



Oral Histories: Hon. Greg Crafter AO

Interview held in the House of Assembly Chamber on Wednesday 18 February 2026 at 2.25pm

Emeritus Professor Clem Macintyre, Interviewer

The Hon. Greg Crafter AO, Interviewee

CLEM MACINTYRE: Greg Crafter, thank you for joining us. You were member for Norwood from 1979 to 1993—albeit with a little minor interruption, which we will come to—and then minister through the Bannon and Arnold governments in a range of portfolios, but perhaps most significantly education from 1985 to 1992. Thanks for your time today. I would like to start, if we can, by just going back to your very early life: if you could tell us a bit about where you were born, your family and early education.

GREG CRAFTER: I was born in Mount Barker of long-established South Australian families. My first year at school was at Littlehampton Primary School. Garth Boomer was one of the senior boys at the school, and my brother Tony, who later became a test cricket umpire. They were in the same class and went on to Adelaide High eventually.

At the end of that year we moved. My father was looking after a farm for a really interesting woman, a spinster, who loved horses and had a mixed farm at Blakiston. Dad was looking after all of that for her, so he was really a farmhand. Then he was offered a job to establish a horse stud at a mixed farm between Smithfield and One Tree Hill, before Elizabeth was built. That was in 1951.

Interestingly enough, the farm never eventuated. My dad helped do some minor works on the farm but eventually, of course, it was sold for Elizabeth. In fact, many prominent South Australian families had managed to buy land that was then soon after acquired by the government, and this was one of those properties, I suspect.

My father had worked at WRE (Weapons Research Establishment) during the war; in fact, he drove trucks bringing uranium from Mount Painter and often told stories of Tom Playford, who Robin Millhouse referred to as 'Atomic Tom'. I saw that reference in one of the *Hansards* I was reading leisurely one day in the lobbies. Interestingly, that uranium apparently was uranium used in Hiroshima, so my father could have been driving one of those trucks that was carrying uranium to Port Adelaide.

There were some issues with the accommodation at Mount Painter when he got up there. There were dusty roads and long trips and there were showers and the local Aboriginal community often came and used the showers as well. My father used to lock the door. Someone was knocking on the door and he said, 'Go away, I am having a shower!' and he said, 'It's Tom Playford here.' So it was those beginnings.

I went to Smithfield Primary School and then to Gawler High School. They were small schools. It was a three-teacher primary school. There was a migrant hostel at Smithfield at that time and that added to the population, I guess, greatly. It was pretty basic education that I received. The fifties were tough times. It was post war. I was born in 1944, so towards the end of the war, but it was a pretty hot war at that stage. America had come into the war, the Pacific was endangered, and so on. There was rationing and shortages of all sorts of things that I had grown up with as a child.

My dad began working then in the machine shops at Salisbury. There were thousands of people working there; it was a huge war effort as well. He learnt a trade in his late 40s and stayed there until he retired. My brother had gone to Smithfield Primary School as well, but he went to Adelaide High. In those days you could catch the train down, but when I wanted to go to high school, the school was zoned and even sibling rights weren't accepted. So I went to Gawler High, which I enjoyed, but also there was no school oval, it was a small country school that had grown reasonably rapidly, and a lot of the teachers had needed more training. They were good people; they did their best. I enjoyed attending school but academically it didn't really do much for me.

In 1960, we moved to Adelaide. There were four children in my family and we moved mostly for our education, so that we got at least a basic education. I went to Woodville High School. We lived at Taperoo near the sea, where we had many holidays over the years. That move of my family really helped me enormously. I repeated my year 11. They just said my standard was not up to Woodville High School standard, which was a very strong academic school with 2,000 students, a male staffroom and a female staffroom and wonderful teachers.

Kevin Gilding was my English teacher one year. He later became the director of the Torrens CAE. Later, when I was Minister for Education, he led the review of secondary education and created the first SACE. The examination authority had been moved away from Adelaide University and put into the statute that created the authority.

When Kevin came to talk to me about the review, I was able to repeat class after class to him. Paul Hughes was one who later did a doctorate. He was an outstanding Aboriginal leader and academic in South Australia. There were a lot of people in those classes at Woodville High who were just outstanding.

For the last 15 years or so I have gone to a lunch once a month with a group of former Woodville High students. There are five PhDs in the group and five of us—not all attending the lunches—went into parliament from my year at Woodville High. A number of them were ministers, including Caroline Hogg who became education minister of Victoria whilst I was education minister in South Australia.

At one ministers' meeting in Adelaide I said to Caroline, 'Come down to our old school.' We went to our classrooms. I don't think they had been painted since we left. With the little authority I had over capital works in the system, I managed to get some of the school painted I think. That was an achievement.

CLEM MACINTYRE: It sounds like a very impressive cohort of students you were with. They were probably important in the development of some of your awareness and so on.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. I left school after my Leaving year and I briefly worked at the Harbors Board at Port Adelaide.

CLEM MACINTYRE: We will come to that in a moment. Let me just take a bit longer with your childhood. In your family, you said were one of four children?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Was it a close family?

GREG CRAFTER: It was. When you live in the country, I think you are close. We were out of the township, so I had to ride my bike into town and catch the train to school.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Around the dinner table, did you talk about issues, public life?

GREG CRAFTER: Sport was a big issue in our family. I've got four cousins who were professional golfers and my brother was an outstanding sportsman too. I was the black sheep in the family. I went into politics. We had lots of discussions about all sorts of things. Fortunately for my parents, they became very close friends of the headmaster of the primary school and his wife, Pat and Mary O'Brien. They used to play cards a couple nights a week, canasta, listen to the test matches or whatever was going on. They were an influence I think on my parents as well. That was a great friendship. When both of the husbands had retired, they went on a tour for six months around the world, a *Women's Weekly* sort of tour. It was a great new experience for them.

CLEM MACINTYRE: With those close community connections and so on, did your parents talk much about politics with you as children?

GREG CRAFTER: Living in rural South Australia at that time, the influences were very conservative, so my parents were probably apolitical if anything.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Do you know how they voted?

GREG CRAFTER: They would have voted conservative, I am sure, but they changed.

CLEM MACINTYRE: How much was religion a factor in your childhood?

GREG CRAFTER: My mother was the Catholic in the family. It's an interesting story. My paternal grandfather, Ernest Richard Crafter, was the accountant for John Darling, the wheat

merchant. He was a wealthy man. They lived in Lockleys originally, but he bought Goyder's property in Mylor, Warrakilla. It was a very handsome property that went down to the Onkaparinga River. There were four boys and four girls in my father's family, and a number went to St Peter's College, Prince Alfred College, Saints girls and so on, but my father didn't. He worked on the farm. He didn't move on beyond primary education, nor did my mother.

When my father married my mother, who was Catholic, in the will there was a pencil line through my father's name, so he was out of favour. I had a very good relationship with my grandfather. He left me some books when he died in his 90s. A very interesting man actually. He was in the temperance movement and so on in that period. Sadly, that house got burned twice in bushfires but it has been beautifully restored and it is a handsome property actually. It is part of the legacy of our family.

CLEM MACINTYRE: You have talked about your time at primary and secondary school but at what point in your life did politics become something you were conscious of and thinking about? What, for example, was your earliest political memory?

GREG CRAFTER: At primary school, when we would have an assembly, you would recite the Oath of Allegiance and sing *God Save the Queen* and so on. The local MP, Jack Clark, who had been a headmaster in those northern suburbs, came to visit the school. He only came once I think in the period I was there but I was very interested in what he actually did and made some inquiries, I remember, and asked my parents about it. It always fascinated that there were these people who went off to parliament. I had never been to parliament of course and really never studied it at school. I was tutored in English history mostly and not modern Australian history at all.

CLEM MACINTYRE: What about the big national debates? I am thinking at that time of course of Menzies being elected again in 1949 and the nationalisation of the banks case before that, the anti-communist referendum and so on. Were those things that impinged on your consciousness?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, they were. It is interesting. My mother had two sisters. They were all from Hahndorf. My father was from Mylor, my mother from Hahndorf. Both those sisters married farmers, one from the Peterson family at Glen Vimy Orchards and the other from the Paech family where four brothers ran a mixed farm over at Balhannah.

Christmas dinners were fantastic because my maternal grandfather, Leonard Patrick O'Keefe, who changed his name to Keefe during the Depression so he could get a job, was an SP bookie, worked in hotels, was a travelling salesman and did all those interesting jobs and was fascinated by football and cricket and so on, but at Christmas dinner there were often debates about superphosphate bounties and the things that would rile the farmers up of course. So there would be really interesting discussions, and a few drinks and so on but pretty friendly stuff really. But there were sharp divisions of course in the family. I think I would say that I inherited my interest in the Labor Party and that side of politics from my grandfather and my grandmother.

CLEM MACINTYRE: On your mum's side?

GREG CRAFTER: On my mum's side, yes. That was the Catholic side of the family. Growing up we attended mass once a month in the town hall in Smithfield and confessions were behind the piano. Catholic social teaching was quite an issue. *Rerum Novarum* the *Great Encyclical* and encyclicals that followed were often talked about and preached about in masses and so on and I had a sense of that.

