given principals, deputy principals to – the whole year off to actually set the curriculum. So, they'd had a curriculum. So, in terms of the things, the early 1980s, the colleges regarded what I was trying to do was really not necessary. But we did get to the stage that when David Francis took over the curriculum from me, he went ahead, and he did establish more of a curriculum than had been there in the period before him.

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Mr Haggar: **When we came to do the rewrite of the system curriculum in 2005/06, the union had a very significant role on the steering committee in terms of the development of the new curriculum frameworks.**

So just getting back to those early years, Kath Blakers, from the parents side, very significant involvement, one name that's occurred from the primary sector, female, I think, deputy principal at the time was Margaret Dempster. Do you remember Margaret's involvement?

Dr Price: Well I remember Margaret but not too much her involvement. Because keep in mind that in the late '70s and early '80s I was really apart from what I'd been in the federation earlier.

Mr Haggar: **Right, okay. Well look Barry, unless there's something specifically you'd like to draw to my attention we might bring the formal part of the discussion to a close.**

Dr Price: I got on reasonably well with Hedley Beare, very well with Brian Peck, but I always regarded Hedley, if there was going to be something definite had to be done, you didn't rely on Hedley, you relied on Brian, in that period. With Greg Hancock I think I probably had more sympathy with Greg Hancock than I had with Hedley Beare, in the sense that if Greg Hancock want's something done, he made certain that it was done. Whereas Hedley often backed off.

Now, Eric Willmot should never have been chief education officer... Because Eric would go into a meeting with one viewpoint, and somebody would say something and the next minute he'd be heading off in a different direction.

Mr Haggar: **Yes, certainly I experienced that.**

And you were there for the year that Max Sawatzki was acting chief?

Dr Price: No, I don't think so. I'm not sure when he was acting chief. But I wasn't very sympathetic to Max Sawatzki either. Max Sawatzki came from Queensland and he was determined that he was going to change the system that was in place when he got here. And so it was almost a matter of change for changes sake under anything in curriculum with Max Sawatzki.

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Mr Haggar: **Alright. Well as I say, I might bring the recorded part of the conversation to a close.**

[End of Transcript]