When we moved to Taperoo, I joined an organisation called the YCW (Young Christian Workers). It had come out of the late 1800s, early 1900s, in Belgium, Cardinal Josph Cardijn was the founder. It was a very working class, blue-collar youth movement. It took on in Australia and particularly here in the Adelaide Archdiocese. I joined and became involved. In 1965, they asked me if I would work full-time as a youth worker and I worked in Adelaide archdiocese, Port Pirie diocese and part of Wilcannia-Forbes around Broken Hill for three years.

CLEM MACINTYRE: We have skipped a few years. I just want to ask one last question about that period of the 1950s, coming from a Catholic family and Labor sympathies beginning to emerge. Was the DLP split a factor in your family's life?

GREG CRAFTER: It certainly was.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Tell us a bit about that.

GREG CRAFTER: I think there was lots of pressure on Catholic families. It depended on who the priest was. Many of the priests were supporters of the National Civic Council and the DLP. There was a big fear of communism and the five minutes to midnight, mantra espoused was on the television and there were lots of publications. The National Catholic Rural Movement was very strong.

There was coming out of the Communist Party dissolution legislation and the aftermath to nationalise the banks and so on. There was a fear in rural Australia particularly that this was pretty dire stuff: that period of Doc Evatt and so on, Petrov and all of those issues. Bob Menzies was able to engineer some of that as well; it kept him in power, actually, during that time.

In South Australia the reality was that the DLP was never as strong as it was in Melbourne and Sydney. Sydney seemed to extricate itself but Victoria didn't. But in South Australia I think there's no doubt that once the gerrymander was removed here—and the Walsh and then Dunstan governments saw very strong Catholic representation in the Labor Party, those men who had stayed with the Labor Party during the years of the "split".

CLEM MACINTYRE: So the divisions in South Australia were not as strong in the fifties?

GREG CRAFTER: No.

CLEM MACINTYRE: It's probably fair to say there was a less prominent Catholic presence in South Australia than the Eastern States.

GREG CRAFTER: I think it was the influence of Archbishop Beovich, who had been a Mannix protégé and was sent to Adelaide I think to discipline the church. He was an intellectual and Croatian (not Irish). He was a good man and he expelled the NCC workers within the church. The Vatican had sent out a message telling the Australian bishops to lift their game—like they have just done for the American bishops. Beovich was, I think, responsible for getting the church out of that sort of base-level politics, which was a good thing.

I often tell people a story about when I was in the Thebarton parish when I was working with Don Dunstan. Archbishop Beovich was doing a confirmation, I think it might have been, and the reason he was at the church. His driver, Keith Cohen, came around to see me and said, 'The archbishop wants to see you in the vestry after mass.' So I went around and he was very formal. I was in my 20s and he said, 'Mr Crafter, how are you going?' I said, 'Pretty good, Your Grace.' 'Tell me about your work now,' and I said I was working in the Premier's office. 'What do you do?' I told him, and he said, 'I'm watching your career with interest. Off you go now.' So I got the message. It was something that I guess you look back on in your career and you knew that what you were doing was valued however it led along the track.

I should go back, though, to leaving school after my year 11. I worked briefly in the Harbors Board delivering shipping notices and wrapping the manifests off ships. It was very interesting, actually. There were 94 ketches registered in Port Adelaide at that time; there are none now, of course. There was still a shipping trade around the coast: Wirrina, Waratea, Minnipa and so on, these vessels. Some of them were holiday-type vessels, honeymoons and so on, around the coast, but a lot of coastal trade. I was there for only a few months as I wanted to go to work at the courthouse. We had a family friend who worked there who talked to me about opportunities coming up.

CLEM MACINTYRE: This was in Port Adelaide?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, Port Adelaide.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Were you living in Port Adelaide then?

GREG CRAFTER: Living at Taperoo. I started in the courthouse. On the first day I arrived I was stamping unsatisfied judgement summonses for people who couldn't pay their outpatient fees at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital. They were £2—this was pounds, shillings and pence days—or £3 or whatever it was, and often that would result in 10-day orders for non-appearance and non-response to that summons and they would go to jail. So on Monday mornings there were hundreds of people appearing in that debtors' court and it was still Dickensian, really.

The other side of it was people who were charged with drunkenness, and there were people with 250 convictions or 300 convictions. Magistrates would often hear them and they would say, 'Look, you need to smarten up, get a good feed and some nice clothes, so we're sending you off to jail for a week or two weeks.'

Saturday mornings I used to go in and take depositions—I had learned shorthand and typing—and sit there with the magistrates. One morning was the morning that John F. Kennedy was assassinated and the magistrate sat up and made a pronouncement from the bench and talked about this event and its impact. It was the court in the community, which you don't hear about these days.

But there I really got interested in the law and I remember Brian Crowe—no, George Zeizing; Brian Crowe was a magistrate there. George Zeizing's name was commonly seen in barber shops because he was the Chair of the hairdressers' board, so he would sign the certificates to say that you are a qualified hairdresser—it's all gone now. He said to me one day—I was filling up his ink well with a big bottle of ink, as he still had a pen and nib—'Boy, this is how I started!' I acted for Chris Sumner as Attorney for 11 years—I did his work in the lower house. George by then had died and I would have liked to have caught up with him and said, 'This is where I've ended up!'

CLEM MACINTYRE: What were your professional ambitions at that time?

GREG CRAFTER: I would have been clerk of court, I guess—it was a Public Service position. The very first week that I became a public servant I went up to the Public Service Commissioner's office for a training session for new employees—there were probably 30 or 40 of us in a room, and a guy called Gard—I'm trying to think of his Christian name; his brother Alf Gard was a race commentator and a very good singer. But this guy, Gard, was the comptroller of prisons, as head of the prisons department, and he explained to us what his job was. 'The prisons,' he said, 'they're the arsehole of the Public Service.' I never forgot it. I thought, 'My God, this is our society.'

And so working in the courthouse I think in a sense began to radicalise me that there had to be better ways than the injustice of the court. The very first law lecture that I ever went to, Ivan Shearer was my lecturer and later became a very close friend. Ivan said, 'Look, the law and justice is like the Waldorf Astoria Hotel: it's open to everyone as long as you can afford to pay.' That was the law and that is the law, unfortunately. That's the civil law. In fact, most people who appear in the criminal courts are poor, unwell or disadvantaged in some way, most of them Indigenous, unfortunately. So, yes, that helped to radicalise me. My involvement in the YCW, a young worker movement—

CLEM MACINTYRE: This was voluntary work on top of the work you were doing in the courts?

GREG CRAFTER: It was, yes. I joined the executive and you would be out four or five nights a week as we had 39 branches, I think, in the parishes, and we had a training house at Stirling. So there was deep formation of leadership, of public speaking and charring meetings, but also of understanding Catholic social teaching and, of course, one's own spirituality. I was quite fortunate and I went off to national leadership programs, and so on, mostly in Melbourne.

Also, I was awarded a scholarship by the National Fitness Council in 1966 when I started working full-time. The National Youth Council of Australia, which I was involved in as a representative of youth organisations in South Australia, had chosen three people to attend the World Assembly of Youth Meeting in Tokyo. I was 21. So I spent three months travelling and meeting youth organisations in the Asian region, which was a wonderful experience for me. It sort of opened up my eyes in another dimension.

CLEM MACINTYRE: An important influence. I did read one interview, I think quoting you, saying that you considered entering the priesthood before settling upon politics.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Was that a serious—

GREG CRAFTER: I certainly thought about it. I had discussions with the Archbishop who often talked to me about it. I guess I left my options open. I spent a lot of time in those five years that I was a full time youth worker staying at presbyteries and meeting priests. It's a lonely, difficult life. You look back now, particularly as a result of the royal commission, it is even more difficult to put the collar on or to be saying to someone, 'I'm a Catholic priest.' It is very difficult indeed.

I also worked in North Queensland, when Bishop Faulkner was made Bishop of Townsville, he asked if I would go up there, and I spent two years working in North Queensland in Rockhampton and Townsville dioceses, and that's what really radicalised me, I think. I just saw acute disadvantage—it was the Bjelke-Petersen period—particularly in the Indigenous communities that

were very much put into Palm Island and Woorabinda and these camps in Queensland—segregated; it was an apartheid.

CLEM MACINTYRE: This is sort of late 1960s, is it?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, that's right. The education system was poor. Young people out in remote communities didn't get the opportunities, education or training. It was very difficult to go to tertiary education.

I met my wife. She was teaching in a town called Home Hill, which is south of Townsville. It was 700 miles from home, her first teaching appointment. To go home on holidays in a bus—(it was out of the question to fly in an aeroplane in those days—)she would take up most of her holidays going home and back again. We formed a friendship, and she eventually decided she would come to Adelaide.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So what brought you back to Adelaide?

GREG CRAFTER: I had finished my time. I was 25. I wasn't able to get married or really have a career, so there had been five years without an income, really. It was just a stipend, enough to live on, basically.

I had matriculated by going to Muirden Business College, and then I did an economics subject from UQ by correspondence in those days. I passed, so I thought, 'Well, I can tackle uni studies.' I came back to Adelaide, talked to various people and decided I would try to do law. I didn't get accepted for law. I got accepted for Arts at Flinders. I said, 'Fine, I will do Arts and then I will do law.' My family were not impressed by that.

Anyway, I met Dean Jaensch, Neal Blewett and Tony Stimson, these great teachers at Flinders. I was there for, I think, four or five weeks and really enjoying it. My mother got a phone call from Adelaide Law School saying someone had dropped out and there was a place there if I wanted it. So I charged in and got a lecture from the secretary of the law faculty that I was a mature age student, I had to learn how to study, 'People have confidence in you, but you have to work hard,' and all that. So I got into law.

I worked as a barman in the Osborne Hotel, which was a pretty rough hotel. Workers would come in at lunchtime from the sulphuric acid works—ICI and these places. They would put their coins on the bar, and they would be corroded. This is the sort of work these guys did. I also had a holiday job in the hospitals department that uni students could get in those days, working out payslips for doctors, nurses and so on.

A phone rang on my desk and they said, 'It's the Premier's department here. Would you please come tomorrow to be interviewed for a position in the Premier's department?' I didn't really have time to think. They said, 'Eleventh floor of the State Administration Building, 10 o'clock,' so I turned up, bemused by that. I was interviewed by a guy called Doug Claessen, who had been secretary to Don when he was in Opposition and worked in the Premier's department, and he was wanting to move on. He said, 'Look, this is what you will be doing for Don. You will be contacting his family, interviewing people who come in to see Don and he can't see them all. The people he meets you will need to follow up, etc.'

CLEM MACINTYRE: It is a fascinating opportunity to go straight into the Premier's office with Don Dunstan. How did they settle upon you as a person to bring in to this role?

GREG CRAFTER: I have never found out, and you never do, probably. But I had been quite active as a youth worker on the National Youth Council and the various bodies. When Don had been welfare minister in the Walsh government, I was appointed to a committee that was building youth centres—St Clair youth centre and so on. I guess in that way I had come to some sort of prominence, but I have never really found out who doxed me in. Anyway, this job unfolded. It was called an inquiry officer position.

CLEM MACINTYRE: And you were doing part-time study at the same time?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. I said to this guy, 'My name's Greg Crafter. I'm a law student. I haven't applied for a job. I think you might have the wrong person.' He said, 'You don't apply for these jobs.' He explained to me that it was a political position and that you were there—

CLEM MACINTYRE: You were not a member of the Labor Party?

GREG CRAFTER: No, I was not. When I had worked for the church it was frowned upon to be involved in party politics, particularly in North Queensland, which was highly political, and in the Catholic church—Santa Maria high school and so on. I was warned by people to be very careful of getting involved in politics in north Queensland. The government probably would have thrown us out, but they gave us a rail pass that we could use. There was a girls' full-time worker and I was the boys' full-time worker.

After he said, 'No, you don't apply for these jobs.' He said, 'John White, who is head of the Premier's department, will now see you.' So I went in and there was John White, who was later Agent-General and secretary to the Governor. He was a lovely man, and we had a talk about what I had been doing and my family and so on. He said, 'Don is waiting to see you now.' So I went in and Don was sitting with his sunglasses on at the desk and said—referred "sport" in those days—'It would be good to have you on the team.' This was in February of 1971. He was elected back into office in the 1970 Government following the defeat of the Steele Hall government.

He said, 'I'm just trying to get set up. We have a huge legislative agenda ahead of us and I would like you to be involved in doing some research but look after me and all the people who want to see me and so on, helping me out and helping people who are seeking accommodation who with the Housing Trust or jobs and all those issues that people are writing to me for help.' He would go to the Central Market and do some shopping and for a week I would have people coming in with a note saying to see Greg, so I did a lot of those tasks.

I had a lovely chat to Don and went out to the anteroom where John White had his office, which was a huge office, and I said to him, 'Mr White, if I'm going to take this job on, I would like to have a bit of a break. I have been working in the hotel and the hospitals' department.' He said, 'No, Don wants you to start on Monday, if you can.' This was a Thursday or a Friday. I said, 'Look, I still want to keep up my study.' He said, 'Yes, that's okay. I have spoken to Don about it and the government will pay your university fees.' I thought I was made because university fees were pretty steep in those days. I said, 'How do you know that I can actually do this work? I'm really quite interested in doing it, but I want to know I'm the right person.' He said, 'Look, we will review it after a year and talk about it.'

I went home and said to my parents, 'I have a job'. My father said, 'Thank god, you have a job.' He said, 'What is it?' I told him and he said, 'Is it a Public Service job?' I said, 'No, it's a political job.' He said, 'Anything would be better than working for the church.' He was very sympathetic, but he did not see much of a future in it for me and they were probably worried I was going to become a priest anyway.

He said to me, 'What's your salary?' I said, 'I forgot to ask.' He said, 'Obviously you have been working for the church too long.' On the Monday, I started and they said, 'This office is your office,' and it was the office of Sir Alwyn Barker, who was the head of the Economic Development Board or whatever under the Steele Hall government. So, here am I, a law student, sitting in this big office—

CLEM MACINTYRE: In your mid-20s.

GREG CRAFTER: —in the Premier's suite. I sat there and thought about it. I saw John White during the day and said, 'Mr White, would you be able to tell me what my salary is?' He said, 'I'm really sorry. I should have had this information for you. It's a new position that Don has created and we will get the Public Service Board to declare a salary.' He came back in the afternoon and said, 'Greg, your salary will be \$7,800 a year and there will be \$2,000 for overtime.' I went home and I said to my father, 'This is my salary.' He said, 'That's more than I have ever earned in my life.'

CLEM MACINTYRE: And you were getting university fees paid as well.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, plus an incredible formative experience.

CLEM MACINTYRE: An extraordinary opportunity for somebody.

GREG CRAFTER: I got involved in emergency housing and trying to get conscientious objectors out of prison. Don was into all of these things in one way or another. It was amazing. So I just did two subjects a year then for the next seven years. After cabinet, after a couple of years, Len King came to me and he said, 'Look, I want you to come and work with me.' He said, 'I'd like you to be my'—

CLEM MACINTYRE: He was Attorney-General at the time?

GREG CRAFTER: He was Attorney-General, and you can imagine what the seventies were like for the Attorney-General. He had a host of portfolios, and Don really relied upon him for the legislative agenda. It was a law reform agenda, consumer, family law—it was massive, huge statutes and so on. He said, 'Look, I want you to help me do my press work.' He didn't have a press secretary. He shared Tony Baker with Don. He said, 'I would like you to do my press work. I want you to do some research for me. I want you to help me in the electorate, you know, contact with my family,' and he said, 'We'll help you with your law. You can use Crown Law library and so on.' He said, 'I've spoken to Don and Don said you can't go. You better go and see Don.'

So I went and had a talk to Don and eventually Don said, 'Look, I think the best thing you can do is get your law degree. That's the most important thing. Find someone who can do your job for me,' and I did. So I went with Len King, which was a fantastic experience for me. He was a very devout Catholic. He had studied theology when he was doing his law course. He was a clerk in Shell Company before the war. He went off to war and on return received a war scholarship, postwar reconstruction scheme scholarship, as did many of the judges and senior lawyers, who became great lawyers. He was certainly in that category. He should have gone to the High Court. He got trumped. He was a great Chief Justice as well. So I had two mentors that were top shelf really. Then, when I ran in Coles—

CLEM MACINTYRE: Sorry, just before we get there: when did you join the Labor Party?

GREG CRAFTER: What happened is that the first week I was working in the Premier's office I had a phone call from David Combe, the secretary of the Labor Party—

CLEM MACINTYRE: Who was then state secretary or national?

GREG CRAFTER: State secretary. I think he might have been assistant secretary to Mick Young and in Trades Hall, which was in Grote Street in those days. The building is still there. There was a side door, I went in, and he said, 'Look, we'll have a cup of coffee.' He introduced himself and he said, 'Now, have you thought about joining the party?' I said, 'Look, I would like to join the party.' I told him that I hadn't been able to be involved in politics. That was 1971, so I have now been a member for a long time. I got involved in the party, and my wife too, she was very active.

I had a period for seven years when I was chairing the National Catholic Education Commission where the bishops asked me not to get involved in politics because it was too tricky, so I didn't, but my wife kept up activities. So, no, that was an interesting conversation I had with David. David and I became very good friends and he was involved in the creation of the Don Dunstan Foundation.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Were you thinking, from those very early days when working for the Premier as a young 25 year old, of a political career?

GREG CRAFTER: Not at all. No, a legal career. My courthouse days came back to me, I guess. I'm not quite sure what sort of lawyer I wanted to be. I remember I went overseas with Len King and his wife, Sheila, at one stage. We were in Paris and on a Saturday Len said to me, 'Look, do you know how to work the Metro in Paris?' I said, 'I think I do.' He said, 'Look, let's get on the train. We'll go out to the furthest place and there will be a village there, in the outer suburbs, and we'll wander round and we'll see some life in Paris.'

There was a place called Maria de Montrevil outside of the walls and we went up. We were near a church and there was a wedding in the church, a Catholic church, and he said, 'Look, come and sit here and just watch this.' He said, 'When this wedding is over we'll just walk along the street because they will go to the Town Hall and then actually get married at the Town Hall because the church is not accepted as the official place where you get married.' We went off to a pub for lunch and he said to me, 'What sort of law are you going to practice?' I said, 'I want to act for disadvantaged people'—I was very idealistic—and try and do some advocacy for people who are missing out in the community.'

He said, 'Greg, your duty is to act for every person that comes in the door'—the old style of engagement, and, you know, there was very little specialisation of the law in those days. In fact, I think over 90 per cent of lawyers practised in the CBD of Adelaide. In those days there was hardly any country or suburban lawyers. So he was one of those generalist lawyers, and we would have lots of those sorts of conversations over the years, and I travelled with him a lot. So, yes, that was a fantastic period.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So talk me through the process of working with the Attorney-General, you've worked for the Premier, you've got ambitions to be a lawyer, but by 1977 you're a Labor Party candidate for a marginal seat.

GREG CRAFTER: Marginal seat, yes. It was Len King's seat. So I knew the seat pretty well. I had been involved in doorknocking since Norm Foster's time, in Sturt, and knew the area.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Were you living over on that side?

GREG CRAFTER: No, I was living in Mile End actually.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Mile End, right. And Coles is north-east a bit of the centre of the city.

GREG CRAFTER: That's right. I was living in the house originally where my grandmother was born, my paternal grandmother, in Kintore Street, Thebarton. So, when I was preselected I ran in that campaign still living in Mile End. I don't know where Jennifer lived, but she was probably living in the electorate.

CLEM MACINTYRE: And in the process of preselection was it in a sense an anointing of you as the Labor candidate, or was there a competition?

GREG CRAFTER: There was no contest.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Right; you were the chosen one.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. Then Norwood, of course, came up when Don took ill.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Yes. So Coles election is 1977, Labor win, but you—

GREG CRAFTER: No, Jennifer Cashmore ran—

CLEM MACINTYRE: Sorry, Labor win the election.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, they did.

CLEM MACINTYRE: But you don't win that seat. So back working for—

GREG CRAFTER: Through the Attorney's office, Peter Duncan—

CLEM MACINTYRE: And Peter Duncan became A-G after Len King.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. There was Don Bamford, Don Dunstan, and then Peter Duncan I think during the interregnum. So, I said, 'Look, that's it for politics, I'll practise law.' My wife Rae was very happy about that. I had graduated, and I had done my articles for three years whilst I studied, through the Crown Solicitor's Office. I then practised in the corporate affairs commission. Don Dunstan suddenly took ill in 1979, and there was a by-election called. I ran for preselection. There were five of us running. Mick Young was doing the numbers in those days. It wasn't a preselection assembly conference; there was just the state executive requires to make the preselection.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Was that par for the course, in a sense, that the state executive would choose a candidate for a by-election rather than the more formal process?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, because there's a very short turnaround.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Yes, so it's an unusual path, but reflecting the circumstances of a by-election.

GREG CRAFTER: So, Mick Young was managing all of that. There were some really great people who were running against me: Ian Bidmeade, who was just outstanding—professional tennis player, deputy head of Tennis Australia at one stage. He became a good friend, and his wife, Gayle, too.

There was Mark Pickhaver, who was a law barrister. Unfortunately he died through a bee sting; he was an amateur apiarist. There was Brian Fitzgerald, whose wife Marge was the Mayor of St Peters and had been a long-time activist in the Labor Party. John Cummins who later ran against me, and then he joined the Australia Party then the Liberal Party and then won the seat of Norwood from me.

CLEM MACINTYRE: He eventually won in 1993.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, when the bank collapsed. He had just one term.

CLEM MACINTYRE: But he was also a candidate for Labor in the by-election that you eventually got selected for.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. I am just trying to remember: I think there were five of us, and I won that. I remember that then there was a big meeting of the party in the St Peters town hall, and there were a lot of people very upset about Don retiring and his illness, and concerned for his health but also the circumstances surrounding that, and the debates around nuclear energy and so on. They were quite intense emotions in the party at that time, which Chris Sumner refers to in some detail.

CLEM MACINTYRE: You must have been conscious that you were stepping into giant shoes as the member for Norwood.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, it was very interesting. The next morning, after that meeting when I had been announced as the candidate, I got a phone call, at about 8.30 in the morning, from Chris Schacht, who was working in the party office. Chris said, 'Greg, by 9 o'clock I want you out, doorknocking in St Peters.' He said, 'Start in St Peters Street and just work your way down. You've got to be doing this every day for the next few weeks.'

So I went down to St Peters Street, and at about the fifth house a very elderly lady answered the door. I introduced myself, and she said, 'I've read about you in the paper. I would like to say hello and meet you.' She called out to her husband and he came out. We were talking at the door and she said, 'Would you like to come in and have a cup of tea?' I said, 'I would love to have a cup of tea, but I've really got a lot of people I need to visit. Maybe on another occasion.' She looked at me and she said, 'Don always came in and had a cup of tea.' So I went and had a cup of tea, I can tell you. It was a good lesson to learn, actually.

Taking over from Don Dunstan was not—at the time, I guess, I didn't quite realise just what it really did mean. But what I had learned over those nearly 15 years as an M.P., is just how effective he was as a local member—the stories. What I was able to do was connect those stories of an individual families about a consumer contract, or buying a car or a refrigerator or a property where there had been a conflict between a conveyancer and a real estate agent, or a contract that wasn't clear and you couldn't read it or whatever—the language and so on—and fencing disputes or whatever it was. There was legislation in the seventies that fixed all these things up, whether it was education, health or the arts community. It was all passed in that electorate; all those stories were there.

I actually inherited Don's electorate office and his electorate constituent files, but I destroyed them all because I didn't want to have responsibility for individual stories. Mind you, if I had kept them I am sure they would have been a treasure trove.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Yes, and it's interesting that I have never heard anyone describe the program of reform that the Dunstan government undertook, in the sense of a reflection of the microcosm of the seat of Norwood. You would think that there is enough evidence to sort of point that that is where a lot of the inspiration was coming from.

GREG CRAFTER: You go to Parliament House in Canberra, the new Parliament House, and see the inlays of leaves. I learnt the story that they actually came from the Botanic Gardens. An artist who lived in Hackney and walked around the Botanic Gardens, designed those inlays and they ended up in Parliament House in Canberra—because Don promoted this work. Myer Solomon did the carpets for Parliament House. There were people who were in Don's coterie, and particularly in the Jewish community in South Australia—Gretel Dunstan was Jewish. Somehow or other, Don managed to allocate time in his busy life to always be around the electorate. He would go to the football and his staff would stop him taking a book to the football. He was often looking at the wrong end, and they would say, 'Don, the football is up this end.'

CLEM MACINTYRE: So the by-election has been held and you have won that seat; you are suddenly a member of this parliament. You had obviously been to the building many times over the course of your professional life. What was it like walking in the first time as an elected member?

GREG CRAFTER: It was different of course. The sense of responsibility dawns on you.

CLEM MACINTYRE: A seat up in the backbenches somewhere?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, it was. Because I came in on a by-election, no committees were vacant, and I was left off the usual lists. It was good in a way because I had to learn the hard way. Being in government—Des Corcoran was the Premier—and being in caucus with such characters

as Hugh Hudson and Normie Foster, there were some colourful times in the caucus, but there was a lot of camaraderie and support for me too.

CLEM MACINTYRE: As a brand-new member, you obviously had a pretty good working knowledge of how the parliament worked but how much of it was a bit of a mystery in terms of process and protocol and the unwritten rules of the place? Of course, you were coming in from a by-election so it's not like there is a group of you all learning at once. Who did you turn to to get a feel for surviving as an MP in the chamber?

GREG CRAFTER: I think there were some characters. You share an office with people and so on. George Whitten had been the party secretary. He was a comrade.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Did you have sort of a mentor on your side who took you in hand and showed you the ropes?

GREG CRAFTER: Not as such. Don Hopgood was always very supportive, and Chris Sumner in the upper house was as well. Des Corcoran was certainly a mentor to me, full of common sense and the reality of it all. I generally had many friends and I had friends across the chamber as well, people who I could chat to when I was working in offices and someone would come and want help. Graham Gunn was one of those. You get to know these people really quite well—Ian Gilfillan in the upper house and so on.

CLEM MACINTYRE: You felt at home reasonably quickly?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. Bruce Eastick had been our vet when we lived in the country. I think, if you are interested in the law, and as a barrister, you learn the personality of judges and of other lawyers and it's all very important, and it's like that in parliament. You have to understand your colleagues. They say your enemies sit right behind you and I think that's probably quite true, and so you have always got to be mindful of that, but also with people you are dealing with, you have to get on. You have to get legislation through. The Labor Party has never had a majority in the upper house. It's unlikely that they will. Maybe the next election might help a little but the reality is that you have to work through the Council.

If you look at that Dunstan government creating the State Government Insurance Commission, the pipelines authority, the merger of the banks and so on, they were threatening the vested interests in this state and yet they managed to get the legislation through. Certainly, with the one vote, one value constitutional reform, there were huge issues with forcing that through. So I learned how important that was. I was often in meetings of managers of two houses when there was a conflict on settling legislation. That's where you need to work your way through those battles.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Do you remember your first speech?

GREG CRAFTER: My maiden speech?

CLEM MACINTYRE: Yes.

GREG CRAFTER: I do, yes.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Did you have family and friends in the chamber to watch it?

GREG CRAFTER: I did.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Were you nervous?

GREG CRAFTER: I was a little, I think, yes. When you realise that here you are.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Yes, suddenly you are a member.

GREG CRAFTER: I talked about judges. I worked for a long time in the Attorney's office and had seen how important judicial office was and saw that some treated it more seriously than others, I guess. Some had real talents that they didn't quite use. The role is so important. So I learnt a bit about the inside of government as well.

CLEM MACINTYRE: What about the process of becoming a local MP? You talked particularly about your predecessor Don Dunstan's assiduous work in looking after the electorate of Norwood. You took on office. Was it the same staff? Did you keep his staff or did you import your own?

GREG CRAFTER: I did keep the same staff.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So there was a continuity there.

GREG CRAFTER: Which was great. Romey Stubbs, who was Don's electorate secretary and her husband, John Stubbs, who was Hugh Hudson's press secretary, had come from interstate. I got to know the family. In fact, I spoke at Romey's funeral, which was up in Byron Bay eight or nine years ago. Kerry O'Brien was the MC at the funeral. There was a writers' enclave there.

John had written a book called *The Hidden People: Poverty in Australia*. He was a journalist with the *Sydney Morning Herald*. He wrote a series of articles that led up to the Henderson Royal Commission into Poverty. When I was working for the YCW, I had read that book and it really influenced me about understanding the depth of poverty and what the signs of poverty were—children going to school with plastic sandals, which sort of stuck in my mind I guess. It was an important friendship for me.

CLEM MACINTYRE: And you were well looked after in terms of finding your feet as a new member?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. That period from March 1979 until September was an interesting period in politics because Des Corcoran became very ill as Premier. He had very bad arthritis and he really suffered badly when he left parliament after being defeated in that election. He really just wasn't able to do the job in the end unfortunately. It was very sad.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So you come in in March of 1979 and there is an election in September, and that goes against you.

GREG CRAFTER: It does.

CLEM MACINTYRE: You lose that seat, but soon after there is a by-election. Tell us about the story there.

GREG CRAFTER: What happened is the day of the election was pretty tumultuous. We knew there had been a bus strike and the buses were stopping, letting off people halfway between bus stops. There were disabled kids being abandoned. It was just horrific. Geoff Virgo was transport minister. It was also an unorganised campaign. It wasn't like the well thought-out campaigns that Don had been involved in when polling was done. Des hadn't done the polling. It was an ad hoc campaign to a large extent.

CLEM MACINTYRE: And called a bit earlier than was necessary.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, he said he needed to get a mandate. I can understand that, but there are ways of getting a mandate. I had all my friends in polling booths because I knew there was going to be protest voting. It rained as well. Many more people voted on the polling day than they do these days. The polls closed 8 o'clock at night. I had all my law school friends come and they took notes of what was happening, and that helped us because we took out a Court of Disputed Returns plea. It was heard before Dame Roma Mitchell, who was just an outstanding judge. Every state changed their electoral law as a result of that decision.

CLEM MACINTYRE: What was the basis?

GREG CRAFTER: There were I think 19 grounds altogether, one of which was an advertisement by my opponent Frank Webster. I ran against Frank three times. I became quite good friends with him and his family after all of that. What happened was that his mother had been born in Italy but didn't write fluent Italian for this purpose. She had gone to see the local Catholic priest in St Peters and asked him to translate the advertisement. He is actually Egyptian but had some Italian. They had a photo of Frank and some words about the election, but it was signed 'il vostre deputato', 'I am your deputy' Your M.P.

In fact, I was the sitting member, and we said that was passing off and a misrepresentation. If you could prove that then you could get a fresh election alone. What happened was that Elliott Johnston QC was acting for the Labor Party and there was quite a reluctance to take on the Court of Disputed Returns. It's expensive. You hardly ever win. Rod Cameron came over and did polling for the party. I got called in and they said, 'Sorry, Greg. You are not polling well. You are seen as a sore loser. No-one wants to go and vote again. What on earth is all this about?' I said to Rod, 'I don't want to hear that. I want to hear how I can win.'

CLEM MACINTYRE: Rod Cameron said that?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. I said to Rod, 'Tell me how to win.' He said, 'You have to tell the electorate why you are having another election.' And it is because the Liberal Party did X, Y and Z, and because the Electoral Commission did not conduct the election in accordance with the law. There were about 600 votes which were ticks or crosses for me that were ruled out because they were people who didn't have English or they had been told by someone to vote tick or cross and so on. But then the other grounds were electoral grounds. People were screwing up their ballot paper, putting it in the bin and so the electoral staff were getting the ballot papers out of the bin because they had to account for every ballot paper. They would put them in the ballot box, and so clearly—

CLEM MACINTYRE: And you had the evidence of that?

GREG CRAFTER: There were these people who were in the polling booths taking the notes; it was contemporaneous, they had their notes. They could explain it, and actually some of the polling staff gave evidence as well about what they were doing.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So you were pretty confident you would win that appeal?

GREG CRAFTER: Well, you never know.

CLEM MACINTYRE: No.

GREG CRAFTER: They are very hard to win.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Yes.

GREG CRAFTER: So what happened is that there was a whole team of us getting this evidence together and getting statements, pulling the case together, and about two weeks before it was due to come on—because they bring these on very quickly. It was about 2 o'clock in the morning that Elliott came in and we were all working. He was on two other cases at the time: the Zach murder trial, and he was appearing for Alan Scott in the Bank of Adelaide collapse, and he was in a Royal Commission in Western Australia. He said, 'The Supreme Court want me to sit every day. I'm in the morning on one case and the afternoon another case.' He said, 'I can't do this for you, but I've got very good senior counsel, a guy called Ted Mullighan. He's President of the Law Society. He'll look after you. And we've got an up and coming junior, a guy called John Doyle. They'll look after you.' And so John Doyle wrote the opinion on defamation, which held up all the way through.

CLEM MACINTYRE: And we should say for context that John Doyle subsequently becomes the Chief Justice for the Supreme Court and Ted Mullighan a very senior legal figure as well.

GREG CRAFTER: And royal commissioner.

CLEM MACINTYRE: And royal commissioner, yes

GREG CRAFTER: Involved in many royal commissions. So we won I think on most of the electoral grounds. You have to prove that sufficient votes were in doubt that would change the result of the election. I lost by 33 votes and we could prove that some sixty or so votes, I think it was, were in doubt. And so the Court of Disputed Returns went for weeks. There was lots of evidence. There were three parties. There was the Electoral Commission, there was the Liberal Party and there was the Labor Party. The Labor Party I don't think at any stage was confident and were worried about the amount of money it was costing and so on and it wasn't going to change the result of the election anyway. Labor were beaten fairly soundly.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Labor still would have been in Opposition even if you had won the seat.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. So anyway, we ran a really big campaign and there are lots and lots of stories about this campaign, because everyone was out doorknocking and working. David Tonkin was the Premier and my neighbour in Bragg, and a very nice man too. Anyway, I won, and by I think 600 votes, or whatever it was, and there was a controversy because we had put a lot more people on the rolls as well; we had encouraged people to enrol. Anyway, that meant that I was in a second by-election and I was back into parliament.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So three elections inside a year.

GREG CRAFTER: Then there was the next election. That's right. I look back on that third election. Rae was pregnant with our daughter and she had Laura one week before the third election. So I had been elected, we had bought a house in Norwood—which we couldn't afford—and—

CLEM MACINTYRE: Lost the seat.

GREG CRAFTER: Lost the seat. And I went to the bar and I accepted difficult briefs, in order to earn some money.

CLEM MACINTYRE: But your thoughts were turning towards, 'I have to go and earn some money and I'm back being a lawyer,' and then trying to run a campaign at the same time.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. I have a son, my son Sam, who was three at that stage. So it was turmoil really. Fortunately my wife is a teacher and she could keep working, although when the baby came there was another complication. So we had the 3rd election and, fortunately, we won.

By that stage we were in opposition. I really appreciated those years in opposition. We would be in here running off 12,000 pamphlets over a weekend, Kevin Hamilton and I, and trying to get stuff out into the electorate and tell people what we were doing. It is just backbreaking work trying to get established in an electorate like Norwood.

It's a great electorate, it really is. You bring people from interstate and they say, 'Why is this a Labor electorate?' In fact, in one election in the St Peters-Joslin booth I got more votes than Don did in his elections. He said to me, 'How did you do this?' and I said to him—pretty boldly, I guess—'Well, I don't argue at the door with people like you used to do.' Someone would say something to Don and he would be into them. He was very forthright in his views.

CLEM MACINTYRE: The experience of sitting in opposition to government is obviously a very different perspective.

GREG CRAFTER: It was, actually. Towards the end of the Tonkin government I got into the shadow cabinet. Howard O'Neill had taken ill and had to resign. He was the former party secretary too. So I had community welfare and Aboriginal affairs, and the Aboriginal affairs portfolio was quite active. David Tonkin had also been interested, of course, in the Pit lands act and so on, and the Maralinga legislation was coming up, potentially, so I started taking that up. I really enjoyed that Opposition period.

It was great in the electorate, too. I spent a lot of time learning from people. I tried to learn from Don. I tell people often that when I arrived in the electorate office on my first day there was a letter from St Peter's College that said, 'Dear Don, would you be so kind as to once again adjudicate the annual debate in Latin?' So I had to politely decline that invitation! But that was Don. He was a Renaissance man—exceptional.

When we set up the Dunstan Foundation to inherit the bulk of his library, which is now down at Flinders, you read the breadth of reading of the guy. It was incredible. Many of the books were given to him and autographed by the authors. You can imagine how he would respond to Writers' Week or something like that, those controversies going on today. He was just way out there on the rights of freedom of speech. In the Salisbury royal commission, I remember (I was involved in that) and he was quoting Voltaire, saying 'I disagree with every word you're saying, but I'll fight to the death to allow you to say it.' He lived by that sort of mantra as well. He took censorship away from Len King at one stage. Len had pretty straight views about censorship.

CLEM MACINTYRE: I want to bring you back to the period of three years in opposition from the 1979 election.

GREG CRAFTER: Well, the remainder of that period. I was there six months out.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Yes, from the by-election in early 1980 through to the election of the Bannon government in 1982. You were on the front bench building a bit of portfolio expertise and so on, then you came in as Minister for Community Welfare—

GREG CRAFTER: And Aboriginal Affairs.

CLEM MACINTYRE: —and Aboriginal Affairs in that first government. People often talk about the difference of sitting here as a minister and how you engage with the parliament from being either in opposition or on the backbench. What sorts of lessons did you get from that? Again, did you have someone mentor you in terms of being a minister and the different relationship you would have with the legislature when you're sitting on the Treasury benches?

GREG CRAFTER: It's interesting because I would attend with Len King at meetings he would have with heads of departments. He was Minister for Community Welfare, Minister for

Aboriginal Affairs, companies, licensing, censorship: he had all those jobs as well. So you would get to know how the Public Service works. Ian Cox was the head of community welfare. It is interesting: Robin Millhouse had been the attorney and welfare minister. He had set up the District Court for the first time, but he didn't make any appointments. Len King made the appointments to it. Robin would have been pretty upset that he couldn't appoint who he wanted.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Again, for context, Robin Millhouse was a Liberal and Liberal Movement member of parliament.

GREG CRAFTER: And a maverick in many ways.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Yes, and a maverick, as you say, but only in office for a brief period.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. He would come in here, sat over there, and would have his tabs on ready to go to court at 2.15. If you come here at two o'clock you get ticked off by the Clerk to record you had attended Parliament. He would be in court for in 15 minutes' only,. He often asked questions on behalf of his clients. He was quite a character.

CLEM MACINTYRE: The transition to being a minister?

GREG CRAFTER: The appointment of Ian Cox as the Director General of Community Welfare. What Len King had done—and I learnt about this—was he had a list of people who had applied for the job when he became minister, and he had the recommendation of the panel, and Ian Cox was the person recommended. Welfare was not in good shape. We had a very large number of young boys in Magill Reformatory, and Vaughan House for girls—hundreds and hundreds actually—and Ian was wanting to reduce all of that when he came in.

Len King went to Melbourne and went out to where Ian and his family lived and got in a phone box and rang him up. He said, 'Look, I'm in Melbourne. I'm the minister for welfare. You have applied for this job and I need to tell you that you have been recommended for appointment, but I would like to come and see you.' He said, 'Oh, well, we will make a time.' He said, 'I'm actually in your area at the moment. Can I just pop in?' He wanted to see how he lived and meet his family, so in he went. He struck up a friendship pretty quickly with Ian, became an outstanding public servant.

Those meetings were interesting. It wasn't long after that I became the welfare minister. Poor old Ian was seeing me and thinking 'What are you are doing here?' We had a very good relationship. I had learned how the Public Service works and how a minister can actually influence the department in a way that gets things done. Whether you are in business or in parliament, if you have responsibility for a major enterprise you need to get things done if you want change. You are only in parliament for a brief period of time and minister for less time mostly, and you want to do things.

The Maralinga land rights legislation, the Royal Commission, the clean-up of the Maralinga lands, the return of the people back on to the lands were huge issues. That was one of my challenges, but welfare was also another challenge and it was the beginning of the period of understanding the depth of child sexual abuse, and so on, and really developing that. Eventually I wanted Ian to go into the Public Service board so we could have much more humanising of the Public Service as well. He had all those skills.

Sue Vardon came in to welfare. I had done the same with Sue. I went to Sydney and rang her up and said, 'Sue, I am the minister. How are you going?' It was late afternoon on a Saturday, I think. She said, 'I'm having a dinner party tonight.' I said, 'I would love to have a brief chat to you if I could.' She said, 'Of course. I will suspend my dinner party preparations.' She came in—and she often talked about this afterwards—and I had a lovely chat with her.

I came back and went through cabinet. I went back to the department. There were some really nice people in the department, but it had been the children's welfare and public relief department in its history. Some of those staff were still there. Mac Harris and Gordon Bruff were two fine, upstanding men, but I remember coming back and they were acting in leadership positions in the department.

From cabinet I said, 'Cabinet has now appointed a new director-general of welfare.' They said, 'Who is he?' I said, 'No, it's a her.' They said, 'Do we know her?' and I said, 'No, she comes from Sydney.' They said, 'Will her family come?' I said, 'Well, she has a daughter, but there's no other family. She is a supporting parent.' They said, 'Are you sure you made the right decision, minister?' She was, of course, outstanding. She went off to the commonwealth and ran Centrelink and so on and had a brilliant career.

That's part of the experience that I had gained from being around ministers and ministers' offices. Very few members of parliament have that sort of background. Some do come in as staffers, but I had actually had another set of experiences before I went into Parliament.

CLEM MACINTYRE: You had had extraordinary preparation and training for the roles that you took on; that's clear.

GREG CRAFTER: Particularly at that level, too. These were achievers who were mentoring me.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Yes, with Dunstan and King, you're right. You moved to Education after the 1985 election. How did you feel about that? Was that by choice or was that John Bannon just saying, 'Guess what'?

GREG CRAFTER: I had really started to make ground. It takes a while to get your feet on the ground in Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs. After the election, I thought, 'Goodness, I have actually won an election in my own right now.' Anyway, Rae was back in teaching in the state system. You wait for the phone call from John Bannon the Premier. Ministers ring each other and say, 'What have you got? What's going on?' It was 9 o'clock, 10 o'clock, 11 o'clock, 12 o'clock, 1 o'clock and still no phone call. I thought, 'He's just going to give me the same portfolios.'

The phone rang, and Rae was with me. John says, 'Greg, sorry, I have been really busy ringing people, but I want you to take on Education.' I said, 'Are you sure? There are five teachers in the cabinet.' John said, 'No, I want you to do it. There is a job of work to be done here, and I think you can do it.' I said, 'Look, I would like to come and talk to you about it.' He said, 'Mate, you have to be down at Government House at 2.30 to get sworn in.' I said, 'Okay, John.' He said, 'You keep Aboriginal Affairs, and I am giving you Children's Services as well.' I said, 'That's quite a handful.' 'Yes, you'll be right. We'll help you.' So off I go. Rae, of course, was standing there, swearing. She said, 'That's the end of my career in state schools.'

Rae and I—and Rae's parents were down from Queensland—went off to Government House, and I got sworn in. The Governor, Sir Donald Dunstan, said to me, 'It looks like a lot of students will be getting half holidays now.' It was something like that, just lovely repartee. We had become quite good friends over the years. I was often running right on time for Executive Council meetings. The lift would be held at the State Administration Building, and he would hold it for me to get in. We would have a chat going up and then he would let me get into the cabinet room. Then he would dawdle in, walk around the table and shake hands with everyone. He would get to me and say, 'Have you had a nice morning? Good to see you again.' He was always that sort of jovial character. But Education was a huge challenge.

CLEM MACINTYRE: What were the big issues you confronted first?

GREG CRAFTER: It was a generational change. The leadership of the department was well entrenched. It was male dominated. It was people who were related to each other or their wives were. It was that old school. They were outstanding people in the department and had taken that Labor period—Hugh Hudson and Don Hopgood; Lynn Arnold had been there. They were educators rooted in the education systems. I was not. I had a vastly different background.

Lynn had had a library for the minister's office. There were four libraries in the department. It was a huge bureaucracy. There were 15,000 teachers, 25,000 altogether in the system. Every day there was a crisis of one form or another. There was a lot of bureaucracy. A problem—an industrial problem, particularly—would get to your desk about 30 seconds after it had happened. If someone was writing a letter to thank you, it would take about five people to sign it before it got to you. It was that sort of bureaucracy.

John Steinle was the head at the Director-General. He was a great man and a great educator. John was coming to the end of his career at that stage and there were Jim Giles, and Peter Tillett and Maurice Anderson—it was just a really good group of highly experienced people who worked their way up and had written curriculum and textbooks and so on.

We had a fantastic reputation in South Australia because Labor had poured money, particularly when Whitlam and Dunstan, the only two Labor governments, and a lot of funding came to South Australia in that time. The schools commission time—Garth Boomer and Peter Karmel and so on. The access and equity programs were very strong.

At the beginning of any time in Education the brakes were being put on education budgets. Enrolments in state schools were declining, so it was an interesting time really. I remember the very first meeting I had with the executive of the department. They had the ALP education platform, they had been through it and said, 'You want to create the school of the future and do this and that. What allocation are you going to make for the funding of these?' I said boldly, 'Well, that's your problem. You have to reallocate money in the department for these government priorities.' You could hear the groaning going on.

But I enjoyed all of that with the department. I was very fortunate to have, as I was in welfare, staff who worked around me who were giving me really good advice. In Education, John Hill was my Chief of Staff, who later became party secretary and minister and he was a teacher. The coterie of staff was just outstanding. They kept me out of trouble, so we could focus in on a series of key issues.

For example, primary school principals and deputies were being appointed on the basis of seniority, so if you were on the deputies' list you waited about 13 years to get to the school you wanted and principals were not much less than that. If you wanted to get to Walkerville Primary School and you bought a house in Walkerville you knew you were going to get there because it was just a matter of time before you did. You could not have thought of a worse way of appointing leadership in schools, particularly during a time of change in society, in education, and it needed to be fresh and to put the best people up-front.

Of course, with women who had to resign previously when they got married or had a child, seniority was ruled out, so there was an army of men who had privileged positions and to change that was quite difficult. Di Yerbury of the University of New South Wales retired and we got her to come over and do some work. As a result, there were many issues we tackled.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So the department officials were largely sympathetic to the program of reform—

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, they were.

CLEM MACINTYRE: —once you brought them onside, but there was resistance from unions and from teaching organisations and so on.

GREG CRAFTER: It was 15,000 versus one. We brought in another rule that said that after 10 years you had to reapply for your job. A senior chemistry teacher at Adelaide High, who had written textbooks and was a leader in his field, was asked to go to Elizabeth High where there was no chemistry taught at all. You cannot believe it. I remember talking to him and he said, 'This is outrageous. I'm being sent out here. You are wasting my time.' But his job, he said, was to get chemistry going. I kept in touch and he said at the end of a few years, 'This has been a great part of my career.'

CLEM MACINTYRE: So when was that 10-year rule of movement introduced?

GREG CRAFTER: It was in the late eighties, early nineties maybe.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So that was while you were minister, though?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So one of your initiatives was to see that movement to refresh and to stop staff becoming comfortable and stale in a particular—

GREG CRAFTER: That is right. It was to freshen up, but it also was to stop us sending people back compulsorily to country schools. We wanted to refresh the system, so there were a number of facets to it. At the same time, Ken Boston, who came in as Director-General, said it was a great job and he loved Adelaide and was going to stay for the rest of his life. Within two years, he had gone to Sydney and two years after that he had gone to London, as head of QCA.

When I was chairing the IB I was through London—I went 30 times in seven years through London for meetings and I would often catch up with Ken and reminisce about the reforms that he carried out, because they were major reforms too. Of course, when I left the education portfolio Susan Lenehan came in and within months the 10-year rule had gone. So, we tried.

CLEM MACINTYRE: There was certainly tension in terms of industrial relations. I read a report in the late—1988 I think it was, that you might need to be moved from education ahead of the 1989 election because the relationships were not as strong and so on.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Did you always feel you had the confidence of the Premier and the party in terms of the reforms you were undertaking?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, you find out when you go to cabinet and you've got a salary award that's retrospective, and I think it was \$80 million additional money we had to find. The cabinet said, 'Look, we'll put up the price of petrol tax, beer, cigarettes, and we'll get this amount of money but you've got to find X amount,' I think it was about half of that, 'out of your budget.' So we had to reduce the teaching service, not by sacking anyone but by attrition of 850-odd positions.

CLEM MACINTYRE: I think in the 1989 election you had a candidate against you—

GREG CRAFTER: The president of the union.

CLEM MACINTYRE: —who was president of the union, standing on behalf of the Liberal Party.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So were you worried in that 1989 election that it might go the wrong way?

GREG CRAFTER: I was because the teachers' union mobilised against me. I had, deep down, good relations as well, I think, with the three presidents of the teachers' union: Clare McCarty was the first one, who was very much in the old Communist Party of Australia mould. David Tonkin—was a lovely guy who was left in politics. He and I could work together. I couldn't with Clare, we just couldn't get agreement on matters, but with David I could. He had a vision for education, I think, that we could share, and so we created a document that really stood the test of time as well, and I enjoyed that.

Then Bob Jackson was the third leader, who was in the Liberal Party but he went to Trades and Labour Council meetings, representing the union. He had a very difficult personality and I just could not relate to him at all, unfortunately, but then there wasn't so much disputation in that period as there was in the earlier periods. I think we had a lot of catching up to do on industrial issues in that time, and I think John Bannon, that's why he in fact asked me to take it on because I think—

CLEM MACINTYRE: He had anticipated this level of conflict.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, that's right. Also, education was polling very badly for us in the polls and so education reform wasn't a winner in many ways. I think the teachers in the cabinet were probably seen as activists and had an agenda that didn't quite accord with where we wanted to go.

CLEM MACINTYRE: But you stay in that portfolio until John Bannon leaves the government.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes, seven years.

CLEM MACINTYRE: And Lynn Arnold, as new Premier, moves you into new portfolio areas.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. It was time for me; I wanted a change as well. I was worried about the bank, the electorate, and I think we knew that we were going to lose government, but I thought I might have been able to hang onto the electorate. John, I think, had also concluded before he left about what I should be doing. Lynn Arnold asked me what I wanted to do and I said, 'Really, I'm about community development,' and education was an important part of that, so I got housing, planning, local government and recreation and sport portfolios. The planning role included the bad bank buildings, the East End Market, we were able to restore that and renovate it, open up the East End—a whole lot of other development issues emerged at that time.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Less politically fraught areas than education, you might say.

GREG CRAFTER: It was good news, some of that, as well, although it was based on—you know the East End Market was valued, on a fire sale basis the department told me we would probably get between \$7 million and \$9 million. The bank had paid \$41 million, (or the subsidiaries:) Beneficial Finance for it. John Oswald took over from me. I used to talk to John about it and I think the government got about \$18 million or \$19 million directly back, but indirectly it lifted the whole of the East End, and that really took off then. It was derelict; it was all boarded up when I arrived on the job.

CLEM MACINTYRE: We could talk about those things for a long time, but I am conscious we haven't got all day. Let me, as we move towards the conclusion, get you to reflect a bit more on

the relationships you had with people. You just mentioned John Oswald, who took over as a minister in the Liberal government after the 1993 election. Who were the great characters you formed strong relationships with on both sides of the floor in your time here?

GREG CRAFTER: It's through huge challenges like the Maralinga land rights legislation. Lance Milne and Ian Gilfillan, who were Democrats, supported the legislation. Arthur Whyte was President. He came from the West Coast and he was a supporter. We wouldn't have got the legislation through without those guys. We would travel to the—

CLEM MACINTYRE: These were critical balance-of-power votes in the upper house?

GREG CRAFTER: The upper house, yes. Lance and I became quite good friends. Lance was from an establishment family and was a very nice guy. We had a visit from a group of US senators who came to Parliament House for dinner. We had a formal dinner and it was a very hot night. Lance always wore a coat and a waistcoat, tie and so on, and he took off his jacket during the night and then he took off his waistcoat and put it on the chair. I was watching him and I took the waistcoat and put it on the statue of Tom Playford out the front. Everyone thought it was a big joke, but someone saw me do it and they told Lance, so he said, 'I know you did it. I know you did it.' We used to laugh about it.

Ian and I have had a relationship after parliament. We met reasonably frequently. Graham Ingerson, Graham Gunn—I had a really good working relationship with Graham.

CLEM MACINTYRE: And who were your closest colleagues on this side?

GREG CRAFTER: The cabinet itself. When you sit for 11 years, twice a week, with your colleagues you get to know them really well. The sad thing was that when John resigned and the bank collapsed and we lost government, the cabinet never ever got together again. People were dispersed, I guess. They went interstate—

CLEM MACINTYRE: Well, about five ministers at least, I think, lost seats at that election.

GREG CRAFTER: Exactly, yes, that's right. There was just disarray really, I think, politically, and to lose by such a large margin. Looking back on it, I was close to John, to Chris Sumner in the cabinet, to Lynn: these were all really good friends.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Who were the great orators in your time?

GREG CRAFTER: Lynn was certainly—Hansard were throwing their pencils in the air when he was talking at 180 words a minute or whatever. He was an orator, but John Bannon was as well. John was a very skilful politician, and a great guy. Gavin Keneally was another guy who I really got to know, particularly in his later years. He had Alzheimer's and we used to meet and have dinner with him when he was being cared for. You could say to Gavin, 'Look, we need someone to speak for half an hour while something's going on,' and he could speak, no matter what the topic was. He had come out of Port Augusta. His father had been a poet and quite a left-wing character industrially and so on, and he had that ability.

GREG CRAFTER: Des Corcoran was also a great friend and mentor to me. Des, with that long period in opposition—the Legislative Council used to meet 15 minutes later than the lower house, and a lot of the Liberal members would go across to the Adelaide Club for dinner and then come casually back after dinner. Des would be in Assembly Chamber and he would immediately call for a quorum the second the bells stopped ringing, and he would get all the Labor Party to stay out. The Liberal Party guys who were coming back thought it was the bells still ringing for parliament, and of course the house was closed down., no quorum was present. So to get the House going again was embarrassing. They played games like this all the time.

CLEM MACINTYRE: I've been thinking, as I've been listening to you, that you probably came into this parliament with a better idea of how it worked and of the ins and outs than most members. Did being a member live up to the expectations that you had when you first took your seat?

GREG CRAFTER: I had an insight into members and what they are made of. I think what you learn is that it's not about your educational qualifications or your status. Farmers would come in here, or trade unionists or people who had worked on workshop floors and so on, and they all had their contributions to make. You learn respect for their contributions. Some were out of their depth

and some were lazy or just didn't understand the role, but there were very few of those. Most people I think worked very hard to hang on to their seats.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So you enjoyed your time as a member?

GREG CRAFTER: I did. This parliament, though, is not the enjoyable part of being a politician. These days it's run by numbers, and you can debate to your heart's content and you are still not going to win the debate, because the numbers are there—cabinet solidarity and so on. You look back on people in cabinet—a minister would argue and lose the debate and then come down here and argue for the cause that he or she had lost. You see with admiration that ability to do that.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Would you have had an agenda for reform if you had ended up as Premier? Are there things that you would want to change about the way the parliament was run?

GREG CRAFTER: I think being in the education ministry gave me an insight. The travels a lot, you are involved with a large cross-section of people—and people still pull me up in the street and so on. It's one portfolio—there were 13 in the cabinet in my day, and I sat around the table with them—Education is formative, it is constructive, it is about building the future of our society, and there is a lot of enjoyment that follows, I looked at my colleagues who are worried about prisons or roads or whatever, and it's a totally different job at work. In human service portfolios it's similar to Education, in a way.

I never aspired to leadership, but, if it had been thrust on me for some reason, mine would have been, I think, a very different style of leadership: not about the theatrics of the job but just damn hard work, and trying to get a Public Service that really did serve the community and bring the community on board, and having an insight into the injustices to be righted through welfare, Aboriginal affairs, educational opportunity and so on, to try to hammer that home all the time.

CLEM MACINTYRE: We won't spend a long time on it, but after you left the parliament you maintained a strong interest in education.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. I could never get away from it, really. In the latter period, as Minister of Education, I was really responsible for bringing the IB into the mainstream in Australia. There was a school Narrabundah in Canberra, a state school, but there were no other IB schools. So I got to know Kevin Marjoribanks when he was vice-chancellor of Adelaide University, he was really interested as well, and his wife. So Kevin helped me. But there was an IB deputation came to Australia and I got them to come to Darwin and address an Education Ministers' meeting, and at that meeting I think there was some interest. By that stage, I had committed to getting the IB here to Glenunga and Di Medlin at Pembroke jumped in first, actually, and Chris McCabe at Mercedes, so they were the three schools. Glenunga was really to provide for the families coming from Kockums to build their submarines.

John Bannon first of all said to me, 'What school will you place this in?' and I said Glenunga, which was a girls' technical high school and then became a general school, and wasn't really succeeding. I said, 'I want to put it in at Glenunga; I think that's the place.' He said, 'I will give you some money to get it going.' Interestingly, none of those Kockums families sent their kids to Glenunga: they went to state schools down in the western suburbs, and they appreciated it. Glenunga has 2,400 students now and I am still the patron there, 30-odd years after that event. The IB was a fantastic experience for me. I was elected in 1995 as the president and chair of the executive committee of the global organisation.

CLEM MACINTYRE: That's at an international level?

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. It was based in Geneva, the IB headquarters. It was an experience that I could not believe. We used to have our annual meeting in the UN building in Geneva. The cross-section of people who were there—Margaret Nkrumah from Ghana was on our executive and Eluned Morgan who was a member of the European parliament from a Welsh mining family, and so on—was a wonderful cross-section of people. Joe Matome was the company secretary for De Beers. He was a black South African and had studied the IB. He had worked his way up.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So post-political life was pretty rewarding?

GREG CRAFTER: It was. I was there for 10 or 11 years I think, but seven years as chair. I was involved in the IB for 25 of its first 50 years. Then I chaired the National Catholic Education Commission. I went on to Adelaide University council and chaired the alumni and the Dunstan

Foundation. I had a very heavy involvement in Adelaide Uni and big reforms in that period with a number of vice-chancellors.

Then I served on the Truth, Justice and Healing council that represented the Catholic Church in the royal commission, into child sexual abuse. About 40 per cent of offending in the Catholic Church occurred in Catholic schools and so the education involvement was really very much paramount in those deliberations. More recently, I chaired the National Catholic Education Commission. So that's 30 years of my life gone in the involvement in there organisation.

CLEM MACINTYRE: A very busy time. We are certainly well aware that some members of parliament, especially when they lose their seat at an election defeat rather than choosing to walk away, really struggle in post-political years, but you seem to have mastered that pretty well.

GREG CRAFTER: Yes. The last 10 years, I have been on the board of Torrens University, the startup "for-profit" university, which has been fascinating. We have 20,000 students around Australia and New Zealand. I have also, for 30 years, had an involvement with four companies, family businesses in South Australia, that are vastly different: two that I have served on boards and two that I have given advice to. They are family businesses, and very successful businesses too. So I have worked in the private sector as well.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So did you miss the parliament when you went?

GREG CRAFTER: When I entered parliament, my wife, Rae, said to me, 'How long do you want to stay in parliament for?' When we got married, she knew I was interested in politics, but when I went into parliament, she said, 'How long do you want to stay?' and I said, 'I will retire by the time I am 50,' and she said, 'Will you commit that to writing?' and I said, 'Yes.' So I signed this document, which she often produced and showed me.

When the bank collapsed and I was defeated, I was 49, so I am one of the very few beneficiaries of the bank collapsing. I was asked to go back into parliament by a subsequent Premier and I said no. I had been there, done that, and I had another career that was evolving. I had a young family. I had had a fantastic period in office winning 7 elections in Norwood.

CLEM MACINTYRE: So you didn't want to come back after defeat, but would you do it again if you were back in your 20s?

GREG CRAFTER: I would for sure, yes. My advice is not to go in too young but to get out before you get too old. Don't see it as a career but resolve you want to make a contribution and have the opportunity to get into a party that can form government and then stay in government. As a minister for 11 years is a long period of time when you look back on it, so I was very fortunate indeed.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Any other advice for aspiring MPs?

GREG CRAFTER: I think it's very important to understand that the community still holds our parliament in good standing, and that's incredibly important in a world where democracies are being diminished and destroyed, deliberately in many cases. This parliament is I think the sixth longest surviving continuous parliamentary democracy in the world and so that's something to be cherished. It has its standing because of the institution that it is and the way in which we have respect for the vice-regal role and the regal role in it as well.

But it's about the people who come here and serve it as well. In recent history there has been a very unfortunate choice of members who have come in here. I think it's always beholden on parties and the community itself to preselect people who really are capable and really want to make a difference, who don't see it as a career, who don't see it as serving a political party alone, who don't see it as a sectional interest but genuinely open up their minds and hearts to what it means to be here and to make laws, to be accountable for the Public Service and the judiciary.

I think most members would never see themselves as responsible for the judiciary, but they are and they are responsible for the Public Service. This is where it's accountable. This place has huge powers, powers that we have inherited because of European settlement but we have often forgotten, too, about the Indigenous community and the traditional owners. That gets overlooked far too often.

CLEM MACINTYRE: That's a good sort of lead-in to the last question I have for you, which is just to get you to reflect on what it's like coming back today and reliving some of those memories. What sort of feelings are invoked by sitting here and reflecting on your career?

GREG CRAFTER: I had almost nine years, I think, before I went into parliament, working in and out of Parliament House, and I have been back regularly since that time. I am one person who really does feel part of this place as the highlight of my working career. I had never worked in a job where I got the long service leave, and after 10 years as a minister I said to John Bannon, 'I have been working as a minister for 10 years and I'm really exhausted. John, I'm stuffed.' When the bank collapsed, it was even more difficult because I had huge portfolios. I said, 'I just need a break.' He said, 'Take a week off.'

CLEM MACINTYRE: Generous to a fault!

GREG CRAFTER: He was.

CLEM MACINTYRE: Well, Greg Crafter, I have kept you going for a long time. Thank you so much for talking about your time here and sharing those memories with us.

GREG CRAFTER: Thank you.

The interview concluded at 4.18pm.